



# UK ATHLETICS ATHLETES' COMMISSION – TERMS OF REFERENCE (2025)

## Introduction:

The UK Athletics Athletes Commission was established in order to ensure that there was an independent voice for GB&NI international athletes and an opportunity for those athletes who have experience in the high performance system in the UK, to share their perspectives on important issues and topics across the sport. The commission is intended to bring these views to UK Athletics and ensure they are heard at the highest levels of the sport. By adopting a collaborative approach, we aspire to create a strong positive organisation that contributes to our sport in the UK, Europe, and globally at all times. Together, we aim to build a positive future based on professionalism where both parties (UK Athletics and the Athletes Commission) act in the best interest of our sport.

## 1. Purpose

1.1 The UK Athletics Athletes' Commission ("the Commission") exists to:

1.1.1 Represent the voice of GB & NI international and World Class Programme (WCP) athletes and ensure systems are in place to listen to and act on feedback from athletes and participants.

1.1.2 Provide constructive athlete input and be a sounding board for key areas of high performance operations and wider operations as appropriate and as requested.

1.1.3 Act as a bridge for communication between international athletes and UK Athletics (UKA).

## 2. Objectives

2.1 The Commission will:

2.1.1 Promote the athlete voice and athlete perspectives on key issues affecting the sport, sharing insight with UKA.

2.1.2 Represent athlete feedback where required to the UKA Board and the Performance Team.

2.1.3 Promote and uphold the values of UK Athletics and specifically support the key elements relating to ethics and high performance behaviors as set out in the UKA Athlete Agreement.

2.1.4 Promote and support athlete welfare.

2.1.5 Engage with other athlete commissions / commission representatives. For example the WA AC, the EA AC, the BOA AC, the PGB AC (as outlined below) or the British Elite Athletes Association (BEAA) to ensure consistency in athlete voice and representation.



### **3. Membership and Composition**

3.1 The Commission will consist of:

3.1.1 Chair (appointed via open recruitment)

3.1.2 Up to 9 Full Members, of whom; a representative proportion (3-4 Full Members) shall be current WCP athletes (Olympic and Paralympic Pathway) and one of whom shall be Vice Chair (elected by the Commission)

3.1.3 Ex Officio Members (non-voting)

3.1.4 Additional Members

3.2 Eligibility for Membership:

3.2.1 All Full Members must be aged 18+ and have represented GB & NI in the last 10 years.

3.2.2 All Commission members must uphold the values of UKA and have no disciplinary or other record that in the reasonable view of the UKA Board should preclude them from membership.

3.3 Terms of Membership:

3.3.1 Members serve a four-year term, renewable once.

3.3.2 The Chair may serve up to two four-year terms, with the second term requiring approval of the UKA Board. The Chair may be removed by the UKA Board.

3.3.3 A Full Member may be removed by the UK Athletics Board or a vote of at least 75% of the other members for inactivity or conduct concerns.

3.4 Ex Officio Members:

3.4.1 The following individuals may attend meetings of the Commission in a non-voting capacity:

3.4.1.1 Current or former GB & NI athletes who are members of:

(a) The World Athletics Athletes' Commission (WA AC)

(b) The European Athletics Athletes' Commission (EA AC)

(c) The British Olympic Association Athletes' Commission (BOA AC)

(d) The ParalympicsGB Athletes' Commission (PGB AC)

3.4.2 Ex Officio Members may attend all meetings, contribute to discussions, and support the work of the Commission but will not hold voting rights.

3.5 Additional Members:



3.5.1 Up to a maximum of two Additional Members may be appointed, at the Commissions discretion, at any one time to ensure that the Commission represents and reflects the diversity of the athlete community and athletics disciplines.

3.5.2 All Additional Member appointments must be agreed and ratified to by UKA Board.

#### **4. Selection and Appointment**

4.1 The Chair is appointed via an open process (Appendix B).

4.2 The Vice Chair is a Full Member who is elected by the Commission from among its members.

4.3 Three to four Full Members will be current WCP athletes. All current WCP athletes will be asked to express an interest in joining the Commission. Following expressions of interest, Full Members will be selected jointly by the Chair of the Commission, the UKA Performance Director (or equivalent) and one additional member of the UKA Executive Team or UKA Board Member following such interview process as they decide upon.

