

UK Athletics World Class Programme

Paralympic

Additional Important Information

ATHLETE PERFORMANCE AWARDS

1. GENERAL

- 1.1. APAs are a National Lottery funded grant award aimed at assisting athletes to pursue medal success in the Paralympics and in other major international championship events. The APA system is aligned to investment in sports' high-performance programmes, with APA funding designed to enable athletes to fully engage with these programmes and meet the demands associated with progression towards the Paralympic podium.
- 1.2. APAs are not designed to support athletes (or their associated company/financial vehicle) who could be considered professional – i.e., athletes who have secured an income via professional or semi-professional contract, through salary, stipend, prize money, endorsement or related income streams that enables them to operate independently. Such athletes will be subject to a financial needs assessment and may not receive an APA (see further section 9 below).
- 1.3. Athletes who are selected for the WCP but who do not receive an APA following the financial needs assessment are still required to sign the WCP agreement.

2. APA LEVELS

- 2.1. APAs are available at different levels:

Podium APAs are designed to support athletes whose profile indicates a strong prospect of achieving/contributing to medal winning performances at the Paralympics Games within the cycle and who are already achieving/contributing to international results within the medal zone

- Podium awards are made at A and B levels.
- An additional award level 'Paris Potential' is provided to support athletes

who have been in receipt of a Podium level award, who do not meet the competition outcome standards to retain an A or B award, yet remain a strong medal prospect for Paris.

Podium awards level APA amounts are:

A+ level – £28,000

A level – £26,500

B+ level – £23,000

B level – £21,500

Paris Potential award value at Podium level is £19,000.

Podium Potential APAs are designed to support athletes who have been identified and confirmed as having the potential to bridge the gap to Paralympic medal success and have made the commitment to pursue this goal

- Podium Potential awards are made at C and D levels.

Podium Potential level APA amounts are:

C level – £17,000

D level – £11,000

Confirmation Level APAs are designed to support athletes in their first 1-2 years of inclusion in high-performance programmes, to provide a period through which the potential of the athlete is explored and confirmed.

Entry level APA amount is £7,500.

Amounts are subject to change.

WCP SELECTION PANEL

3. COMPOSITION AND MEETINGS

3.1. The WCP Selection Panel will comprise of the following voting members:

- a) the UK Athletics Technical Director.
- b) the UK Athletics Head of Paralympic Performance.
- c) the UK Athletics Paralympic Podium Potential Manager.

3.2. The following persons (who shall not be voting members of the WCP Selection Panel) shall attend meetings of the WCP Selection Panel unless they are unable to attend due to unforeseen circumstances:

- a) the UK Athletics Paralympic Pathway Manager.
- b) UK Athletics Head of Performance.
- c) Independent Sport Observer¹;
- d) UKA Medical representative(s).

3.3. Other persons may be invited to attend meetings of the WCP Selection Panel at the invitation of the Technical Director.

3.4. The Head of Performance, or in their absence a person nominated by the Technical Director, will chair WCP selection meetings.

3.5. The WCP Selection Panel will meet upon the request of the Technical Director.

4. VOTING AND CONFLICTS

4.1. Voting of the WCP Selection Panel is by simple majority. In the event it is required,

the Technical Director will have a casting vote.

4.2. Decisions of the WCP Selection Panel are subject to the ratification of UK Sport.

4.3. In relation to each athlete being considered in a selection meeting, WCP Selection Panel members and other attendees must declare any conflict of interest. Where a conflict of interest exists, the relevant person will not be permitted to contribute to discussions about the athlete in question and, if a vote is required, a conflicted WCP Selection Panel member will not be entitled to vote and must not be present when the vote takes place. Where there is any doubt as to whether there is a conflict of interest, the matter will be decided by the Chair of the WCP selection meeting.

5. POWERS AND DUTIES

5.1. The WCP Selection Panel may request reports (oral or written) or data from any person in relation to an athlete or athletes.

5.2. The WCP Selection Panel will:

- a) consider status of existing WCP athletes.
- b) confirm, change the level of, or remove (if appropriate and in accordance with this Selection Policy) the WCP membership and level of existing WCP members; and
- c) consider athletes not currently on the WCP and either grant them WCP membership at an appropriate level or reject them.

