

National Age Group Programme Scholarships Selection Policy for U14

1. Aim

The National Age Group Programme U14 (NAGP) is a key stepping stone for junior players to develop into full-time professionals. Delivered as a series of camps and trips, along with a structured individual development programme (IDP), it focuses on providing transformational training and competition opportunities to Britain's highest potential juniors. The programme is geared towards the player's long-term development, with the aim of supporting them on the journey toward selection for a National Academy and the Pro-Scholarship Programme (PSP).

This document describes the criteria and process for selection for the NAGP Annual Player Scholarships only (referred to in this document as "the NAGP"). This document is subject to annual review and may be updated intermittently.

2. Benefits

We will work in collaboration with the player and their team to establish and support the delivery of a world class IDP. Those players selected for the NAGP will be eligible to:

- Receive a funding grant of up to £10,000 to support their coaching programme;
- Receive a £3,000 reduction on fees at a Regional Player Development Centre;
- Receive free of charge access to the LTA's Regional Training;
- Receive frequent visits per year from their designated LTA National Age-Group Coach;
- Receive Sports Science / Sports Medicine support; and
- Invitations to attend National and International camps.

3. Number of places

There are a maximum number of NAGP places. In 2019 there will be places on the programme for up to 16 players. The Panel appointed will consider players based on these figures, but are not obliged to fill every available place.

Where possible, places will be split equally across boys and girls. This is subject to the number of players who meet the criteria. In the event that there are fewer players of a particular gender than places available, the remaining NAGP places may be taken up by the other gender.

Acceptance of a place on the NAGP is encouraged but optional. If a player chooses to decline the offer for any reason they will not be restricted from selection to represent Great Britain, but there will be no form of programme support.

4. Junior representation for Great Britain

Decisions made by the Panel are made in isolation from any decision in respect of selection for National Team events, including Summer Cup, Winter Cup and European Championships. Players do not need to be on the NAGP to be considered for selection for these events. Furthermore, selection for these events does not automatically mean that a player will be offered a place on the NAGP. Further information on the selection for these events will be published on the LTA website.

5. Player eligibility

For 2019, to be eligible for the NAGP, players must be:

- Born in 2005, 2006 or 2007; and
- Eligible to represent Great Britain.

Non British passport holders

Those players who do not currently hold a British passport, but who are eligible for one, will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Such players who are interested in a place on the NAGP must email playerpathway@lta.org.uk by 9 November 2018 and provide: 1) evidence on how they are eligible for a British passport, 2) where they are in the process of obtaining a British passport, and 3) details of their tennis background.

6. Consideration for selection

Existing players

All players who were awarded an NAGP agreement in 2018 will be automatically considered for selection if they remain eligible for the programme as outlined in point 5.

New players

The Panel will consider those (providing they are eligible – see section 5) who have achieved the following requirements:

- They were selected for a National Camp between January 2018 and the date of selection; or
- They were selected for an Official Trip between January and September 2018 – see Table 1.

Table 1: List of eligible LTA Official Trips

Squad	Eligible trips – all dates are 2018
U12	Tennis Europe Winter Cup U12 (January); Open Super 12 Auray (February); Lampo Trophy (July); Tennis Europe Nations Challenge (July/August).
U14	Tennis Europe Winter Cup (February); Croatia Tennis Europe U14 (April); Slovenia Tennis Europe U14 (May); Messina Tennis Europe U14 (June); Tennis Europe Summer Cup U14 (July); Tennis Europe European Champs U14: August; Waiblingen & Ulm Tennis Europe U14 (July/August).

Performance limiting factors

A 'performance limiting factor' is an injury or illness (or combination of injuries and illnesses) which results in a significant interruption or impact upon playing for at least three months – intermittent or continuous – in any single year. Those considered for selection that have had a performance limiting injury during 2018 may be required to provide the following details: 1) details of the injury including the full period missed, and, 2) any medical / physio reports confirming the injury. If this information is required, players will be contacted by a member of the LTA Performance Team.

