

National Academy Player Selection Policy

1. Introduction

The National Academies will provide inspiring, pro-style training environments for players normally aged 14-18. There will be two National Academies, both of which will start at the beginning of the 2019 Autumn term. GB National Tennis Academy at the University of Stirling will start in August 2019 and Loughborough University National Tennis Academy will start in September 2019.

This document outlines the selection policy and process for players who wish to attend a National Academy. To give players and parents/legal guardian enough time to prepare for the start date of each of the programmes this process will commence in January 2019.

2. Number of places

In 2019/20 there will be a maximum of 8 places available at each of the National Academies. This means a maximum of 16 players may be selected for a National Academy starting in August/September 2019. The selection panel are not obliged to fill all the places available and the composition of players at each National Academy will be determined by the process outlined in section 8.

3. Eligibility

To be considered for a place at a National Academy players must be of an eligible age (3.1), be eligible to represent Great Britain (3.2) and have met the requisite performance level requirements (3.3), as follows:



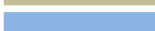
3.1 Age eligibility

For a player to be considered eligible they must be born between the dates outlined below. This will normally mean players entering Years 9-12 (or S2-S5 in Scotland) on 1 September 2019 will be considered eligible. Differences in age eligibility between the academies exist due to the differences in academic school years between England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. Player age eligibility by academy is as follows:

- For Loughborough University National Tennis Academy - born between 1 September 2002 and 31 August 2006 inclusive.
- For GB National Tennis Academy at the University of Stirling - born between 1 January 2003 and 31 December 2006 inclusive.

Table 1 below shows age eligibility for each National Academy dependent on the player's month and year of birth. The school year that the player will be entering (including Scottish school years) on 1 September 2019 is indicated for information.

Key:

	Eligible for Loughborough University National Tennis Academy only
	Eligible for both academies
	Eligible for GB National Tennis Academy at the University of Stirling only

Year of birth	Month of birth											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2001												
2002												
2003	Going into year 12 / S5 on 1/9/19								Going into year 11 / S5 on 1/9/19			
2004	Going into year 11 / S4 on 1/9/19								Going into year 10 / S4 on 1/9/19			
2005	Going into year 10 / S3 on 1/9/19								Going into year 9 / S3 on 1/9/19			
2006	Going into year 9 / S2 on 1/9/19								Going into S2 on 1/9/19			
2007												

In exceptional circumstances, players who are younger than the age range outlined above (but not younger than 11 years on 1 September 2019) may be considered. These players must fulfil the requirements set out in sections 3.2 and 3.3 and be able to have the appropriate educational requirements, pastoral care and / or parental supervision facilitated dependent on the player's age.

In addition, players who are born between 1 September and 31 December 2002 and are educated in England, Wales or Northern Ireland may still be considered for a place at GB National Tennis Academy at the University of Stirling provided they fulfil the requirements set out in sections 3.2 and 3.3.

3.2 Eligible to represent Great Britain

In addition to meeting the age eligibility requirements outlined above, players must either hold a British passport (and be eligible to represent Great Britain) or be eligible for a British passport. Players who do not currently hold a British passport but are eligible for one will be asked as part of their application to provide: 1) evidence on how they are eligible for a British passport; and 2) where they are in the process of obtaining it.

3.3 Performance level requirements

In addition to 3.1 and 3.2, to be eligible for a place at a National Academy a player must fulfil either of the requirements outlined in 3.3.1 or 3.3.2.

3.3.1 National Age-Group Programme player award recipients

All eligible players who are in receipt of a National Age-Group Programme Annual Player Scholarship award between 1 January and 31 December 2019 will automatically be considered by the selection panel for a place at the National Academy unless the player (and parents/legal guardian) have expressed that they do not want to be considered for a place at a National Academy.

3.3.2 Players not in receipt of a National Age-Group Programme Annual Player Scholarship award (including players based overseas)

All eligible players who have been selected for at least one national camp or official trip between 1 January 2018 and 28 February 2019 will be considered by the selection panel for a place at the National Academy if they receive a minimum of two nominations from the following individuals (together the Nominating Coaches):

- the LTA National Age Group Coaches; and / or
- members of the LTA Men's and Women's coaching teams; and / or
- the Head Coach of the Loughborough University National Tennis Academy; and / or
- the Head Coach of the GB National Tennis Academy at the University of Stirling.

For the avoidance of doubt, a player can be nominated by more than one of the LTA National Age Group Coaches or members of the LTA Men's and Women's coaching teams.

Players who have been invited to attend National Age Group activity but have not accepted the invitation will be considered.

The Nominating Coaches will put forward players who they believe have the potential to be selected for a National Academy place, with nominations based on observations at the following events and/or activity between Monday 1 October 2018 and Monday 18 February 2019 (the nominating window):

- Tennis Europe and ITF junior or pro circuit events;
- LTA grade 1 and 2 domestic events;
- National Age-Group Programme camps and trips; and
- Regional Training and player and/or centre visits.

