

International & Domestic Travel Policy – Official Trips/Overseas Camps or Using LTA funding

1. Introduction

Travelling to tennis events both internationally and domestically are part of being a tennis player. This will usually involve a player travelling with their coach either in a group of players or 1:1 with their coach. This policy applies for all players attending LTA Official trips and overseas camps and players travelling using LTA funding. It also includes general guidance for players travelling with a coach.

LTA Official trips, overseas camps and Trip Grants are some of the core activities of the Men's and Women's Programme (MWP) and the National Age Group Programme (NAGP) which is focused on providing exceptional training, learning and competition opportunities for Britain's best juniors. Official trips are trips run by the LTA to identified international events during the year to allow top British players to gain experience and exposure of the relevant international level ("Official Trips"). Overseas camps are run where it has been identified as a relevant and useful training opportunity for players to experience different training situations to those experienced through the National Camps run at the National Tennis Centre (NTC). Travel Grants may be awarded for overseas tournaments where an official trip is not planned, to help players progress towards transitioning to the next stage of the pathway or, for senior players, where a player has shown outstanding recent results to put themselves in contention to reach Grand Slam qualifying. The LTA has a duty of care to all players travelling on an Official Trip.

The Official Trips and overseas camps will be staffed and run by an LTA National Coach or LTA National Age Group Captain ("Lead Coach") and in certain instances additional coaches (LTA or external), strength and conditioning coaches or other performance staff (e.g. physio or analyst) may be in attendance. These staff members are responsible for the players for the duration of the trip and will act in "loco parentis". Players are selected for these trips in line with either the [NAGP U14 Activities Selection Criteria and Process](#) or the [MWP Activities Selection Criteria and Process](#).

Players who have a Pro Scholarship Programme (PSP), MWP or NAGP scholarship or agreement, and receive funding to support their schedules, are highly recommended to follow the same guidelines when travelling with their team that are outlined for official trips.

2. Official Trips/Overseas Camps

2.1 Safeguarding & Duty of Care

Further to the publication of the Duty of Care in Sport Review and the NSPCC's Child Protection in Sport Unit updating their guidelines, the LTA has reviewed its policy for the staffing of Official Trips.

The NSPCC guidelines state:

“Whatever the recommended ratio of adults to participants is, **a minimum of two adults should be present**. This ensures at least basic cover in the event of something impacting on the availability of one of the adults during the activity (e.g. in the event of one participant requiring the attention of an adult during the activity following an accident).”

These would be suitable for most organisations working with children and young people. **Remember that regardless of the overall ratio, a minimum of two supervisors is recommended.**

The guidelines also state that the gender of at least one of the supervising adults should match the gender of the children.

Since 1st October 2017, in all possible cases, we will adopt the following policy on all Official Trips, both in the UK and abroad, and overseas camps with players who are under 18 years of age.

- A minimum of two members of staff on all trips.
- At least one member of staff must be the same gender of that of the players on the trip.
- A minimum of one member of staff to every four players.

All staff on trips will be members of the LTA’s Men’s Tennis Team, Women’s Tennis Team, Performance Team or an external LTA Accredited Coach, who is the individual coach of one of the players travelling or a coach working in the high performance system who is being given this opportunity for development purposes. Where possible at least one member of staff will always be an LTA employee.

One member of staff will always be a coach and the second member of staff may travel in any of the following roles or capacities, with an emphasis on the pastoral welfare and supervision of the players:

- strength and conditioning coach;
- physiotherapist or doctor;
- performance analyst;
- senior coach/manager for player observation;
- coach development;
- performance lifestyle advisor;
- performance psychologist; and/or
- pastoral/welfare;

The second member of staff will be decided in consultation between the Lead Coach, the LTA Head of Science and Medicine and either the LTA Head of Men’s or Women’s Tennis or the LTA Head of National Performance Pathway.

Members of staff are not permitted to share a room with players under any circumstances.

When travelling in groups, players may be asked to share a room with other players of the same gender and similar age. Players over the age of 18 are not permitted to share a room with players under the age of 18.

2.2 Security & Health

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment (as described below) will be conducted by the Lead Coach normally at least 6 weeks prior to any Official Trip taking place, with this being reviewed 3 weeks prior to ensure nothing has changed. This is to ensure the proposed country to be visited is safe and as much relevant information as possible is known so an informed decision can be made as to whether to proceed with the trip. The risk assessment process aims to highlight any potential risks with mitigation methods then implemented to reduce risks to a safe level if possible.

In order to complete the risk assessment various reliable sources of information will be accessed including, but not limited to, the [FCO website](#) and the Crisis24 platform (please see below for more information on this).

The risk assessment is split into two phases. Phase one consists of ten questions which cover elements such as the overall security/risk rating, travel restrictions, health provision and logistical operations. If all the answers to these questions are satisfactory then the risk assessment is complete. If any areas highlight a potential risk then phase two will need to be completed.

Phase two consists of recognising the potential risks and then plotting them on a risk matrix. Once all potential risks are acknowledged mitigation measures are then identified to reduce the risk where possible (for example, if there is a risk of pick-pocketing then a mitigation measure would be to not take valuables out, to not go out in those areas at night, to take a taxi to rather than walk, etc.).

Due to the Covid-19 global pandemic, a specific coronavirus section has been added to the Risk Assessment which will identify the current situation regarding the virus in the identified destination of travel, what the government guidance is on travel to/return from the country and the accessibility of testing facilities should they be required.

Based on the outcome of the risk assessment there will be a decision as to whether the trip will go ahead or not. For trips with a low risk this will be a quick, simple decision made between the Lead Coach and Performance Operations Manager. With medium or high risk trips this will be escalated to the Head of Men's / Women's Tennis and then as appropriate to other senior members of the LTA.

