

Selection Policy: National Academies

1. Introduction

This policy describes how players will be selected for a place at one of the National Academies for the 2022/2023 academic year. Places at the National Academies are subject to the terms of the player agreement provided by the National Academies.

The policy may be updated periodically; for example changes may be made to the selection process and timeline, and dates and processes may be subject to change as a result of COVID-19 requirements. Any amendments shall be published on the LTA website so please check for changes on a regular basis.

2. Programme aims and locations

The National Academies aim to support the development of those junior players considered to have the highest potential for international success and selection for the LTA's Pro Scholarship Programme (PSP).

There are two National Academies, the GB National Tennis Academy at the University of Stirling (GBNTA) and Loughborough University National Tennis Academy (LUNTA). Both academies provide inspiring training environments and excellent tournament schedules, with full-board residential accommodation and an integrated academic programme at a mainstream school also included.

3. Eligibility

Players are only eligible for selection provided they are of an eligible age (3.1), are eligible to represent Great Britain (3.2) and have met the performance level requirements (3.3), as follows:

3.1 Age eligibility

For a player to be considered eligible they must be born between the dates¹ outlined below:

- For GBNTA – born between 1 January 2006 and 31 December 2009 inclusive.
- For LUNTA – born between 1 September 2005 and 31 August 2009 inclusive.

In exceptional circumstances, players outside these age ranges outlined above (but not younger than 11 years on 1 September 2022) may be considered. These players must fulfil the requirements set out in sections 3.2 and 3.3 and any such selection is subject to the National Academy's assessment that the appropriate educational requirements, pastoral care and / or parental supervision can be facilitated for the individual player.

3.2 Eligible to represent Great Britain

Players must hold, or be eligible for, a British passport. Those not meeting this stipulation, but who have lived in Great Britain continuously since 1 January 2020, will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Such players must contact PlayerPathway@lta.org.uk by 25 March 2022 to confirm they would like to be considered.

3.3. Minimum performance criteria for consideration - MPCC

A player must receive a minimum of two nominations from LTA National Coaches as well as having fulfilled one of the following requirements:

¹ Differences in age eligibility between the academies exist due to the differences in academic school years between England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

3.3.1 The player was selected for the Men’s & Women’s Programme (MWP) or the 14U NAGP as a Scholar in 2021 or 2022;

3.3.2 The player achieved one of the following results between 1 March 2021 and 30 March 2022:

- a) Main draw singles final at an LTA National 12U and/or 14U G1 or G2 tournament;
- b) Main draw singles semi final at an 12U TE category 1 tournament;
- c) Main draw singles semi final at an 14U TE category 2 or above;
- d) Main draw semi final of an ITF junior event in Europe;

3.3.3 The player met the following ITF Junior World ranking criteria at any point between 1 January 2022 and 30 March 2022:

Boys

15 th year (2007s)	16 th year (2006s)	17 th year (2005s)
ITF Juniors Top 2000	ITF Juniors Top 1000	ITF Juniors Top 400

Girls

15 th year (2007s)	16 th year (2006s)	17 th year (2005s)
ITF Juniors Top 1000	ITF Juniors Top 500	ITF Juniors Top 250

3.3.4 A player who reaches the singles final at the U16 National Championships (in 2022) will automatically be shortlisted for selection and would not require an LTA National Coach nomination.

Meeting minimum performance criteria for consideration does not mean players will be automatically nominated. The minimum performance criteria outlined in 3.3 are deliberately inclusive.

The LTA National Coaches will nominate players they believe have the potential to fulfil the programme aims. In making a nomination, the nominator must use match observations from relevant international and/or domestic events between 1 March 2021 and 30 March 2022 (the “Nominating Window”) and, if relevant, consideration may also be made on game development over the last 12 months. This nomination must be supported by evidence and include why they believe the player should be considered for the National Academy taking into consideration the programme aims (see section 2) and an evaluation of player suitability (see section 5.2).

3.4 Number of places

The number of places available in 2022 will be based on the following considerations:

- i. The programme aims set out in section 2;
- ii. The number of players currently on each programme and the ability for the programme to appropriately service each player and offer appropriate competition opportunities;
- iii. Available resources.

4. Application

4.1 Player shortlisting

Once the Nominating Window has closed, players meeting the criteria set out in section 3 will form the shortlist, i.e. the list of players invited to apply for a place at a National Academy.

Shortlisted players will be notified by 1 April 2022. It is possible that more players will be considered for selection than there are places available at the National Academies.

Players who have not been shortlisted to apply for a place at a National Academy will not be notified.

4.2 Programme visits

All shortlisted players will receive an invitation to visit both National Academies.

These visits provide an opportunity for players (and parents / guardians) to gain insight into the programmes on offer at both National Academies. They also provide both programmes an opportunity to learn more about those who are interested in attending a National Academy.