After the nomination window has closed, the selection panel (as outlined in section 7.1) will convene to confirm those players who will be considered for selection. Only players who will be considered for selection will be notified. It is possible that more players will be considered for selection than there are places available at the National Academies.

5. Communication of players considered for selection

Each player who will be considered for selection will receive formal notification in writing, with a National Academy application pack by Friday 1 March 2019. If a player does not receive an application pack by Saturday 2 March 2019 then they have not been shortlisted to be considered for a place at a National Academy in year 1 of the programmes.

This pack will include information on each Academy and an invitation to visit each National Academy for an open day in March 2019, which will be arranged by each National Academy in partnership with the LTA (see dates below). It is recommended that all players (along with their parents/legal guardian) who have been shortlisted and have an interest in attending a National Academy visit both sites to inform their decision making.

Visiting each National Academy will also provide the opportunity for players and parents/legal guardian to meet the National Academy Coaching team. The National Academy Head Coaches will also be in attendance at targeted events in January and February 2019 which will give players and parents/legal guardian the opportunity to do the same. The National Academy Head Coaches may also visit a number of Regional Player Development Centres (RPDCs) in January and February 2019.

In the interests of ensuring availability to attend the National Academy open days we recommend that players hold the following dates in their diaries:

- Saturday 9 March 2019 – GB National Tennis Academy at the University of Stirling open day (1 of 2).
- Friday 15 March 2019 – GB National Tennis Academy at the University of Stirling open day (2 of 2).

- Monday 4 March 2019 – Loughborough University National Tennis Academy open day (1 of 2).
- Saturday 16 March 2019 – Loughborough University National Tennis Academy open day (2 of 2).

6. Confirmation of player interest

Having had the opportunity to visit both National Academy sites, players in consideration for selection (and parents/legal guardian) must then decide if they would like to apply for a place at a National Academy. If they choose to do so, they must complete the National Academy application by Monday 25 March 2019. Within this application they will be asked to specify:

1. If they are applying for a place at both Loughborough University National Tennis Academy and GB National Tennis Academy at the University of Stirling (and if so in order of preference);
2. If they are only applying for a place at Loughborough University National Tennis Academy; or
3. If they are only applying for a place at GB National Tennis Academy at the University of Stirling.

This is an important element of the process as, if a player only applies for one National Academy and there are more applications than there are places available, the player **may not** be offered a place. If a player applies to both National Academies, they may not be successful in achieving a place at their first choice. They **will be** eligible to be considered for a place at their second choice if there are still places available and depending on the selection panel's assessment of their performance against the factors set out in 7.2 below.

7. The selection process

Once players have confirmed their interest in being selected for a National Academy, players will be evaluated by the selection panel.

7.1 Selection panel

The selection panel will consist of the following (or their nominees):

- LTA Performance Director
- LTA Head of National Performance Pathway
- LTA Head of Men's Tennis
- LTA Head of Women's Tennis
- Loughborough University National Tennis Academy Head Coach
- Loughborough University National Tennis Academy Manager
- GB National Tennis Academy Head Coach
- GB National Tennis Academy Manager

At the discretion of the Performance Director, the selection panel may also have an independent professional tennis expert (typically a leading coach, senior administrator or former player). An independent member of the panel will have a vote in the selection process. The Performance Director will chair the selection panel. The Chair may nominate additional members of the LTA Performance Team to the selection meeting to provide further relevant experience. If a member of the LTA Performance Team is invited by the Performance Director to be on the panel to provide advice and guidance then they will not have a vote.

A member of the LTA's Legal team may attend the meeting to advise on procedural issues and adherence to the policy but shall not have voting rights. A member of the LTA Performance Team may also be invited by the Chair to attend and record selection decisions.

7.2 Evaluation of player suitability

The selection panel will use its professional opinion to consider which players have the greatest future potential to meet the Pro Scholarship Programme (PSP) selection criteria between the ages of 16-18 (in accordance with the PSP policy – for more details [click here](#)). All players that fulfil the eligibility criteria set out in section 3 of this policy and who have applied for a place at a National Academy will be considered. The panel will consider the factors listed below (and when doing so will take into account any aspects that may influence these factors, such as their age and physical maturation, their injury and training history, and/or their lifestyle and training environment):

1. The player applies themselves fully in training and competition and has a willingness to learn and a desire to be a professional player in the future.
2. The player has an all-round game which can be developed into a clearly defined game style that could be successful at the next stage of the pathway.
3. The player has emerging strengths which can be developed into weapons that could be successful at the next stage of the pathway.
4. The player has a robust athletic foundation which can be developed into physical attributes that could positively influence the outcome of matches at the next stage of the pathway.
5. The player consistently demonstrates resilience, smart decision making and a high level of focus in matches that could make them successful at the next stage of the pathway.
6. The player demonstrates the ability to consistently win matches and beat players of a higher level than themselves.