5.3. The Chair of the WCP Selection Panel will decide the order in which athletes are considered.

¹ The role of the Independent Observer, as defined by UK Sport guidance, is to provide confidence to athletes about the fairness and objectivity of the process. The independent member or observer must be familiar with high performance sport, either as an athlete, coach, or legal expert. Their role is to act as an observer – scrutinising the process, holding the panel accountable

to the policy and its criteria, and ensuring the principles of fairness and acting without bias are upheld. The independent member or observer should have no current or previous relationship (personal, financial, membership) with the NGB, the athlete, or the athlete support personnel which could reasonably be perceived as a bias.

- 5.4. The WCP Selection Panel may set conditions and targets for each athlete on the WCP. These will need to be met by the end of the season for membership of the WCP to continue, and some may have to be met by a particular point during the season for membership to continue.
- 5.5. The deliberations of the WCP Panel are confidential and may not be disclosed or discussed with any third party (other than for the purpose of taking legal advice).
- 5.6. The WCP Selection Panel will complete a written note of their decisions in relation to each athlete, including the reasons for their decisions.

CIRCUMSTANCES THAT MAY LEAD TO DE-SELECTION FROM THE WCP

The following paragraphs 6-8 apply to athletes being removed from the WCP during the WCP year. They do not apply to athlete selection for the WCP which is carried out annually and may lead to any athlete being removed from the WCP at the end of the WCP year.

6. INJURY & ILLNESS

- 6.1. In the event of injury/illness (both physical and mental), and in cases where an athlete is considered likely to recover to full fitness for training and competition, the athlete will continue to receive their full APA and WCP membership up to three months from the point the injury/illness occurred or was identified.
- 6.2. If after three months the athlete remains unavailable for full selection or training, an expert review will be undertaken to confirm the likelihood that the athlete remains able to pursue success in the Paralympic Games, to agree a programme of rehabilitation and to plot a timetable for return to full training and competition.
- 6.3. Each case will be considered on its own merit, and further expert advice may be sought where the long-term impact of the injury/illness is unclear (such as referral to the mental health panel). The athlete's

progress against the timetable will be reported to UK Sport every three months thereafter, until the athlete has either fully resumed training and competition or left the programme.

- 6.4. Subject to satisfactory evidence of the likelihood of return, the APA will continue to be paid at the existing award level for up to a year but will only be extended beyond this in exceptional circumstances.
- 6.5. Where there is medical evidence that the injury/illness will affect the long-term potential of the athlete, or where the athlete has shown neither progress nor commitment to the agreed rehabilitation programme, the athlete can be removed from APA support providing an appropriate period of notice is given – see Athletes Leaving the Programme.
- 6.6. Visually impaired track athletes currently on the WCP who require a guide runner to compete in their chosen discipline(s) (classes T11 and/or T12) and who fail to meet the Performance Matrix Standards will be considered for retention on the WCP if:
 - the guide runner has been affected by a Performance Limiting Injury that, in the opinion of the Panel and at its absolute discretion, significantly impacts upon the athlete's ability to meet the Performance Matrix Standards.
 - the WCP Selection Panel considers that the athlete still has realistic potential to win a medal at the 2024 or 2028 Paralympic Games: and
 - where, in the opinion of the WCP Selection Panel, the guide runner does not demonstrate the ability to recover sufficiently from their Performance Limiting Injury, the athlete and his or her coach are able to identify suitable guide runner alternatives, which are then subject to the approval of the WCP Selection Panel at their absolute discretion.

Current Podium Potential visually impaired track athletes whose performances have been affected by a Performance Limiting Injury to

their guide will only be considered for retention to the WCP in exceptional circumstances at the absolute discretion of the WCP Selection Panel.

