

## LTA Pro Scholarship Programme Selection Policy

### 1. Introduction

This policy explains how players will be selected to the Pro Scholarship Programme (PSP). The following players are eligible to apply:

- Male and female players aged between 16 and 24 (inclusive) on 31/12/18; and
- Male and female players aged 15 or younger on 31/12/18 who meet the shortlisting criteria

Players selected for the PSP will be required to enter into a formal player grant funding agreement with the LTA which will detail their grant, their responsibilities and their commitments to the LTA's PSP.

Players attending a UK / US university are not eligible to apply for the PSP.

Players who have earned more than US\$1 million (as published on the ATP / WTA website) are not eligible to apply.

### 2. Consideration for selection (shortlisting)

To be considered for selection, players must meet both the shortlisting ranking criteria (2.1) and the minimum physical standard (2.2). Only players who fulfil both of these requirements will be considered by the selection panel unless there are exceptional circumstances (2.3).

#### 2.1 Shortlisting ranking criteria

Any players who have met the following ranking criteria at any point between 31<sup>st</sup> July and 30<sup>th</sup> October 2018 (inclusive) will be considered for selection if they have also met the minimum physical standards outlined at 2.2. The ages referred to in the tables below are the age of the player on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018. These shortlisting targets have been established using multiple evidence sources (as outlined in appendix 1) and suggest a player is on a trajectory to reach the top 200 ATP / WTA singles ranking. Based on the evidence, these targets also reflect the difference between men's and women's tennis and the current distribution of players of each age and gender within each of the ranking brackets on the ITF, ATP and WTA rankings. For the avoidance of doubt, players who have met the ranking targets but do not meet the minimum physical standard outlined in 2.2 will not be shortlisted.

#### Women

Age	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Shortlisting criteria	WTA 800 or ITF 50	WTA 650 or ITF 25	WTA 500	WTA 350	WTA 325	WTA 300	WTA 250	WTA 200	WTA 200

#### Men

Age	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Shortlisting criteria	ATP 1250 or ITF 75	ATP 950 or ITF 30	ATP 900 or ITF 10	ATP 550	ATP 450	ATP 350	ATP 300	ATP 250	ATP 200

Players who have met these criteria (and the minimum physical requirements outlined in 2.2) must confirm via e-mail to Sophie Disley ([Sophie.disley@lta.org.uk](mailto:Sophie.disley@lta.org.uk)) that they would like to be

considered for selection by 5pm on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> October. For all key dates in this selection process, please see appendix 5.

## **2.2 Physical requirements for shortlisting**

All players who have met the shortlisting ranking targets (2.1) must then also meet the minimum physical standard (within 16 weeks prior of the selection meeting). This has been included in the shortlisting process to demonstrate the value the LTA place on athleticism and movement and to provide confidence in the player's capacity to tolerate the expected demands of the PSP. If a player does not meet the minimum standard outlined below they will not be shortlisted for consideration.

The minimum physical standard is linked to the LTA shuttle test (as described in appendix 2). Whilst this test is not meant to represent 'tennis specific fitness' it is used for this purpose as it gives the player the opportunity to display the three key physical attributes of acceleration, change of direction and endurance which players need to display in both training and matches.

The minimum standards on the LTA shuttle test are:

**Women:** less than 170 seconds to complete the test; and

**Men:** less than 160 seconds to complete the test

These times have been set within 5% of the current PSP average times.

All players who have met, or expect to meet the shortlisting criteria (based on their current ranking trajectory) by the application deadline (Friday 26<sup>th</sup> October) must complete the LTA physical testing protocol between 3<sup>rd</sup> September and 26<sup>th</sup> October 2018. Players can only complete the testing protocol once. Testing slots will be available on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> September; and 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> October. Players should contact Sam Kirk ([Samantha.kirk@lta.org.uk](mailto:Samantha.kirk@lta.org.uk)) to arrange a date for testing to take place. Players should also notify Sam if they are unable to make any of the proposed testing dates to see if it is possible to arrange an alternative date. Players must have been tested at the National Tennis Centre within 16 weeks prior of the selection date to be considered for the PSP, (i.e. between 24<sup>th</sup> July and 13<sup>th</sup> November 2018).

## **2.3 Exceptional circumstances**

If a player has had a long term injury / illness (minimum of 3 months) during 2018, or has missed a minimum of 3 months of the 2018 season for a non-performance reason then they must supply in writing to the Performance Director, the Head of Pro Tour Pathway and the Head of Science and Medicine (by 5pm on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> October via e-mail to [sophie.disley@lta.org.uk](mailto:sophie.disley@lta.org.uk)):

- Details of the injury / issue including the full period missed; and
- Medical / physio or other reports confirming the injury and / or reason for absence

The Performance Director, the Head of Pro Tour Pathway, the Head of Science and Medicine and the Head of Men's / Women's Tennis will then consider the evidence and impact of the injury or issue and decide whether this factor alone prevented the player from meeting the shortlisting targets. If that is deemed to be the case then the player will be shortlisted due to exceptional circumstances. If not, then they will be notified accordingly. For the avoidance of doubt, players with exceptional circumstances do not need to have met either the ranking targets in 2.1 or the minimum physical standards in 2.2.

