

Boccia UK Talent Transition Squad Selection Policy: Paris Cycle

POLICY AIM:

This document sets out the selection policy for the 2023 - 2025 Talent Transition Squad. It includes criteria for athlete eligibility, minimum performance standards and the assessment, selection, and confirmation process.

This policy outlines how an athlete can be selected and support athletes who possess the skills and ability to progress onto the UK Boccia Federation (UKBF) Talent Transition Programme and ultimately the World Class Programme (WCP). Athletes should be on an upward and progressive trajectory* and by being supported achieve their potential in the sport.

*Players should be showing an upward progression in terms of development and medal trajectory path determined by technical performance indicators and thresholds – accuracy and consistency levels and competition performance, Home Nation programme assessments, review and individual player planning.

The policy has been written to set out the principles and create a transparent process to invite athletes to join the Talent Transition Squad. While the principles will be adhered to, there may need to be some flexibility to ensure effective training squads are created, considering differing levels of development as well as any other exceptional circumstances including injury or significant illness.

BOCCIA UK TRANSITION FORMAT

Talent Transition Objective: Identify, support, and develop athletes who demonstrate the potential to progress to compete for the United Kingdom in the future, by developing the foundation skills required for future major competitions and Paralympic Games. The programme will take a holistic overview of an players circumstances and treat each player equally to enhance future performance potential.

Athlete Guidelines: Athletes joining the Programme will be required to act in accordance with Codes of Conduct. Athletes will also need to demonstrate an ongoing commitment to achieve future medal-winning performances on the world stage and full engagement with the WCP's policies.

The UK Boccia Talent Transition Squad is positioned primarily to support athletes that are between National Programmes and the World Class UK Programme stages of the performance pathway, in order to help them make the progression onto the WCP within 2-3 years. All classifications will be considered with Boccia UK WCP identifying gaps and trends to focus on.

There is a four-stage process and timeline that will be applied to select athletes to the 2023 - 2025 Talent Transition Squad:

1. Athlete Eligibility
2. Meeting Minimum Performance Standard

3. Suitability to the Programme
4. Final Selection

ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY

Before consideration for selection onto the Talent Transition Squad, an athlete must first fulfil the following requirements:

1. Eligible to hold a United Kingdom (UK) passport
2. In addition to being a UK passport holder, an athlete must meet at least one of the following criteria:
 - Born in UK
 - Parent born in UK
 - Athletes main residence is in UK
3. On entry to Transition Support an athlete must hold a national classification and obtain a national confirmed classification within 12 months
4. Comply with the Boccia UK code of conduct

NOMINATION PROCESS

A Home Nation Lead can nominate an athlete at any time of the season by completing a Talent Transition Programme expression of interest form.

Boccia UK can, at its discretion, add an athlete to Transition Support at any stage of the program if they feel they have the ability to perform at the level required and meet the Minimum Performance Standards.

An athlete may also be invited by the WCP to attend part of a WCP camp for a period of extended support and assessment to support selection of competing at international events. If a player is invited to attend WCP activity accommodation will be provided/reimbursed by Boccia UK for an athlete and assistant.

SELECTION CRITERIA

This selection policy intends to provide a clear guidance to all athletes on the basis upon which selection decisions will be made. These factors will be given varying importance with the aims of the policy and an athlete's individual performance at the forefront of decision making. The intention is for an athlete to not be a member of Transition Support for more than 3 years, with a review every six months from the Talent Transition Coach and Head of Performance Pathway.

To support the individual developmental needs of each athlete, athletes can be re-selected for the Talent Transition Squad if they demonstrate medal winning potential back in Home Nation programmes. This will also be reviewed if the programme is still able to continue to support the athlete's development, and what level of support the Programme should provide in order to fulfil the Talent Transition Squad objective. This ensures the policy's purpose of creating potential to progress through the pathway to elite level Boccia is achieved.

Considerations for selection:

In addition to the eligibility criteria, the following will be considered determinants for selection for athletes to the Boccia UK Talent Transition Squad. These factors will be given varying importance with the aims of the policy and an athlete's individual performance at the forefront of decision making.

The achievement of the Minimum Performance Standards does not guarantee selection onto the Programme. There are a limited number of places and reaching the Minimum Performance Standards only enables an athlete to proceed within the selection process.

To be considered for selection the panel will take a holistic overview of an athlete's circumstances and include discussion and assessment of factors that may limit or enhance future performance potential such as:

A COMPETITION FACTORS

An athlete who has a consistent track record and demonstrates a positive performance trajectory and an ability to deliver in a competition environment:

1. The performance potential to deliver medals at future World Championships and Paralympic Games
2. Consistent performances demonstrated in domestic competitions, Challenger events and UK Championships
3. The age of athlete in relation to health and performance levels and its fitness to train and compete
4. Demonstrated ability to perform well under competition pressure
5. A positive approach to competition experiences and an ability to reflect and learn
6. Holding a set of equipment that is competitive for international level competition
7. Specific requirements of World Boccia rulings on female quota*
8. Team/Pairs combination factors
9. The ability of the nominated Sport Assistants and Personal Assistants to contribute to the performance goals of the team

*All classifications will be reviewed fairly with Boccia UK using data intelligence to identify potential gaps.