- 6.7. For both current and non-current members of the WCP, the Paralympic Lead Doctor (or designated medical representative) must be satisfied of the medical diagnosis underpinning their classification (such a diagnosis being a "Relevant Diagnosis") for them to be considered eligible for retention on, or selection to, the WCP and the following provisions shall apply in any assessment of a Relevant Diagnosis:

- a) it shall be the responsibility of the athlete to obtain and provide documentary evidence of a Relevant Diagnosis so as to show that the athlete meets the requirement at paragraph 5.1d of the Paralympic WCP selection policy.
- b) the athlete shall comply with all reasonable requests of the Paralympic Lead Doctor (or designated medical representative) for further evidence of the Relevant Diagnosis, and the costs of obtaining such evidence shall be borne by UK Athletics; and
- c) all documentary evidence submitted in support of a Relevant Diagnosis must be in English, dated and signed by a registered medical professional who provided the diagnosis.

- 6.8. WCP membership status of any athlete without a permanent classification will be reconsidered by the WCP Selection Panel upon review of their classification by an IPC International Classification Panel ("an IPC Panel"). In particular:

- a) any athlete who ceases to satisfy the eligibility requirements at stage 1 of the Paralympic WCP selection policy, section 5.1 following a review by an IPC Panel, will be removed from the WCP in accordance with section 7 of this additional important information.
- b) the funding level of any athlete whose classification is changed will be subject to immediate review by the WCP Selection Panel based on the Performance Matrix. Such an athlete may then be subject to a

change in their WCP programme level, or possible removal from the WCP, at the absolute discretion of the WCP Selection Panel; and

- c) where paragraph 6.8b (above) applies but the athlete continues to satisfy the eligibility criteria in stage 1, section 5.1 of the Paralympic WCP selection policy, the athlete will automatically be considered in alternative events for which they are eligible, assessed against the Performance Matrix. The WCP Selection Panel at their sole and absolute discretion, may choose to retain this individual and place them at any level on the WCP if it believes that the individual has the potential to successfully transfer to another class and/or discipline and win a medal at the Paralympic Games.

7. DISCIPLINARY ISSUES

- 7.1. If an athlete is in breach of the World Class Programme Performance Athlete Agreement between UK Athletics and the athlete, UK Athletics may in its absolute discretion suspend the athlete's WCP membership (including APA payments) until such time as the athlete remedies such breach or UK Athletics otherwise deems it appropriate to end the suspension.

- 7.2. In the event that an athlete:

- a) no longer satisfies the Eligibility Criteria.
- b) is in breach of this WCP Selection Policy.
- c) refuses to follow reasonable instructions from UK Athletics, including but not limited to in relation to training, recovery from illness/injury and selection of coach/medical provision.
- d) is in breach of the World Class Programme Performance Athlete Agreement
- e) in the reasonable opinion of UK Athletics has brought UK Athletics into disrepute or is otherwise guilty of Misconduct under UKA Disciplinary Rules.

- f) is in breach of the codes of conduct for athletes.
- g) fails to engage with their UK Athletics point(s) of contact (including medical).
- h) fails to provide information or evidence as to alignment (or lack of) to the agreed annual plan; or
- i) if any of the termination rights set out in the World Class Programme Performance Athlete Agreement are engaged,

UK Athletics reserves the right, following the application of a disciplinary process, in its absolute discretion at any time to terminate that individual's WCP membership (including right to an APA) immediately upon notice in writing (which shall include email).

For the avoidance of doubt, this provision permits termination by UK Athletics at any stage during a funding year.

8. LOSS OF PERFORMANCE

- 8.1. An athlete may be removed from the WCP in circumstances where:
- a) the Technical Director considers the athlete is making insufficient progress against the IAP and their agreed individual athlete plan and goals.
 - b) events are not attended without good reason; or
 - c) the Technical Director considers the athlete's training progress or race performance is deemed to be unacceptable against any criteria that have been set for the athlete or those linked to the level the athlete is admitted to the WCP as set out in the Selection Policy..
- 8.2. Before an athlete is removed from the WCP in accordance with paragraph 9.1 above, the Technical Director and Head of Paralympic Performance will meet with the athlete to discuss their concerns and the athlete will be given a period of at least one month to show the necessary improvement.