All shortlisted players will then be considered for selection by the selection panel.

### 3. The selection process

#### 3.1 The selection panel

The selection panel will comprise of the Performance Director and the following (or their nominees):

- Head of Men's Tennis
- Head of Women's Tennis
- Head of Pro Tour Pathway

The selection panel may also have an independent professional tennis expert (typically a leading coach, senior administrator or former player). The Performance Director will chair the selection panel. The chair may nominate additional members of the LTA Performance Team to the selection panel to provide further relevant experience from time to time. If invited by the Performance Director to formally sit on the panel then they will have a vote.

A member of the LTA's legal team shall attend meetings of the panel 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 to record selection decisions.

#### 3.2 Selection criteria

All players shortlisted for the PSP will be considered by the selection panel in a formal selection meeting on or around Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2018. Each player will be considered against two types of criteria:

- Type 1:– a set of ranking targets which suggest the player is on the right trajectory to reach the top 100; and
- Type 2:– a set of development based criteria which take into account the player's overall development profile.

There are two ways the player can meet the selection criteria:

- 1) The player achieves the Type 1 criteria plus two of the Type 2 criteria (excluding number 6).
- 2) The player doesn't achieve the Type 1 criteria but does achieve five of the Type 2 criteria.

##### *Type 1:*

Players must have achieved the Type 1 criteria at any point between the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2018 and the date of the selection meeting (inclusive) (the ages referred to in the table below are the age of the player on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018). Type 1 criteria are designed to be more challenging than the shortlisting criteria as using the available evidence they suggest a player is on a trajectory to reach the top 100 ATP / WTA singles ranking (and not the top 200 ATP / WTA singles ranking as per the shortlisting criteria).

##### **Women**

Age	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Type 1 target	WTA 600 or ITF 30	WTA 500 or ITF 10	WTA 375	WTA 275	WTA 250	WTA 225	WTA 175	WTA 150	WTA 150

## Men

Age	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Type 1 target	ATP 1000 or ITF 50	ATP 800 or ITF 10	ATP 600	ATP 450	ATP 350	ATP 275	ATP 225	ATP 175	ATP 175

### Type 2:

The following Type 2 criteria will be applied with consideration to the objective of the PSP (for British players to reach the top 100 ATP / WTA singles ranking):

1. **Game style:** The player has consistently demonstrated a clearly defined game style that is tracking towards the style norms for that game style in either men's / women's tennis at Tour level.
2. **Weapons:** The player has clearly defined and consistently applied weapons (or strengths) (consistent with their game style) which can be successful now and in the future at the next stages of the Player Pathway and ultimately at Tour level.
3. **Heart:** The player consistently shows the drive to succeed in competitive (and, where relevant, training) situations.
4. **Head:** The player consistently demonstrates emotional regulation, smart decision making and a high level of focus in key moments in matches especially when leading.
5. **Legs:** The player:
  - a) consistently displays physical attributes that positively affect the outcome of matches; or
  - b) demonstrates physical strengths by meeting the A standard in one of the three functional area tests (as defined in appendix 3 and 4) and the B standard for the remaining two functional areas (based on physical testing completed within 16 weeks prior of the selection date); or
  - c) after physical testing (completed within 16 weeks prior of the selection date) there is robust data which indicates that, with a coherent plan, clause 5 (b) is likely to be achieved and there is a clear and evidence based reason (e.g. maturation / injury / illness) as to why this has not yet been achieved
6. **Programme:** The player is committed to a training plan that has the appropriate volume and intensity for elite performance and that targets any limitations identified during observations.

### 3.3 Using evidence and expert opinion to support decision making

The following sources of evidence and expert opinion alone will be used to inform the decision making during the selection meeting:

- Match reports captured in an online reporting app by the Men's / Women's coaching teams;
- Match footage and statistics from video captured by the LTA Performance Analysis team or other verified sources (e.g. ATP / WTA / ITF / IBM etc.);
- Statistical analysis of game styles at the top of men's and women's professional tennis;
- Head of Men's / Women's Tennis expert judgement;
- Expert coaching panels (made up of the men's or women's coaching teams and independent coaches); and
- LTA Physical testing data.

In the case of a tie as to whether a particular criterion has been met, the chair will have the casting vote.

