

**2020-2021 WCP Selection Process**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**



**BRITISH  
ATHLETICS**

**What is the World Class Programme?**

British Athletics receives National Lottery money from UK Sport and we use it to support the World Class Programme (WCP). We offer places on the Olympic and Paralympic WCP to athletes with the potential to win medals at the Olympic or Paralympic Games. This stipulation is key to our ability to support any athlete via the WCP – if the Selection Panel (“the Panel”) do not believe that an athlete has genuine global medal potential, they cannot become a member of the WCP, regardless of their world ranking, British ranking or competition performances.

**How many athletes will you support?**

The numbers of athletes we can support via the WCP is limited by our funding agreement with UK Sport. These numbers were set at the beginning of the Tokyo cycle, and are reflective of the number of athletes that UK Sport believes we need to support to meet our medal targets for Tokyo.

We have a maximum number of athlete places for both the Podium and Podium Potential programmes, and for financial reasons, we cannot exceed these numbers. We want to support as many athletes as possible, but where we do not believe sufficient athletes have ongoing medal potential, we may leave spots unfilled. If there are more athletes eligible for selection than there are places available, it will be up to the Panel to decide which of these athletes is best equipped to win medals at future Olympic and Paralympic Games.

**Why is it so complicated?**

We have to be realistic - Athletics is a complicated sport with many varied disciplines, so one size can't fit all. We want you to know what is expected of you to be selected for and then stay on the WCP, and what will happen if you get injured or have a temporary drop in form. We also want to be clear how former WCP athletes can return to the programme. All of this makes for a complex programme, but we have tried to make the policy as straight forward as possible, whilst still abiding by the legal requirements that such policies demand.

**Why are the 2020-2021 WCP selections different?**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent cancellation of the Olympic and Paralympic Games, as well as a significantly disrupted competition season, the WCP selections are being held differently this year to ensure athletes are not at a disadvantage in their preparations for the Olympic and Paralympic Games to be held in 2021.

**I'm already on the WCP, what do I need to do to stay on?**

Current WCP athletes will be expected to engage in a 2020 WCP end of year review. Unless exceptional circumstances exist, current WCP athletes will be retained at their current level for the 2020-2021 WCP year. All current WCP athletes must also continue to meet the eligibility criteria.

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### How do I get on the WCP for the first time?

If there are “spare” places available, prospective athletes may be added to the WCP. The main steps you need to achieve are outlined below:

1. You have to be eligible to compete for GB&NI / Team GB or ParalympicsGB at both the World Athletics or World Para Athletics (WPA) Championships and the Olympic or Paralympic Games, and you have to be eligible to do so in the eyes of WA and WPA. You also have to meet a range of other eligibility requirements, such as not currently serving a suspension for a doping violation, not being a student at an NCAA university in the United States (and not having special dispensation to receive financial support), and not having brought British Athletics into disrepute.
2. Para Athletes must have at least an IPC review level classification which can be clearly evidenced by medical diagnosis (see below for further information on this point). Athletes must be eligible to represent GB & NI at the Paralympic Games, and they are not eligible until such time as they have an IPC classification.
3. Para Athletes must also compete in an event which features on the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games medal event programme. If your event won't be staged in Tokyo, you can't win a medal and we won't be able to support you.
4. You then need to produce performances that mean you match the requirements set out in the “Selection Criteria”.
5. The WCP is not about rewarding past success (though this helps us to predict the future), so for every level, you also have to satisfy the Panel that you will possess all the necessary characteristics to win global individual medals in the future. Athletes who satisfy the basic criteria for consideration will be sent a questionnaire in advance of selection to help gain more information about them before the selection meeting takes place.
6. Finally, you will need to be prepared to complete an Individual Athlete Plan and sign the UK Athletics WCP Athlete Agreement for each period when you'll be a member of the WCP.

### I've been on the WCP before, how do I get back on?

You will need to satisfy all the same requirements outlined for individuals looking to gain membership of the programme for the first time. Additionally though, as the standards are increasing year on year, you will need to demonstrate that you have progressed since you were removed from the WCP previously. Specifically, this means that you cannot be added at a level below which you were exited previously. Exceptions to this can be made at the discretion of the Paralympic Head Coach or Performance Director\* and only if you have changed event or class.

### What about the relays?

#### ***Olympic WCP***

To be a relay member of the WCP, athletes must meet all the same eligibility requirements as individuals (i.e. eligibility to represent GB&NI etc.) and must also satisfy the Panel of their future fitness.

The “Selection Criteria” (Section 2 of the Selection Policy), outlines what is required for athletes to gain membership at each level. Relay members are afforded the same WCP benefits as individual members.

Crucially though, individual membership for sprint events (i.e. 100m/200m/400m) no longer exists below Podium B level. So if you are a sprinter and you don't satisfy the individual requirements for membership of the WCP at level B or above, you will only be eligible for consideration for WCP membership as a relay runner.

Athletes who are offered WCP membership as a relay runner will then need to sign up to the British Athletics Relay Plan – their personal coach will also need to sign up too. The plan outlines the requirements of relay runners over the coming year, both in terms of activity (practices/competitions etc.) but also behaviours. Signing up to the plan is optional, but sprinters who are not eligible as individuals and who choose not to sign up to the relay plan will have their offer of WCP membership withdrawn.