If anything happens which could affect a trip's risk rating between the risk assessment being undertaken and the scheduled departure date then an additional risk assessment will be conducted. If by re-doing the risk assessment a higher score is then recorded the above escalation process will be followed and the original decision reassessed.

If anything happens which could affect a trip's risk rating during the trip then as a first step the Lead Coach will contact the Crisis24 emergency line (outlined below) to receive up to date information and advice on the current situation. If necessary this will trigger a crisis team into motion to make the necessary decisions to try to ensure the safety of the team.

Security Company – Crisis24

Since October 2017 the LTA have been working with Crisis24 (formerly WorldAware) who are an international risk management company. We are utilising many of their services outlined below to try to ensure that the staff and players travelling on Official Trips are safe.

- **Crisis24 platform** – online portal which holds up to date information on over 190 countries in relation to travel advice, crime, health, current issues and security.
- **Alerts/notifications** – texts/emails/notifications which are pushed to the Lead Coach to ensure they are aware of any incident (adverse weather, terrorism, political instability, etc.) in the country they are in.
- **Emergency telephone number** – 24/7 access to English speaking consultant who can provide live updates and advice on any emergency situation.
- **Travel agent synced** – all bookings made through the LTA travel agent will be synced with the portal so the alerts and notifications are sent for that specific country for the duration of the trip.
- **Insurance company linked** – if an issue arises whilst away that requires the insurance company to be involved then by calling the 24/7 number this process is started.

Pre-trip:

- The Lead Coach will use the Crisis24 online platform to research up to date and in-depth information from location reports to complete the risk assessment prior to the trip.
- Once flights are booked via the LTA's travel agent these will be synced with the Crisis24 platform so the Lead Coach will directly receive any alerts, news, updates on that country or region via both email and notification from an app so if any changes occur these can be monitored.
- Information on any recommended vaccinations or health issues can be looked up and shared with all individuals travelling as part of the official team.

During trip:

- The Lead Coach will continue to receive any alerts, news and updates on that country so they have live, up to date information in order to try to ensure safety at all times. If an incident was to occur (e.g. earthquake or terror attack) these alerts contain advice and instructions the team can follow.
- All travellers will be given a 24/7 emergency phone number so if any issues arise they can contact a representative at Crisis24 to receive personal and live advice. Depending on the severity of the call and situation Crisis24 can then elevate it to senior members of the LTA who need to be aware and act accordingly. This may include triggering the LTA Performance Crisis Management Team.
- If an emergency situation did arise then Crisis24 are also linked in with the LTA's insurance supplier so can start the process with them to ensure treatment is not delayed.

2.3 Parents and legal guardians/Individual coaches travelling to Official Trips

Parents/legal guardians and individual coaches are allowed to attend Official Trips, at their own cost, if they wish. We ask that parents/legal guardians inform the Lead Coach prior to the trip if they plan on attending. If they choose to do so the guidelines below must be followed to allow for consistency in delivery across the MWP and NAGP and to ensure that the Lead Coach can effectively and safely manage their duty of care to all players on the trip.

- The player is part of the team therefore the Lead Coach is in charge of all aspects of the trip including, but not limited to, training, meals, transport and coaching.
- The player will stay with the rest of the team and not with the travelling parent(s)/legal guardian(s).
- If a parent/legal guardian wishes to take the player outside of the trip environment (e.g. out to dinner) this must be requested through the Lead Coach. If approved, the scope of the activity and return times must be confirmed in advance and adhered to. At no point would the parent/legal guardian be supervising any other player on the trip unless written approval has been provided to the LTA by the parent/legal guardian of those players.
- If a personal coach wishes to offer coaching advice/support it is with the understanding of working in collaboration with the Lead Coach so consistent messages are being given to the player.
- If a proposed activity is not appropriate at a given time, is not suitable for the player or compromises the running of the wider team then the Lead Coach has the right to not approve it.

If these guidelines are not followed, it could result in a player being removed from the trip or not being selected for future MWP/NAGP events.

3. For players travelling with their own coaching team

We recommend that all players who travel, using LTA funding or their own funds, adhere to this policy. However, we recognise that in some situations this is not possible. Therefore, for the protection of the player and coach, we recommend the following:

- If all suitable options to find a second coach or a coach of the same gender have been exhausted then 1 coach travelling is sufficient for 1 player, however if there are 2 players or more the ratios set out above should be followed. Written records of the efforts gone to should be recorded and kept.
- When there is only 1 coach traveling they should do a risk assessment and make suitable contingency / emergency plans (e.g. player having the phone numbers of relevant Performance lifestyle / Safeguarding staff to hand). The coach should also have written permission from the parent(s)/legal guardian that they are happy for their child to travel 1:1 with the coach.
- Players should have a separate room from their coach.

- Players should only ever share a room with other players of the same gender and similar age. Players over the age of 18 should not share rooms with players under 18.
- If the player is under the age of 18 a group text / WhatsApp should be created in order to communicate. This group should include a minimum of 3 people (player, coach and 1 additional adult who is ideally the parent or legal guardian, but may also be another adult e.g. physiotherapist, trainer etc.)
- If the LTA are made aware of a planned trip to a country which is deemed unstable or a risk then we may conduct a Risk Assessment using the process outlined in section 2.2. The findings and our advice from this will be shared with the player in question. Players can request the information to do their own risk assessments of any location they are travelling to.

The LTA strongly recommends that players follow these guidelines.

Players who choose not to adhere to these guidelines do so at their own risk.

Players, their parent/legal guardian and coach should all be in agreement that a trip which does not comply with the LTA Official Trips Policy can continue and this should be recorded in writing.

4. Amendments

The LTA may amend this policy from time to time. Any amendments will be published on the LTA website.