### **3.4 Finalising numbers**

There will be 4 new places available for the PSP in 2018. If more players meet the selection criteria than there are places available, the following priority order will be applied to establish a rank order of candidates:

1. Players who have met the Type 1 criteria plus two of the Type 2 criteria (excluding number 6); and
2. Players who have met the most Type 2 criteria.

If there are still too many players for the number of places available, or there is a tie, the chair will have the casting vote. In doing so, the chair will consider, taking into account the evidence presented to and the deliberations of the selection panel, which players he believes are most likely to achieve the objectives of the PSP.

### **3.5 Calculating the level of support**

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

The level of the financial grant will take into account the current and potential performance level of the player as well as consideration of the training and competition plan and the overall PSP budget. This may only be confirmed after the profiling workshop (please see 5.1).

The length of the contract will be guided by the age of the player (on 31/12/18) in relation to the age parameters of the PSP. All selected players will be offered a minimum of 2 years support with the overall length of the term ordinarily calculated in line with the following guidelines with exceptions made by the panel where they deem it appropriate:

Age	Length of agreement
16	5 years
17	5 years
18	5 years
19	5 years
20	5 years
21	5 years
22	4 years
23	3 years
24	2 years

All agreements will be subject to annual review against agreed multi-disciplinary progression targets. In addition, the length of agreement may be reviewed and amended if a player finishes the year in the top 100 on the year end ATP / WTA singles ranking.

## **4. Recording and Communication of Decision**

Each decision to select or not select will be recorded on a Selection Panel Decision Form.

The chair of the selection panel will make reasonable efforts either himself or through his senior management team to ensure that the shortlisted players are notified within one week of the conclusion of the selection meeting. Players will be informed that they have either been selected or not selected. Where possible, the notification of the decision will take place face to face however in certain circumstances this may also be done over the phone.

## **5. Player profiling and induction**

Once decisions have been communicated, successful candidates will be invited to a profiling workshop and a PSP induction, both of which are mandatory and a condition of accepting PSP support.

### **5.1 Player profiling**

Player profiling workshops will be held between Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> and Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December. Player profiling will be a facilitated discussion between the player, their support team and relevant LTA staff. Where possible profiling will be chaired by the Head of Pro Tour Pathway but this may also be done by the Performance Director or the Head of Men's or Women's Tennis (or their nominees). Full details of the profiling will be sent to the player once the date for the profiling session has been arranged.

### **5.2 PSP Induction**

The PSP induction for new players will take place on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> November. This will be a multi-disciplinary induction and will be led by the Head of Men's / Women's Tennis, the Head of Science and Medicine and the Head of Pro Tour Pathway. This will clearly explain the relationship the LTA would like to have with the player and their support team for the duration of the player's involvement on the PSP. It will also explain what players and their support teams should expect from the LTA National Coaching and Sports Science and Medicine teams.

All players will then be expected to sign a player agreement before any funding will be released. Players are not expected to have signed the agreement before attending the induction.

## **6. Appeals**

Applicants who have not been selected by the selection panel are entitled to appeal against the selection panel's decision. Such an appeal is to be made in writing (with full reasons) within 14 days to the Head of Legal or their nominee (the Appeal Chair) of the LTA but only 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 Appeal Chair 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.

For the avoidance of doubt, players who apply for but are not discretionarily shortlisted (as outlined in 2.3) are not eligible to appeal.

## Appendix 1

The shortlisting and type 1 ranking targets have been created using a combination of the following evidence sources:

- Head of Men's and Head of Women's Tennis' (and their coaching teams) expert opinion;
- Analysis of current players' ATP / WTA rankings (based on the rankings at 13<sup>th</sup> August 2018) broken down by age and ranking bracket;
- Analysis of current players' ITF junior rankings (based on the rankings at 20<sup>th</sup> August 2018) broken down by age and ranking bracket;
- Unpublished LTA research from 2013 which tracks the annual ranking progression of players who have reached and then consolidated their ranking (at year end) for 4 years or more in either the ATP / WTA top 100 and 200; and
- A ranking prediction tool which establishes a level of probability that a player will reach a certain ranking in future based on their current age and ranking. This takes into account all weekly ATP / WTA ranking data from January 2000 to July 2018
- Published 2017 PSP ranking targets

## **Appendix 2 – Description and protocol for the LTA Shuttle test (linked to Physical requirements for shortlisting)**

The LTA Shuttle test is described and completed as follows:

- The athlete begins the test stood behind the baseline
- When ready they complete 10 court lengths as quickly as possible.
- They must always turn towards the centre of the court and the outside leg must go past each baseline
- After completing 10 lengths the athlete takes 90 seconds rest
- This is completed 3 times
- Each repetition time is recorded and added together to give a total shuttle time



### Appendix 3 – Explanation of physical tests (linked to Type 2 selection criteria)

Using the LTA’s physical testing protocol, all players who are being considered for selection will be evaluated against their testing results in three functional areas. These are as follows:

