

LTA PRO SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME SELECTION POLICY 2024

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy explains how players will be selected to the Pro Scholarship Programme (PSP) for 2024. The following players are eligible to be considered:

- Male players aged between 18 and 24 (inclusive) on 31/12/23;
- Female players aged between 16 and 22* (inclusive) on 31/12/23 and
- Male players aged 17 or younger and female players aged 15 or younger on 31/12/23 who meet the shortlisting ranking criteria of any higher age groups.

**If a female player graduates college or university at 22 years old they will be eligible for selection for an additional year until they turn 23 as long as they meet either the ranking criteria for a 22 year old (2.1) or the NCAA criteria (2.2).*

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 and their responsibilities, commitments and accountabilities (such as agreeing an IDP, structuring daily training and planning annual schedules) to the LTA's PSP.

Players who will have finished at a UK / US university anytime in 2023 or by 30 June 2024, may be considered. Otherwise, those attending a UK / US university are not eligible for the PSP.

Players who have earned more than US\$1 million prize money (as published on the ATP / WTA website on the date of the selection meeting) are not eligible to be considered for new selection by the Selection Panel.

A player will not be eligible for the PSP during any period that they are the subject of a provisional sanction or a sanction (or other investigation outcome) accepted or imposed under the LTA Disciplinary Code or by any other tennis or sporting national or international body (including but not limited to in relation to any anti-doping and/or anti-corruption offence).

2. CONSIDERATION FOR SELECTION (SHORTLISTING)

To be considered for selection, players must meet one of the five outlined criteria below either:

- a) meet the shortlisting ranking criteria (2.1) or
- b) meet the NCAA shortlisting criteria (2.2) or
- c) meet the Junior Grand Slam title criteria (2.3) or
- d) were selected for the PSP in the previous year but did not accept their place (2.4) or
- e) meet the exceptional circumstances requirements (2.5)

2.1 Shortlisting ranking criteria

Any players who have met the following ranking criteria at any point between Monday 24 July 2023 and the Monday of the week of the Selection Meeting (inclusive) will be considered for selection. The ages referred to in the tables below are the age of the player on 31 December 2023. These shortlisting ranking targets have been established using current and historical ranking data to suggest a player is on a trajectory to reach the top 100 ATP/WTA singles rankings with an approximate 25% chance of reaching the top 100. Based on the evidence, these targets also reflect the difference between men's and women's tennis.

Women

Age	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23*	24
Shortlisting criteria	WTA 800 or ITF 40	WTA 650 or ITF 20	WTA 500	WTA 350	WTA 300	WTA 275	WTA 250	WTA 250	N/A

Men

Age	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Shortlisting criteria	N/A	N/A	ATP 700 or ITF 10	ATP 550	ATP 400	ATP 350	ATP 300	ATP 250	ATP 200

* The 23 year old female ranking criteria is only applicable to those players who have graduated university at 22 years old.

Please note if a player is younger than 16 for females or 18 for males on the 31/12/23 and meets the ranking criteria of a higher age group then they will be deemed to meet shortlisting ranking criteria and therefore shortlisted for consideration for selection.

All players who have met these ranking criteria will be automatically considered for selection. If you do not wish to be considered, please email Sophie Disley (Sophie.disley@lta.org.uk) by 5pm on Friday 24 November.

For all key dates in this selection process, please see appendix 1.

2.2 Shortlisting criteria for NCAA players

Players who will have finished at a US university (by 30/06/2024), must meet a minimum of three out of the five below criteria in 2023 to be eligible for shortlisting.

Men's shortlisting criteria:

- Achieving the average NCAA ranking of players reaching Top 100 when finishing NCAA of 5 (as of the published ranking in June post NCAA Individual Championships)

- Achieving the average ATP ranking of players reaching the Top 100 when finishing NCAA of 600 (within the 6 month period prior to the selection meeting)
- Performance based results. These being either qualifying for an ATP Tour Event, semi-finals of an ATP Tour Challenger, winner of an ITF 25k Event, 3 finals of ITF 25k Events and/or winner or finalist of the NCAA Individual Championships
- Illustrating an 'ATP point ranking average' based on competing in a minimum of 8 ATP / ITF Pro Tour events) and linking this to our PSP minimum ranking criteria at 2.1.
- Players can be nominated by members of the LTA Men's Tennis Teams. Players must receive a minimum of two nominations to meet this criteria. In making a nomination, the nominator must outline using match observations from 2023 (international and/or relevant domestic events), and, if relevant, evidence of ranking / game progression over the last 12-24 months, as well as why they believe the player should be considered for the PSP taking into consideration the shortlisting ranking criteria at 2.1 and the type 2 criteria at 3.2.