4.4 Full Members appointed in accordance with paragraph 4.3 will have their Commission Membership automatically revoked if they are removed from the WCP. A replacement member will then be appointed using the process in paragraph 4.3 on a case by case basis.

4.5 The remaining Full Members of the Commission will be elected through an election process open to all eligible athletes (see Appendix A). All GB & NI international athletes who have competed within the last two years will be eligible to vote in Commission elections. Elections may not be required in 2025, subject to the outcome of the transitional arrangements set out below (Section 11).

#### **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

5.1 Chair: Leads the Commission, liaises with UKA leadership, and represents athlete views to the UKA Board and UK Members (note: additional responsibilities can be found as part of Appendix C)

5.2 Vice Chair: Supports the Chair and deputises when required.

5.3 Full Members: Be in contact with current GB&NI international athletes and WCP athletes and make fair representation of their views. Be abreast of the domestic and global athletics landscape and the UK Sport high performance system. Regularly attend Commission meetings, contribute constructively, and uphold confidentiality and integrity.

5.4 UKA: Where appropriate, shares plans and seeks input from the Commission and key members. Provides secretariat support, resources and visibility for the Commission as outlined in Section 8.



## 6. Meetings

6.1 At least one meeting of the Commission will be held every quarter (in person or online). The agenda and documentation will be circulated one week in advance of each meeting by the appointed secretariat or Commission Chair.

6.3 Decisions of the Commission will be made by simple majority. The Chair has a casting vote if required.

6.4 The quorum necessary for the transaction of business shall be a simple majority, more than half of the 'Full' Commission members.

6.5 Full Members who are current WCP athletes:

6.5.1 Should join Commission meetings where possible but are not obliged to join meetings where training or competition obligations clash. However, must attend at least 1 per calendar year.

6.5.2 Shall participate in feedback sessions with the UKA Performance Team as requested by the Performance Director, at least twice per year.

6.5.3 If requested by the WCP Performance Senior Leadership Team, shall act as a sounding board, offer feedback for any WCP or Performance related activity on an ad hoc basis.

6.5.4 Shall help the WCP to raise awareness, understanding of WCP specific activity/issues as requested.

6.6 The Secretariat: Shall minute the proceedings and decisions of all meetings of the Commission, including recording the names of those in attendance.

6.6.1 Draft minutes of the Commission meetings shall be circulated promptly to all members of the Commission.

## 7. Reporting

7.1 The Chair shall be a Director of UKA and shall report to the UKA Board on the work of the Commission at each Board meeting. This will typically be via a formal Board paper submitted in advance of each Board meeting.

7.2 A public annual report will be shared on the UKA website to inform the athlete community of the work of the Commission.

## 8. Resources

8.1 UKA will provide to the Commission:

8.1.1 Secretariat and logistical support.

8.1.2 Travel and accommodation expenses as per UKA policy.



8.1.3 A dedicated budget for Commission activities and the development and training of members.

8.1.4 Dedicated page on the UK Athletics website to promote the work of the Commission.

## **9. Code of Conduct**

9.1 All members must:

9.1.1 Declare any conflicts of interest (in line with the UKA policy).

9.1.2 Maintain appropriate confidentiality.

9.1.3 Adhere to the Commission's Code of Conduct (see Appendix D) and relevant UKA policies.

## **10. Review**

10.1 These Terms of Reference may be amended and updated from time to time. Any updates are required to be approved by the UKA Board. At a minimum, these terms will be reviewed at least every two years by the Commission Chair and a UKA senior executive.

## **11. Transition Provisions (2025 Commission Launch)**

11.1 To support the transition to the revised 2025 Commission structure:

11.1.1 All current Commission members whose terms expire in 2025 will conclude their service and will not form part of the new Commission.

11.1.2 Current Commission members whose terms renew in 2025 will be invited to continue as members, provided they wish to do so and remain eligible under the criteria set out in this document. They shall be eligible to serve one term only.

11.1.3 All new appointments from 2025 onward will follow the updated process. Elections will take place only if required to fill any remaining spaces on the Commission.