1. Repeated power control
2. Speed / court coverage and efficiency
3. Endurance

The tests that are part of the LTA’s testing protocol are described in the table below. The table links each test to the functional area, how the test will be measured, the rationale for it and the reliability of the measure / test:

Tennis description	Physical area	Test	Measure	Rationale	Reliability
Repeated power control	Potential to generate force	Counter movement jump	Peak power / BW (W/kg)	The counter movement jump profiles the athlete’s maximal leg extension power. This physical quality underpins explosive activities such as acceleration , deceleration and change of direction	ICC ≥ 0.98 and CV ≤ 9.4%, 2.3, (Hori et al,2009)
		Drop jump	RSI (Flight time / contact time)	The drop jump shows the ability of the athlete to develop maximal amount of force in the minimal amount of time. Given the nature of tennis movement this is crucial in underpinning acceleration and deceleration performance (Lockie et al, 2011, Young et al, 2015)	ICC ≥ 0.967 , (Flanagan, 2008) and CV = 3.0%, 9Markwick et al, 2015 *)
Speed / Court coverage and efficiency	Potential for speed and change of direction	10m speed	10m speed (secs)	The ability to accelerate is a fundamental element of tennis performance. Data suggests that elite male tennis players may approach speeds of 7 m/s when running to a drop shot (Male, Hawkeye data) which means that would need to have a 10m score of approx. 1.7 – 1.8	0.02 s SEM and ~1% CV (Earp and Newton, 2012)
		Modified 5-0-5 change of direction	5-0-5 time (secs)	The ability to change direction is key element in tennis performance. The 5-0-5 test will assess the athlete’s ability to perform a maximal 180° turn. While not ‘tennis specific movement’, research has been done which validates the 180° performance as a valid predictor of any change of direction >90° (Jess 2014, Final year theses). Data suggests that elite male players reach speeds of 6–7 m/s before they change direction by as much as 180 ° (Hawkeye data, Dunn, unpublished data. Whiteside et al, 2012). These speeds are consistent with data during the 5-0-5 (unpublished EIS data) and further validate the use of this test within tennis.	ICC = 0.951. Smallest detectable difference 3.97% (Barber et al, 2016)
Endurance	Ability to repeat speed and change of direction	LTA shuttle test	Total time (secs)	Research suggest that during and after a match there are reductions in running speed, maximal force production and leg stiffness (Reid and Duffield, 20140) due to repeated change of directions. The purpose of the test is not to replicate match play but to assess a players ability to repeat high intensity change of directions at speeds relative to match play.	ICC = 0.83. CV% = 3.2 ( 90% confidence limits), White et al, 2015 (Taken from 300yd shuttle test)

\* Note - caution must be taken when comparing DJ results between individuals and squads due to large discrepancies between actual drop height and platform height, Costley, 2017

#### Appendix 4 – A and B standards for physical testing (linked to Type 2 selection criteria)

Based on the testing described in appendix 3, the table below shows by gender the level / score that the player needs to achieve to reach the A or B standard in each of the 3 functional areas:

		Repeated power control		Speed / Court coverage and efficiency			Endurance
		Potential to generate force		Potential for speed and change of direction			Ability to repeat speed and change of direction
		CMJ (PP/BW)	RSI	10m Speed	5-0-5 (Left)	5-0-5(Right)	Total Shuttle time
Female	A Standard	50	3	1.97	2.5	2.5	< 163 seconds
	B Standard	43	2.7	2.05	2.6	2.6	< 170 seconds
Male	A Standard	52	3	1.87	2.4	2.4	< 148 seconds
	B Standard	45	2.7	1.98	2.5	2.5	< 160 seconds

## Appendix 5 – Key dates in PSP Selection process (all 2018)\*

Date	Milestone
September 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 10 <sup>th</sup> , 17 <sup>th</sup> and 24 <sup>th</sup> ; and October 1 <sup>st</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup> , 15 <sup>th</sup> and 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Physical testing for shortlisting (e-mail Samantha.Kirk@lta.org.uk to arrange)
Friday 26th October @ 5pm	Deadline for players to e-mail Sophie.Disley@lta.org.uk to confirm they would like to be considered for PSP selection
Friday 26th October @ 5pm	Deadline for players with exceptional circumstances to inform the Performance Director, the Head of Pro Tour Pathway and the Head of Science and Medicine via e-mail to Sophie.disley@lta.org.uk (as outlined in section 2.4)
Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> November	PSP selection meeting
Within one week of the selection meeting	PSP communication of decisions
Thursday 29 <sup>th</sup> November	PSP player induction (NTC)
Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> December to Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> December	PSP Player profiling

\* Please note all dates are provisional and remain subject to change