Women's shortlisting criteria:

- Achieving the average NCAA ranking of players reaching Top 100 when finishing NCAA of 5 (as of the published ranking in June post NCAA Individual Championships)
- Achieving the average WTA ranking of players reaching the Top 100 when finishing NCAA of 650 (within the 6 month period prior to the selection meeting)
- Performance based results. These being either qualifying for a WTA Tour Event, semi-finals of a WTA 60K or above, winner of an ITF 25k Event, 2 finals of ITF 25k Events and/or winner or finalist of the NCAA Individual Championships
- Illustrating a 'WTA point ranking average' based on competing in a minimum of 8 WTA / ITF Pro Tour events and linking this to our PSP minimum ranking criteria at 2.1.
- Players can be nominated by members of the LTA Women's Tennis Teams. Players must receive a minimum of two nominations to meet this criteria. In making a nomination, the nominator must outline using match observations from 2023 (international and/or relevant domestic events), and, if relevant, evidence of ranking / game progression over the last 12-24 months, as well as why they believe the player should be considered for the PSP taking into consideration the shortlisting ranking criteria at 2.1 and the type 2 criteria at 3.2.

2.3 Shortlisting from winning a Junior Grand Slam

Any eligible player who wins a Junior Grand Slam singles title in 2023 will automatically be shortlisted for consideration for selection. For the avoidance of doubt, they would not be required to meet the criteria in 2.1.

2.4 Shortlisting criteria for Players previously selected for the PSP

Players who met both the PSP shortlisting and selection criteria in the previous year (2022) but did not accept their place on the programme before the mid-year start point will be automatically shortlisted the following year. The player must still meet the eligibility criteria outlined in section 1 in order to be shortlisted, however they do not need to meet 2.1, 2.2 or 2.3.

2.5 Exceptional Circumstances – Injury/illness

If a player has had a long term injury / illness (resulting in the player missing a minimum of 3 consecutive months of competition) during 2023, or has missed a minimum of 3 consecutive months of the 2023 season due to another exceptional reason, then they must supply in writing to the Performance Operations Manager (via email Sophie.disley@lta.org.uk) by 5pm on Friday 17 November:

- 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 Performance Science and Medicine and the Head of Men's / Women's Tennis, (or their nominees), 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. Evidence will include match observations and ranking progress in 2023, where this is not available match observations from the previous 12-24 months will be considered together with their ranking profile and ranking trajectory for their age prior to the period of absence in relation to their age and ranking targets outlined in 2.1.

If it is deemed to be the case that the impact of the injury or issue was the sole factor that prevented the player from meeting the shortlisting ranking targets 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 the ranking targets. Players will be informed by Friday 24 November if they have or have not been shortlisted due to exceptional circumstances.

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

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 may 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 Operations Team will also be invited by the Chair to attend to record selection decisions.

3.2 Selection criteria

3.2.1 Type 1 and Type 2 Selection Criteria

All players shortlisted for the PSP will be considered by the Selection Panel in a formal selection meeting during the week commencing 27 November 2023. 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 or,
- 2) The player doesn’t achieve the Type 1 criteria but does achieve a minimum of three of the Type 2 criteria.

Type 1:

Players must have achieved the Type 1 criteria at any point between Monday 24 July 2023 and the Monday of the week of the Selection Meeting (inclusive) (the ages referred to in the table below are the age of the player on 31 December 2023). Type 1 criteria are designed to be more challenging than the shortlisting criteria as using the available evidence they suggest a player has a greater probability (approximately 50%) to reach the top 100 ATP / WTA singles ranking.