## Appendix A: Nomination & Election of Full Members

- Vacant elected positions (up to 4 in total) will be advertised publicly (online via the UKA website and other associated websites, as appropriate), and athletes will be invited to nominate themselves with a brief personal statement.
- Voting will be open to all athletes who have represented GB & NI in international competitions in the past two years.
- If more candidates apply than places available, an online confidential vote will be held.
- Elected members will serve a four-year term and must meet all general eligibility criteria.
- By-elections may be held to fill vacancies with more than 6 months of term remaining.



## Appendix B: Chairperson Appointment Process

### 1. Application Process:

- The role will be advertised publicly with clear eligibility and role expectations.
- Applicants will submit a personal statement and evidence of relevant experience via the application process to be managed and supported by UKA HR team.

### 2. Selection Panel:

- Comprised of:
  - UKA President
  - UKA CEO or Performance Director
  - Two WCP athletes (selected by the Chair and Performance Director)
- In case of a tie, the UKA President has the casting vote.

### 3. Term:

- The Chair serves a four-year term, renewable once. A Chair-elect may be identified one year in advance to support transition.

### 4. Vacancies:

- A new Chair will be appointed using the same process to fill any unexpected vacancy.



## Appendix C: Commission Chairperson: Roles and Responsibilities

In addition to the details contained in the 'UKA Athletes Commission Chairperson Role Description', responsibilities of the Chairperson will include, but not be limited to;

### Chairperson:

- To chair meetings of the Athletes Commission
- Ensure the Athletes Commission fulfils its responsibilities and obligations in line with and as outlined in the groups Terms of Reference
- Is a recognised member of UK Members as an athletes' representative
- Ensure that, via the Commission, the views of athletes and members are heard, through;
  - Regular dialogue with the CEO and Performance Director and/or other senior executives
  - Providing regular updates to the UK Athletics Board as requested
- Likewise, ensuring feedback, and information generally, from Board meetings in relation to matters relevant to the Commission is made available to all Commission members to enable open and transparent discussion and co-ordinating the views, recommendations and advice of the Commission on specific topics or questions
- Contribute to working groups, committees, consultation processes and otherwise as requested by UK Athletics
- Provide regular updates and communication to the athlete community on the work of the group to increase engagement and visibility of the work of the Commission
- Generally ensure the efficient operation of the Commission in its work
- Where the Commission identify that UK Athletics are not engaging with the Commission as expected through these terms of reference then the Chair of the Commission should raise these concerns with the Chair of the Board of UK Athletics for resolution.
- At all times act in a manner which encapsulates the UK Athletics company values.

**Note:** When the Commission Chair is unavailable the duties above will be carried out by their nominated representative from the Commission (typically the Vice Chair).



## **Appendix D: Athlete Commission Members: Code of Conduct**

This Code of Conduct applies to all UKA Athlete Commission Members (Commission Members) appointed in accordance with the Athlete Commission Terms of Reference.

1. Commission Members must uphold the duties required of them by UK Athletics and adhere to relevant policies and procedures of UK Athletics, and by relevant regulatory bodies.
2. Commission Members shall act on an informed basis, in good faith with due diligence and care. Commission Members must act in the best interests of athletes, the sport of athletics in the UK and of UK Athletics at all times.
3. Commission Members must always conduct themselves with the highest professional and ethical standards. Commission Members must act with honesty and integrity when interacting with athletes, UK Athletics staff and stakeholders.
4. Commission Members must not bring UK Athletics into disrepute. Should a Commission Member be subject to a disciplinary process and suspended from the sport, that Commission Member should notify UK Athletics and must stand down from the Athlete Commission position either until the end of the suspension period, or the end of their term of office (at which point the nomination process would apply) – whichever is the shorter.
5. Commission Members must keep all discussions and documents confidential to the Athlete Commission meetings in which they featured. Commission Members must not disclose or discuss any confidential matters with third parties unless prior written agreement has been given by UK Athletics.
6. Where Commission Members are responsible for reaching joint decisions (including circumstances requiring a vote to finalise a matter), Commission Members are expected to provide their full support for the decisions of the Athlete Commission once issued. Where permission is given to discuss such a matter, only the agreed position can be conveyed to any third party by a Commission Member.
7. Commission Members must make every effort to attend all Athlete Commission meetings. If, however, a good reason exists for non-attendance the Commission Member shall make every effort to ensure they review the meeting papers and provide their views or comments to the Chairperson of the meeting prior to the meeting taking place.