

SELECTION POLICY: U14 NATIONAL AGE GROUP PROGRAMME

1. Introduction

The National Age Group Programme (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 the creation of a structured individual development plan (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.

This document outlines the criteria and process for gaining selection for the NAGP for the period of 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020. Selection for the NAGP is for the period outlined above however, a player's status will be continually reviewed against their IDP.

The LTA may amend this policy periodically. Any amended policy shall be published on the LTA website.

2. Benefits

We will work in collaboration with the player, their coaching team and their family team to establish and support the delivery of a high quality programme alongside a well-informed IDP. Those players selected for the NAGP will:

- Be invited to attend all National Camps (UK and overseas) and a number of Tournament Trips,
- Receive frequent training visits from their designated LTA Pathway Coach,
- Access to expert advice from the LTA's Sports Science and Sports Medicine team,
- Receive a reduction of £3,000 on fees at a Regional Player Development Centre,
- Be awarded an LTA grant of up to £10,000 or nominated for a SportsAid award of £1,000¹.

3. Number of places

There are a maximum number of NAGP places. In 2019-20 there will be places on the programme for up to 16 U14 players and 16 U12 players. Where possible, places will be split equally across boys and girls – subject to the outcome of process described in section 6.2. There is no obligation to fill every available place.

Acceptance of a place on the NAGP is encouraged but optional. If a player chooses to decline the offer they will not be restricted from selection to represent Great Britain, but they will not receive any of the benefits identified in Section 2.

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 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. Eligibility

5.1. *Age Eligibility.* For 2019-20, to be eligible for the NAGP a player must be:

5.1.1. Born in 2006 and 2007 for the U14 programme.

¹ Those selected for the U14 programme will receive an LTA grant of up to £10,000 and those selected for the U12 programme will be nominated for a SportsAid award of up to £1,000.

5.1.2. Born in 2008 for the U12 programme. Players born in 2009 may be considered for the U12 programme if they meet the factors identified in section 6.

5.2. *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 April 2018, will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Such players must contact PlayerPathway@lta.org.uk by 16 August 2019 to confirm they would like to be considered.

5.3. *Performance level requirements.* In addition to 5.1 and 5.2, to be eligible for the NAGP a player must fulfil either of the requirements outlined in 5.3.1 or 5.3.2.

5.3.1. All eligible players who were awarded an NAGP agreement in 2018-19 will be automatically considered for selection unless the player (and parents/legal guardian) has expressed that they do not want to be considered.

5.3.2. All eligible players who have achieved one of the following requirements:

- Selected for a National Camp between September 2018 and the date of the selection meeting;
- Selected for an LTA Official Trip between September 2018 and the date of the selection meeting – see Table 1.
- Selected for Regional Training in 2019-20 AND nominated by the region's LTA National Age-Group Coach.

Table 1 shows a list of eligible LTA Official Trips since September 2018

U12	Tennis Europe Winter Cup, January; Open Super 12 Auray, February; Passagespoirs, May / June; Lampo Trophy, July; Tennis Europe Nations Challenge, July / August.
U14	Tennis Europe Winter Cup, February; Croatia Tennis Europe, April; Palermo Tennis Europe, June; Tennis Europe Summer Cup, July; Tennis Europe European Champs, August; Ulm Tennis Europe, August

6. Selection Process

6.1. *Selection Panel.* The NAGP Selection Panel (the Panel) will include the Head of the National Performance Pathway (Chair), 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 voting 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. Other members of the LTA Performance Team may also be invited by the Chair to assist with facilitating the meeting.

6.2. *Evaluation of player suitability.* The Panel will use its professional opinion to consider which players have the greatest future potential to meet the National Academy selection criteria within two to four years. All players that fulfil the criteria set out in section 5 of this policy will be considered. The panel will consider the factors listed below (and when doing so will take into account any aspects that may influence these factors, such as their age and physical maturation, their injury and training history, and/or their lifestyle and training environment):

- The player has an all-court game which can be developed into a defined game style that could be successful at the next stage of the pathway.
- The player demonstrates smart decision making, good problem solving abilities and a level of focus in matches, irrespective of the match situation.
- The player's drive and attitude in training and competition shows a willingness to learn and a desire to win matches.
- The player has physical attributes that can be developed into strengths that could influence the outcome of matches at the next stage of the pathway.

- The player has emerging strengths which can be developed into weapons that could be successful at the next stage of the pathway.
- The player has competitive results (in their current year of birth or above at Tennis Europe and National Grade 1 & 2 competitions) and the capability to beat players of a higher level than themselves.
- The player has no major areas of development which could prove to be a limiting factor and prevent them from being successful at the next stage of the pathway.

When evaluating a player against these factors, the Panel will reflect on the following for the period between September 2018 and the selection meeting:

- Progress against the objectives identified in the IDP (if an existing NAGP player),
- Performance at a National Camp,
- Performance at Regional Training,
- Existing scouting data and match reports,
- Results in Grade 1 and 2 national competitions, and
- Any performance limiting factors (see below).

6.3. *Performance limiting factors.* A 'performance limiting factor' is an injury or illness that has occurred between September 2018 and the selection meeting (or combination of injuries and illnesses) which resulted in a significant interruption or impact upon playing for at least 12 weeks – intermittent or continuous. Those considered for selection that have had a performance limiting injury between September 2018 and the selection meeting 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.

7. Player Agreement

All selected players must sign the LTA's NAGP Player Agreement in order to receive any of the benefits identified in section 2. 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).

8. Camp and trip invites for non-NAGP players

It is recognised that there could be some additional players who are not selected for the NAGP that may benefit from involvement in National Camps and Tournament Trips. To ensure that the appropriate players gain these opportunities, the National Age-Group Coaches will be able to make the following nominations based on the factors identified in section 6.2:

- Up to two boys and two girls per National Camp; and
- One boy and one girl per Tournament Trip.

For each activity, these nominations will be reviewed and confirmed by the Lead National Age-Group Coach. Only players who are invited to attend activity will be notified. Notification will be provided at least three weeks prior to the camp or trip that the player is being invited to.

Any non-NAGP player who is invited to and attends a National Camp or Tournament Trip will become eligible for the reduction on fees at a Regional Player Development Centre.

In addition, all age eligible players (in accordance with 5.1) who are part of a National Academy programme (either GB National Tennis Academy at the University of Stirling or Loughborough University National Tennis Academy) will be eligible to partake in all National Camps and Tournament Trips. Player attendance will be in agreement with National Academy Head Coaches.

9. Key dates

The Panel will meet the week commencing 9 September 2019 with all selected players advised by 13 September 2019 if they will be offered a place on the NAGP.

The NAGP Induction for the U14 squad will take place at the NTC from 12-16 October 2019, with the NAGP Induction for the U12 squad taking place at the NTC from 20-23 October 2019.

10. Appeals

The LTA operate a formal appeal procedure for challenging NAGP selection decisions (including deselection and non-renewal of an NAGP place). Such an appeal is to be made in writing (with full reasons) within 72 hours of receiving the decision and sent to Sophie.Disley@lta.org.uk. This appeal will then be reviewed by a panel that will be chaired by the Performance Director (or their nominee).

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); or
- b. The decision has been reached on the basis of an error of fact.

The 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; 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.