Women

Age	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23*	24
Type 1 target	WTA 550	WTA 450	WTA 350	WTA 250	WTA 200	WTA 175	WTA 150	WTA 150	N/A

Men

Age	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Type 1 target	N/A	N/A	ATP 500	ATP 350	ATP 300	ATP 250	ATP 225	ATP 200	ATP 175

**Please note the Type 1 criteria for 23 year old female is only applicable to females who graduated from university or college at age 22 and met the relevant shortlisting criteria.*

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 within five years):

1. **Strengths and 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.
2. **Heart:** The player consistently gives their best effort and shows composure in key moments.
3. **Head:** The player consistently shows good focus and concentration in a way that allows them to make smart decisions under pressure. They are open to learning both in a self-directed way & with the support of their team.
4. **Athlete:** The player has the ability:
 - a) to tolerate and thrive in the required training and competition workload;and either
 - b) to deliver the required movement on court; or
 - c) to tolerate and thrive in high intensity periods on court.

3.2.2 Determining a Players readiness for the PSP

For all players who meet the above Selection Criteria before being offered a place on the programme the Panel will determine if they are ready to meet the demands of the PSP. In making this decision the Panel will consider the below areas:

- has the player demonstrated the ability to transition and compete on the professional tour with consideration given to the number of professional and junior events the player has competed in during the current calendar year;
- commitment to a full-time playing schedule;
- relevant coaching and training programme;
- composition of ranking with consideration given to the consistency of the player's performance, the average points scored per event and the ranking of players beaten during the current calendar year.

If the Panel deem the Player is not ready to meet the demands of the PSP even if they have met the selection criteria in 3.2.1 they will not be selected for the programme.

All selected players must complete a full medical review and physical testing with the LTA Sport Science and Medicine team before their position on the programme is officially confirmed.

3.3 Using evidence and expert opinion to support decision making

The following sources of evidence and expert opinion may be used to inform the decision making during the Selection Meeting:

- Match scouting reports captured in an online reporting app by the Men's / Women's tennis teams, including statistics and comments;
- 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;
- Consideration of 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;
- Expert coaching panels (made up of the men's or women's coaching teams and independent coaches); and
- LTA Physical testing data and relevant match / training monitoring information.

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 is no set number of spaces available each year, the number of players able to be selected is dependent upon budget limit. If more players meet the criteria than there are places or budget available, the following priority order will be applied to establish a rank order of candidates and the distribution of budget:

1. Players who have met the Type 1 criteria plus two of the Type 2 criteria; and
2. Players who have met the most Type 2 criteria.

If players are tied on the number of criteria they have met and there are more players than there are places (and budget) available the Chair will have the casting vote. In doing so, the Chair will consider, 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 all the evidence presented to the Selection Panel with specific consideration being given to the probability of the player reaching the top 100 based on current age and ranking and the expert judgement of the Head of Men's or Women's Tennis. In addition, consideration will also be given to the training and competition programme and the overall PSP budget. The level of support available may therefore only be confirmed after the player's IDP has been discussed and agreed (please see 5.2). Normally grants will be a minimum of £45,000 per year. In certain circumstances LTA staff may be deployed to coach a player (appendix 2). In such circumstances the financial value of deploying that coach will be deducted from the grant that is available. Based on the above, the level of support available will differ from player to player.

All selected players will be offered an initial 2 year period of support with the overall length of support available (subject to the renewal process outlined in 3.6) being a maximum of 5 years. The intention is for players to normally have graduated from the PSP by the age of 24 for females and 26 for males therefore the overall length of support and subsequent contract terms offered will be linked to this.

In addition, 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. If a player finishes the year in the top 100 they normally will only be eligible for a maximum of one further calendar year of funding if they maintain the top 100 ranking. This may be extended (in line with the maximum length of support) if they drop outside of the top 100 due to sustaining a significant injury or other developmental reason.

3.6 Reselection and non-renewal of existing PSP players

At the end of each player's agreement period (normally at the end of year 2 and 4), each player will be formally reviewed by the Selection Panel in/or near to the Selection Meeting. A player will then either have their agreement renewed (in line with the maximum length of support) or not. In making this decision the Panel will be asked to consider:

1. A player's ranking trajectory against the shortlisting targets outlined in section 2.1; and
2. A player's progress against their IDP.

As per the player's contract, funding levels may be reviewed as part of this process. All decisions will be recorded, and players notified as outlined in section 4.