The 2021 Relay Plan will be sent to all eligible athletes and their personal coaches as soon as possible

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### ***Paralympic WCP***

All single classification group relays (i.e. T11-13 4x100m or T35-38 4x100m) were removed from the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games medal event programme. A single mixed gender, mixed classification relay has subsequently been introduced for Tokyo but due to WPA's rules and regulations, the athletes involved will only ever include those already selected for individual events. As such, no relay specific membership will be offered for at least the remainder of the Tokyo cycle.

### **What data will you use to make these decisions?**

#### ***Olympic WCP***

We will draw data from a number of sources. These include the World Athletics Rankings, the Powerof10 UK performance database and the Finnish athletics data site Tilastopaja.

There is always a statistician present at each selection meeting, and we will also use a range of data generated internally at British Athletics, such as Performance trajectories and event trends.

#### ***Paralympic WCP***

We primarily focus on data from two places, the WPA World Rankings, and the Powerof10 UK performance database. Where classes are "combined" in a single event (i.e. T53/54) we will always look at a combined world ranking to give us a better picture of the event as a whole.

For all major global championships results of combined field events (i.e. those featuring multiple classes) will not be determined by a point score system. Therefore, all combined class events (whether they are track or field) will be determined by performance alone.

### **What is the What it Takes to Win (WITTW) data and analysis**

This is simply a description of what the best in the world looks like. British Athletics have developed a series of interactive dashboards that displays all of this information for each event and this will be used as the framework for assessing athlete medal winning capacity (and therefore their place on the WCP).

It features a huge amount of data that describes the levels of performance expected of athletes as they develop towards the podium (similar to the old funnels) as well as projections regarding the future direction of the event (i.e. is it getting harder or easier). It also outlines the key physical/technical characteristics of medal winning athletes, alongside descriptions of the more subjective areas of global medal winners (such as behaviours, coaching quality, environment etc.).

This system is undoubtedly a competitive advantage over other nations and as such we do not intend to publish this data and analysis, or indeed send copies of the dashboards to individual athletes and their coaches. Instead, the data and analysis will be used as part of the athlete review process, with athletes and their coaches taken through each of the key areas in person.

Any relevant information from the WITTW data and analysis will be provided to any appealing athlete should it be required.

### **What are the different levels on the programme?**

We place all athletes into one of five levels on the WCP – from A to E. You will be allocated to a level by the Panel who will be guided by the "Performance Matrix" (Section 2 of the Selection Policy). In general, the higher the level you are on the WCP the more services become available to you and the higher priority you have to access the services.

### **What is an APA and what do the WCP levels mean financially?**

The vast majority of spend on WCP athletes is indirect through:

1. Employed coaches.
2. Provision of world class training facilities.
3. Medical services including doctors, physiotherapy and soft tissue therapy services.
4. Comprehensive medical insurance.
5. Sports science support services.
6. Championships teams including holding camps.

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Athletes also receive direct payments, known as an Athlete Performance Award (or APA). These payments are made so that athletes can spend less time working, and more time focussing on training. Athletes must complete a UK Sport Application form to access their APA. Their APA is paid directly to them by UK Sport and will be means tested.

Further information and advice on APA's means testing, benefit payments and mortgage/rental references can be found at: <http://www.uk sport.gov.uk/our-work/investing-in-sport/how-uk-sport-funding-works>. Alternatively, you can contact a member of the UK Sport Investment Team.

### **I have an IPC classification, is this enough to make me eligible for selection?**

The classification process is a complicated one and we believe that it is our duty to try and ensure athletes are competing on a level playing field. Therefore, we don't just rely on the result of classification clinics to ensure athletes are in the right class and we ask that athletes work with us to provide medical evidence to underpin their classification.

If there is any doubt as to the validity of an athlete's classification, and if we and/or the athlete is not able to provide this medical information, they may not be offered a place on the WCP in 2018/19.

### **What if I need a guide runner?**

British Athletics recognises that guide runners are integral to the success of visually impaired track athletes. Guide runners for T11 and T12 athletes who are offered a place on the WCP will therefore also be offered support via the WCP provided they guided the athlete in question when they achieved the performance(s) that qualified them for membership of the WCP. This will be at a level equivalent to the athlete that they guide, but the exact amounts offered (in terms of monetary award and access to services), will depend on the level of support that is required (in terms of training and competition access) by the individual athlete.

### **When will I hear if I am a member of the WCP for 2020-2021?**

The WCP Selection Panels meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020 and we aim to publish a list of selected athletes on the British Athletics web site ([www.britishathletics.org.uk](http://www.britishathletics.org.uk)) within two working weeks. Successful athletes will be contacted via email and post prior to the announcement on the website. Those athletes exited from the WCP will also be contacted in person or over the phone prior to the announcement.

### **Can I appeal against WCP selection decisions?**

There is an appeals process, primarily for athletes already on the WCP – see Section 7 of the Selection Policy for details.

*\*For the 2020-21 Olympic WCP selection the newly appointed Performance Director, Sara Symington not formerly commence her role by the date of the selection meeting. Any Performance Director decisions, as described in the policy, will be a made through a combination of the WCP Director and Director of Performance Support in consultation with Sara Symington.*