- 8.3. Where an athlete chooses to use medical support outside of the WCP, the athlete must keep UK Athletics regularly updated with their progress and injury/illness status. If they do not do so, or UK Athletics considers the medical treatment is likely to have a detrimental impact on recovery, performance or health, UK Athletics may remove the athlete from the WCP following a consultation with the athlete.

MISCELLANEOUS

9. ATHLETE FINANCIAL NEED ASSESSMENT

- 9.1. Means testing is applied to all APA awards to ensure UK Sport only targets resources where there is evidence of financial need. The principle of financial need underpins all public investment.
- 9.2. Means testing will apply to athletes whose total income (including APA) exceeds £65,000 p.a. Where this is the case awards will be reduced pound for pound above this threshold. Athletes who do not receive an APA following means testing are still required to sign the World Class Programme Performance Athlete Agreement.
- 9.3. Exceptional cases will be considered for applying a higher threshold where there is substantial evidence that the essential costs of pursuing Paralympic medal success in the sport exceeds £65,000 p.a.
- 9.4. Where the athlete declares that their income has been over £35,000 p.a. (excluding APA), the athlete will be required to provide further evidence of their income.
- 9.5. It is the athlete's responsibility to ensure that UK Sport is provided with accurate information on income. A series of validation checks are undertaken each year, and should it be found that inaccurate information has been provided, this may lead to the APA being withdrawn.
- 9.6. UK Sport reserves the right to conduct random checks and ask for further documentation from athletes above and

beyond the standard annual audit carried out by external parties, to validate an athlete's income declaration.

- 9.7. Athletes and NGBs should be aware that knowingly making false statements or failing to make a full and fair disclosure of information relevant to the financial needs assessment is both a breach of the UK Sport Eligibility Policy and may constitute fraud under the Fraud Act 2006. UK Sport takes the offence of fraud and related offences (including theft, corruption, and bribery) seriously and where any instance of fraud or an attempt to defraud, occurs UK Sport will take appropriate action, including reporting such conduct to the police.

10. ATHLETES IN RECEIPT OF STATE BENEFITS

- 10.1. Podium level athletes that are in receipt of means-tested benefits from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) will receive a reduced APA to enable them to continue receiving the benefits they are entitled to. These APAs are known as General Purpose Training Support (GPTS) APAs.
- 10.2. Where an athlete is eligible for government benefits, UK Sport would recommend applying for these prior to completing the APA application form in order that athletes may accurately reflect their true household income. This however is an athlete's choice and there is no expectation that athletes must apply for benefits.
- 10.3. UK Sport conducts a quadrennial review of the means-tested benefits currently paid by the DWP to ensure parity with GPTS APAs.

11. PREGNANCY

- 11.1. Being pregnant and an elite athlete should not be mutually exclusive. To ensure support is provided for athletes who wish to have a child whilst they are in

membership of the WCP and in receipt of an APA, the following UK Sport policy will apply:

- 11.2. Athletes in receipt of APA funding will remain eligible to access their full APA (subject to means testing) for the duration of the pregnancy at the APA level they were on at the time of becoming pregnant and for up to nine months post childbirth.
- 11.3. Continued access to the APA post childbirth will be dependent on:
- a) The athlete's intention to return to the sport and the programme being discussed and confirmed no later than six months post childbirth.
 - b) At the point where the intention of the athlete is clear, forming a mutually agreed plan/timetable for return to training and competition – this plan should acknowledge the athlete's experience of pregnancy, the impact on them physically and mentally and the nature of the event they are returning to; and
 - c) Monitoring, reviewing, and confirming that the athlete has made the necessary commitment to this plan and is on track to return.
- 11.4. If the level of commitment and or progress against this plan are not demonstrated, the athlete will be given notice and offered a period of transition before the APA funding stops (see Athletes Leaving the Programme).
- 11.5. At nine months post childbirth the potential of the athlete should be assessed and confirmed to UK Sport in order to continue to access the APA. It is important to note that this assessment should indicate the athlete's future medal potential and not necessarily performance outcomes.
- 11.6. An athlete who announces retirement from their sport during pregnancy or in the initial six months post childbirth, will not be given a further period of notice before the APA terminates.