The Head of National Performance (NP) Pathway, in consultation with the Head of Science and Medicine, will consider the evidence and impact of the injury and decide whether in the absence of this factor they believe that the player would likely have met the above criteria.

7. Selection process

Panel

All decisions are made by a panel chaired by the Head of (NP) Pathway. The Lead National Age-Group Coach and additional representation from within the LTA Performance Team will form the remainder of the Panel. The Panel will consist of a minimum of three members.

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.

The Panel will exercise its discretion fairly and without bias in making its decision using the procedures set out in this document.

Evaluation of player suitability

If a player fulfils the requirements in section 5 and 6, they will be evaluated against the criteria below, with consideration given to the player's future performance potential and their capability to be selected for a National Academy (within 1 to 2 years) and the PSP (within 3 to 4 years):

1. **Game Style:** The player has the all-court game to be successful now and at the next stage of the pathway;
2. **Head:** The player demonstrates good decisions, problem solving abilities and the focus required to win matches;
3. **Heart:** The player's drive and attitude shows a desire to succeed and continually develop;
4. **Legs:** The player's physical attributes and physiological abilities positively contribute to their performances;
5. **Weapons:** The player has an emerging strength that has the potential to become a weapon in the future;
6. **Results:** The player has gained competitive results at national grade 1 and 2 competitions.

When evaluating a player against the criteria, the Panel will reflect on the following:

- Performance at a National Camp between January 2018 and the selection date;
- Performance at Regional Training between March 2018 and the selection date;
- Existing scouting data and match reports from matches in 2018; and
- Results in Grade 1 and 2 national competitions in 2018.

The Panel will discuss factors that may limit or enhance future performance potential in the context of the criteria set out above. This may include a player's maturational status, time competing in tennis, and whether their programme is aligned with the goals of the NAGP.

Where the Panel are unable to reach an agreement the Head of NP Pathway will have the final decision, taking into consideration the evidence presented and the deliberations of the Panel.

Calculating the level of support

Once selection decisions have been reached, the Panel will consider the level of financial grant that will be offered to each successful player.

The level of the financial grant (up to a maximum of £10,000 per annum) will take into account the age of the player as well as consideration of the training and competition plan agreed in the profiling session and the overall NAGP budget.

A summary of the selection process in visual form is at appendix 1.

8. Agreement and Individual Development Plan

All selected players must sign the LTA's NAGP Annual Player Agreement in order to receive any benefits selected players are eligible to receive. If players would like to know more about this prior to entering the selection process then please contact Sophie Disley (Sophie.disley@lta.org.uk).

All players on the NAGP will create an individual development plan (IDP) containing a set of individualised development objectives. These objectives will be established by a National Age-Group Coach, in discussion with players and their coaching team, and are intended to show whether the player is achieving the standards and progress necessary to show that they are on track to gain selection for the next stage of The Player Pathway. All objectives will be set at the discretion of the LTA.

9. Key dates

- Non British passport holders need to provide information by 9 November 2018.

- The Panel will meet on or around the 28 November 2018 to consider player selections.
- All players will be advised by 3 December 2018 if they will be offered a place on the NAGP.
- The NAGP Induction camp will take place at the NTC from the 5 -9 January 2019.

10. Appeals

The LTA operate a formal appeal procedure for challenging NAGP selection decisions (including deselection and non-renewal of an NAGP place). The Appeals Procedure must be instigated within 72 hours of the player receiving notification regarding their non-selection on to the NAGP.

Such an appeal is to be made in writing to the Performance Director (the Appeal Chair) (or their nominee) of the LTA but only on one of the following grounds:

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

The Appeal Chair shall consider the player's appeal and may have a member of the LTA Legal Team in attendance to advise on this policy and its application. The Appeal Chair can decide:

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 of the player's contractual status to the selection panel; 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.

Appendix 1: National Age Group Programme

Selection Policy Flowchart:

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.