During the programme, if a player reaches the top 100 in the ATP/WTA singles rankings, or the player earns a cumulative total of US\$1,000,000.00 in prize money (using the figures on the ATP/WTA website), by the week of the Selection Meeting, it will be up to the discretion of the Selection Panel if the player should be reselected.

3.7 Deferral of a PSP Selection

A player will be selected onto the PSP at the end of the year and normally their agreement will commence from January 1. However, the Performance Team have the discretion to decide when the programme commences during the year (January 1 or July 1) if a player is currently attending a National Academy, US/UK University or any other reason as deemed acceptable by the Head of Men's or Women's Tennis.

4. RECORDING AND COMMUNICATION OF DECISION

Each decision to select or not select a player will be recorded.

The Chair of the Selection Panel will make reasonable efforts to ensure that all shortlisted players are notified within one week of the conclusion of the Selection Meeting through the LTA Performance Senior Management Team (or their nominee). Players will be informed that they have either been selected or not selected with all decisions being confirmed in writing.

5. PSP INDUCTION AND INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (IDP)

Once decisions have been communicated, successful candidates will be invited to a PSP induction, which is a mandatory condition of accepting PSP support.

5.1 PSP Induction

The PSP induction is mandatory for all players. This will be a multi-disciplinary induction and will be led by the Head of Men's / Women's Tennis and the Head of Performance Science and Medicine. 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 as well as provide important information on areas such as safeguarding, wellbeing & player representation. Players are expected to attend the induction.

5.2 Individual Development Plan (IDP)

As part of the induction process each player, together with their team and an assigned LTA National Coach, will be required to develop and agree an IDP with three clearly defined and detailed development goals for the year. This will form the basis for allocating and finalising support, as well as tracking and monitoring progress during the year.

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. The intent to appeal is to be made in writing within 3 days (72 hours) of the applicant receiving his/her selection decision, and with full reasons and supporting evidence submitted in writing to be received within 7 days of the applicant receiving his/her selection decision. This is to be sent to the nominated member of the LTA Executive Team or their nominee (the Appeal Chair) via email to Sophie.disley@lta.org.uk 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, based on the written appeal and any supporting written evidence provided, to 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.

The applicant will be informed of the appeal decision in writing.

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 exceptional circumstances (as outlined in 2.5), are not eligible to appeal.

This 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. Any amendments shall be published on the LTA website so please check for changes on a regular basis.

Appendix 1 – Key dates in PSP Selection process (all 2023) *

Date	Milestone
Between 24 July – 27 November	Players need to achieve the shortlisting ranking criteria during this period.
Friday 17 November @ 5pm	Deadline for members of the LTA Men's or Women's Tennis Team to nominate players as outlined in NCAA shortlisting criteria in 2.2.
Friday 17 November @ 5pm	Deadline for players with exceptional circumstances to inform the Performance Operations Manager via e-mail (Sophie.disley@lta.org.uk) (as outlined in section 2.5.)
Friday 24 November @ 5pm	Players will be informed by this date if they have or have not been shortlisted due to exceptional circumstances.
Friday 24 November @ 5pm	Deadline for players to e-mail Sophie.disley@lta.org.uk if they meet the shortlisting criteria but do not wish to be considered.
Week commencing 27 November	PSP selection meeting
Within one week of the selection meeting	PSP communication of decisions
Within three days of the selection decisions being communicated	Deadline for any intent of appeal to be submitted to sophie.disley@lta.org.uk .
TBC	PSP player induction (NTC)

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

Appendix 2 – Deployment of LTA staff

In certain circumstances, a member of the LTA Men's or Women's coaching team may be deployed to coach a player. This decision lies with the Head of Men's or Women's Tennis and the Performance Director. In making such a decision, available resource and the probability of a player reaching the top 100 will be considered. The cost of this deployment will be deducted from the player's overall support package.

An LTA member of staff may be deployed as a coach for a PSP player. If this is not a full time deployment, the player will be required to demonstrate to the Head of Men's or Women's Tennis how the remaining time will be appropriately resourced to ensure progression is optimised.

Where an LTA member of staff is deployed, an appropriate deduction will be made from the player's overall support package in relation to the LTA staff member's time and expenses.