B COMMITMENT TO TRAINING

An athlete who demonstrates an ability to set and achieve realistic goals in training and have a proven ability to commit to a detailed training plan:

1. Demonstrate a positive attitude and a willingness to learn whilst at training
2. Commitment to Home Nation programme i.e. attending camps, communication
3. Adherence to training programmes set by UK Boccia Talent Transition Squad Coach
4. Progression in training measured through coaching reports and training diaries
5. Ability to complete a skills test and understand areas of improvement required
6. Consistency of verified training scores in testing activity
7. Significant and worthwhile progression year on year

C PERFORMANCE BEHAVIOURS

An athlete who demonstrates high performance behaviours with a positive attitude and commitment to the programme:

1. the athletes performance attitude, strategy and planning, communication, and management skills
2. Fully participate with their Individual Action Plan (IAP) and willing to take ownership and responsibility of own performance and programme
3. Be a role model for the sport of Boccia
4. Demonstrate positive attitude and commitment through ownership over own personal development
5. Take a proactive role in their development, are deliberate and focused with their practice, including being prepared to challenge themselves and work on targeted areas of weakness
6. Demonstrate team qualities which fit within the team culture and ethos
7. Fully participate in Boccia UK's player Code of Conduct

The level and selection of athlete may not be parable across male/female classes and between classification. This is in reflection on the constraints of competition entry for each classification. The strength of one classification or event may deem that selection standards in that classification is considerably higher than another. Athletes may also be selected to compete as a team/pair athlete as a priority.

SELECTION PANEL

Selecting athletes requires both subjective and objective judgements. The Panel is made of up experts who will be exercising their discretion based on the knowledge and experience of the sport and what is required to meet the objectives of this Policy.

The Selection Panel will comprise of:

- Boccia UK Performance Director, Greg Baker (voting)
- Head of Performance Pathway, Liz Fisher (voting)
- Talent Transition Talent Coach, TBC (voting)
- Independent representation, TBC
- Boccia UK Physiotherapist (classification/medical purposes*), TBC (non-voting)

*Support gaining eligibility at international level, awareness, and support to maximise physical potential towards better function, performance, and health.

If any of the above are unable to participate in the Selection Panel, the Performance Director (or any person appointed as their deputy) may nominate an alternative.

The panel may consult with other relevant coaches or practitioners from Boccia UK or Home Nations. All members of the Selection Panel must declare any conflicts of interest and notify the Panel of this prior to the start of the Selection Meeting. If an interest is declared, they should then exclude themselves from the decision-making where necessary.

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SELECTION MEETING

The purpose of the selection meeting is to select the athletes for the Boccia UK Talent Transition Squad. The meeting will be facilitated by the Boccia UK Head of Performance Pathway who will make the official record of minutes.

1. Selections will be made and continued invitation will be made from reviews
2. All possible efforts will be made to hold the meeting in person, but other formats may be acceptable where necessary including a remote meeting
3. The selection panel will exercise its discretion fairly and without bias in making its decision against the selection criteria listed in this document
4. Decisions will be made by majority vote
5. Boccia UK can, at its discretion, add an athlete to Transition Support at any stage of the program if they feel they have the ability to perform at the level required and meet the criteria listed above
6. The meeting will be facilitated by the Boccia UK Head of Performance Pathway who will make the official record of minutes

The Panel will then report back to the BPG the outcome of the selection meeting and the Head of Performance Pathway will communicate to selected players their invitation onto the programme.

Once offered a place on the Programme, athletes will be required to attend Induction (in person or virtually), the purpose being:

1. To introduce the Programme (i.e. the values, culture and structure)
2. To ensure athletes know what is expected of them and are able to fulfil the Programme's commitments
3. All athletes joining the programme must sign an Athlete Code of Conduct and abide by the terms
4. At the end of Induction athletes will be asked if they wish to accept the offer of a place on the Programme

DE-SELECTION

The following factors may be considered reasons for an athlete's de-selection of Talent Transition at any point throughout the year. The composition of the Selection Panel will normally be to the same as the composition of the original Selection Panel but if individual members are not available the Head of Performance Pathway may select a replacement.

These main areas this will include are:

1. Athletes who no longer meet the selection minimum standards

2. Significant illness or injury which prevents an athlete from fully participating in invite camps/competition opportunities
3. Loss of form leading to a significant under performance
4. Non-adherence with individual training plan or the wider programme
5. Failing to meet agreed performance targets as identified through their review
6. Boccia UK disciplinary procedures
7. Failure between the athlete and Boccia UK to agree on a care assistant or performance assistant appointment that is compatible with meeting the stated aims
8. Social media infringements such as (but not limited to) leaking of confidential information, criticism of team members and unacceptable public comments or images

In the first instance the Talent Transition Squad Coach will speak to the athlete, advise them of any concerns, and agree a sufficient period to allow them to try and create change.

If not achieved, the Head of Performance Pathway will consult with the Performance Director and reach a decision on de-selection.

If an athlete is to be de-selected from the Talent Transition Squad the Head of Performance Pathway and Talent Transition Coach will formally advise the Boccia Pathway Group and confirm the decision in writing to the athlete.

An Athlete may appeal the decision to de-select them from the Programme.

If an athlete is de-selected, they will be supported as they transition off the programme across 2 months through the Performance Lifestyle Practitioner.

APPEALS

Athletes may appeal their de-selection through the application of this selection policy. To make an appeal an athlete should:

1. Write to the Chair of Boccia UK (via viv.nanopoulou@boccia.uk.com) clearly describing the grounds of appeal
2. This should be received within 7 days notice of non- selection or de-selection being received

UKBF policies and procedures are subject to change from time to time, including variations required to comply with the investment of National Lottery funds. Boccia UK reserves the right to amend at its absolute discretion, for whatever reason, any or all its' policies and procedures. Any changes/amendments to the Selection Policy will be shared with Boccia UK BPG.