It is recommended that those with an interest in applying to a National Academy visit both programmes. If a shortlisted player chooses not to apply or accept a place onto a National Academy, it is expected that they will take at least one visit to a National Academy in order to be considered for a MWP scholarship.

4.3 Application process

All shortlisted players who wish to apply for a place at a National Academy must do so by 29 April 2022. Within this, they will be asked to specify if:

- a) They are applying to both the GBNTA and the LUNTA (with an order of preference);
- b) They are only applying to the GBNTA only; or
- c) They are only applying to the LUNTA only.

If a player applies to both National Academies, if they are not successful in achieving a place at their preferred choice they will be considered for a place at their second choice. If a player only applies for one National Academy, if they are not successful in achieving a place at their preferred choice they would not be eligible for a place at the other programme².

4.4 Non applicants

In some circumstances a shortlisted player may choose not to apply for a place at the National Academy. In this situation:

- Those born in 2009 and 2010 who are already receiving support will continue to receive their current level of support through the 14U NAGP until the next selection point for this programme;
- Those born in 2007 and 2008 will be considered for an MWP Scholarship. Selection for an MWP Scholarship will follow the process described in 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.5.

5. Selection

5.1 Selection Panel

All shortlisted players who submit an application for a National Academy by 29 April 2022 will be evaluated by the selection panel (the Panel).

The Panel will meet the week commencing 2 May 2022. The Head of National Performance Pathway will chair the Panel – the chair will not have a vote. The Panel will consist of the following voting members (or their nominees):

- LTA Performance Director;
- LTA Head of Men's Tennis;
- LTA Head of Women's Tennis;
- Head Coach at GBNTA;
- Head Coach at LUNTA; and
- An independent tennis expert (typically a leading coach).

² In this situation, a player would be considered for further LTA support via the 14U NAGP or MWP – see 4.4.

The Chair may ask additional members of the LTA Performance Team to attend the selection meeting in order to provide insight on the players being considered or to assist with facilitating the meeting; these individuals will not have a vote.

5.2 Evaluation of player suitability

When considering which players have the potential to meet the aims of the programme, the Panel will consider the following factors:

- **Game style:** The player has an all-round game which can be developed into a clearly defined and successful game style for the future.
- **Strengths & Weapons:** The player has emerging strengths which can be developed into successful weapons.
- **Head:** The player demonstrates smart decision making, good problem solving abilities and a level of focus in matches, irrespective of the match situation.
- **Heart:** The player's drive and attitude in training and competition shows a willingness to learn and a desire to win matches.
- **Athlete:** The player has a robust athletic foundation which can be developed into physical attributes that could positively influence the outcome of matches.
- **Performance:** The player has competitive international results, ranking and rating (at current year of birth or above) and a capability to beat players of a higher level than themselves.
- **Readiness:** The player is ready to engage and meet the demands of the programme, to fully benefit from the aims of the National Academies.

When evaluating a player against these factors, the Panel members will use professional opinion to reflect on match observations from relevant international and/or domestic events and activity, as well as player and programme visits, for the period between 1 March 2021 and the selection meeting.

5.3 Considerations relating to limiting factors

When discussing the factors described in 5.2 the Panel may also take into account any of the following matters that influences their opinion on the player's potential:

- The player's age and physical maturation;
- The player's historic training programme and tournament schedule;
- Any other considerations that have led to a significant interruption or impact on tennis (e.g. illness, injury).

5.4 Allocation of National Academy places

At this point, whilst a decision may be made by the Panel in relation to the player's suitability for a place at a National Academy, player selection is not confirmed until they have been allocated a place at one of the National Academies.

Head Coaches from each National Academy will have the final decision as to which suitable players they would like to offer a place to and will be guided by the programme aims, along with the following:

- The Panel discussion during the selection meeting;
- The spaces available at each National Academy;
- The ability (within resources) to effectively support each player; and
- The preferences of each player applying.

5.5 Allocation of MWP Scholarships

Any grant which may be offered is at the discretion of the LTA and would be dependent on the appropriateness of players' programme to achieve the aims in section 2.

If a grant was offered it would be pro rata from the date of the selection offer being communicated to the end of the calendar year.

6. Key Dates

Shortlisted players will be notified by 1 April 2022.

The National Academy application deadline for shortlisted players is by 29 April 2022.

The Panel will meet week of 2 May 2022 with all players advised of the outcome by 16 May 2022.

7. Appeals

Applicants who have been shortlisted but have not then been offered a place at a National Academy are entitled to appeal against the decision.

Such an appeal is to be made in writing (with full reasons) within 7 days of receiving the written decision and sent to mary.joyner@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.

For the avoidance of doubt, players who are not shortlisted for any reason, including not receiving a nomination as outlined in 3.3 are not eligible to appeal.