- 11.7. In the event of complications either during the pregnancy or post childbirth, this policy will be as flexible as is reasonable to accommodate these circumstances on a case-by-case basis.
- 11.8. UK Sport has commissioned further research into athletes' experiences of pregnancy, with the aim of providing further guidance about how athletes should be supported through pregnancy and post childbirth. UK Sport reserves the right to adjust this pregnancy policy where the findings of this research suggest the policy should change.

12. TRANSITIONAL FUNDING AND WCP MEMBERSHIP

Athletes Joining the Programme

- 12.1. All athletes will participate in a comprehensive induction process when joining the WCP or when changing between levels of the Performance Pathway. Where athletes are new members of the programme and are receiving an APA for the first time, UK Athletics will ensure the athlete(s) are provided with sufficient support and opportunity to effectively transition into the programme.

Transition Between Events/Disciplines

- 12.2. Where an athlete is in receipt of a Podium level APA and transitions to a new event or discipline within Athletics, at the discretion of the WCP Selection Panel, a period of transitional APA funding can be agreed before the athlete is expected to meet the performance criteria within the new event or discipline. In these cases, at the discretion of the WCP Selection Panel and subject to the usual annual reviews by the WCP Selection Panel, the APA can be sustained at the current level (or at the Paris Potential level) for up to two years.

Transition Between Sports

- 12.3. Where an athlete is attempting to transfer between two sports, and is currently in receipt of an A, B, C, or Paris Potential APA, at the discretion of the WCP Selection Panel and subject to the usual annual reviews by the WCP Selection Panel, the athlete can be nominated for a transitional APA up to two years before being expected to meet the APA selection standards in the new sport.
- 12.4. At the discretion of the WCP Selection Panel and subject to the usual annual reviews by the WCP Selection Panel, the APA can be extended beyond 12 months where circumstances prevent an athlete achieving a result or performance, which could include:
- a) Injury, illness, or pregnancy (see above)
 - b) External factors such as cancelled competition opportunities
 - c) The sport's schedule for athlete selection not aligning to this timescale.
- 12.5. Athletes in receipt of an A level APA will receive a maximum award of A (£26,500 p.a.) and athletes in receipt of a B level APA will receive a maximum award of B (£21,500 p.a.) during this transitional period.

Athletes Leaving the Programme

- 12.6. A minimum of a one-month notice period will be provided to all athletes that are no longer nominated at Podium or Podium Potential level or will receive a reduction in APA funding as a consequence of the level at which they have been nominated. The notice period for athletes that are no longer nominated at Entry level is one month.
- 12.7. This period of notice will be within an athlete's current award term, i.e. athlete reviews will be conducted before APAs are due to expire to allow for this notice period and paperwork to be turned around.
- 12.8. In consultation with UK Sport, additional transitional funding can be offered at the

current grant level for a period of time dependent on the total continuous period of WCP membership. This additional transitional funding will be provided as follows:

>1 year but <2 years = 1-month transitional award

>2 years but <3 years = 2 months transitional award

>3 years = 3 months transitional award

- 12.9. Where appropriate, UK Athletics will provide continued access to essential services and support during the transitional period and specifically to medical services where this is necessary to support the treatment of a pre-existing medical condition.
- 12.10. Once an athlete leaves the WCP, they will no longer receive access to medical cover through AMS. However, AMS cover will continue for up to a maximum three months after the month their funding ceases for an existing medical claim and treatment to finish. No new claims can be opened within this three-month extension period.
- 12.11. Where an athlete is leaving the programme for disciplinary reasons, or due to a lack of engagement in the programme, UK Athletics and UK Sport in consultation, have the discretion to revoke any transitional funding.

13. TRAINING PARTNERS

- 13.1. Training partners are not eligible to receive APA funding.
- 13.2. Agreed essential training partners of priority athletes may be considered for some support/resource from the WCP at the discretion of the Technical Director.

14. PERIODIC REVIEW

- 14.1. This Additional Important Information and the UK Athletics World Class

Programme Selection Policy will be reviewed by the Technical Director annually in or around May to ensure it remains fair and efficient; takes account of any external rule or policy amendments; includes any relevant feedback from the selectors, athletes, coaches, and appeal panels.