8. Allocation of places

The selection panel will then allocate places to each of the National Academy programmes (with a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 8 places available at each National Academy). In allocating places, the following will be taken into consideration (in no particular order):

1. Which National Academy each player has applied for;
2. The outcome of the selection meeting discussion;
3. The minimum number of players required at each Academy to create a viable programme;
4. The grouping of players by age and gender to create workable groups; and
5. The expert judgement and preferences of the Head Coaches of both National Academies.

If following selection, but prior to starting at a National Academy, a player behaves inappropriately or in a manner that it brings the reputation of a National Academy into disrepute, both National Academies will retain the right to rescind the offer of a place even if there are spaces available. Such decisions will be made solely by the Head Coach and / or the Academy Manager of Loughborough University National Tennis Academy or GB National Tennis Academy and not the selection panel.

9. Offer of a place

All players who applied for a place at a National Academy will receive notification in writing by Wednesday 10 April 2019 which will outline:

1. That they have been offered a place at either Loughborough University National Tennis Academy or GB National Tennis Academy at the University of Stirling; or
2. They have not been offered a place at either academy.

Players who have been offered a place will have a maximum of 14 days to accept the offer, however, offers will be subject to the outcome of any appeal against a selection decision in accordance with the appeal procedure set out below (even where such offer has been accepted).

Once a place has been accepted then more details will be sent to the player and their parents/legal guardian outlining in detail the induction process and associated dates.

10. Appeals

Applicants who have been considered for selection but have not then been offered a place at a National Academy are entitled to appeal against the selection panel's decision. Such an appeal is to be made in writing (with full reasons) within 72 hours of receiving the decision and sent to Sophie.Disley@lta.org.uk. This appeal will then be reviewed by a Panel that will be chaired by a member of the LTA's Executive Team and will be made up of one representative from each of the LTA, Loughborough University and Tennis Scotland who have not been part of the player selection process.

An appeal can only be made on one or both of the following grounds:

- a. There has been a failure by the selection panel to follow this selection policy (i.e. there has been a procedural defect); and / or
- b. The decision has been reached on the basis of an error of fact.

The Appeals Panel can decide either:

1. To set aside the selection panel's decision as it was based on an error of fact or procedurally flawed and remit the matter to the selection panel for reconsideration; or
2. To uphold the selection panel's decision.

Should a decision be set aside and be re-considered by the selection panel which has an effect on a selection decision taken in relation to another player, that decision in relation to the other player may also be re-considered and changed if necessary.

11. Late applicants

For the year 2019/2020, if less than 16 places have been filled, players will be able to re-apply one month before the National Academy programmes start. Only players who were considered for selection will be eligible to make a late application. This may include players who were on the shortlist but chose not to confirm their interest and apply, or players who only applied to one of the National Academies but were not awarded a place due to more players applying to that programme than there were places available. A late application place will only be offered if the school can accommodate the player, both from a timetabling and a housing perspective, at the last minute. If more players re-apply than there are places available then the selection panel will consider all late applicants and use their expert judgement of those most suitable for a place at a National Academy.

12. Key contacts

Should you have a query regarding the National Academy Player Selection Policy, please email Playerpathway@lta.org.uk. If you have any queries regarding player nominations, please contact the National Age-Group Coach for your region:

First Name	Last Name	Region	Email Address
Chris	Wilkinson	South West & South Wales	chris.wilkinson@lta.org.uk
Alex	Lisiecki	East	alex.lisiecki@lta.org.uk
Katie	O'Brien	South East	katie.obrien@lta.org.uk
Martin	Weston	Midlands	martin.weston@lta.org.uk

Richard	Plews	North & North Wales	richard.plews@lta.org.uk
Ellinore	Lightbody	Scotland	ellinore.lightbody@tennisscotland.org
Alastair	Lawrance	Overseas players	Alastair.Lawrance@lta.org.uk

Appendix 1 – key dates in the National Academy player selection process

A table of key dates is provided to show the timeline for the steps within the National Academy player selection process. Dates may be subject to change and any changes will be communicated as required.

Date	Activity
18 Jan 2019	Player selection policy published
By the end of Feb 2019	Panel meeting – player shortlist confirmed
By 1 Mar 2019	Confirmation of players considered for selection and application packs sent to shortlisted players
Mar 2019	National Academy open days (available for shortlisted players only). <u>GB National Tennis Academy at the University of Stirling open days:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saturday 9 March 2019 • Friday 15 March 2019 <u>Loughborough University National Tennis Academy open days:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monday 4 March 2019 • Saturday 16 March 2019
By 27 Mar 2019	Deadline for player applications to be submitted
By 5 Apr 2019	Panel meeting – player selections made
By 10 Apr 2019	Selection decisions confirmed with players
By 23 Apr 2019	Selected players confirm they will accept their National Academy place
Aug 2019	GB National Tennis Academy at the University of Stirling programme starts
Sept 2019	Loughborough University National Tennis Academy programme starts

Appendix 2 – National Academy player selection process:

The flow diagram below is designed to show the stages in the selection process visually. This does not replace the written policy which would always override any discrepancy between the two documents.

