

# LTA PRO SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME SELECTION POLICY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This policy explains how players will be selected to the Pro Scholarship Programme (PSP) for 2022. The following players are eligible to be considered:

- Male and female players aged between 16 and 24 (inclusive) on 31/12/21; and
- Male and female players aged 15 or younger on 31/12/21 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 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 graduate from a UK / US university in 2021, (by 30/06/22), 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 (as published on the ATP / WTA website on the date of the selection meeting) are not eligible to be considered by the Selection Panel.

## 2. CONSIDERATION FOR SELECTION (SHORTLISTING)

To be considered for selection, players must:

- a) meet either
  - i. the shortlisting ranking criteria (2.1); or
  - ii. receive a LTA Coach Nomination (2.2)

and

- b) meet the minimum physical standard (2.3).

Only players who fulfil the requirements of a) and b) will be considered by the Selection Panel unless there are exceptional circumstances (2.4).

### 2.1 Shortlisting ranking criteria

Any players who have met the following ranking criteria at any point between Monday 26 July 2021 and the Monday of the week of the selection meeting (inclusive) will be considered for selection if they have also met the minimum physical standards outlined at 2.3. The ages referred to in the tables below are the age of the player on 31 December 2021. 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 2.3 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

All players who have met these criteria (and the minimum physical requirements outlined in 2.3) will be automatically considered for selection. If you do not wish to be considered, please email Mary Joyner ([mary.joyner@lta.org.uk](mailto:mary.joyner@lta.org.uk)) by 5pm on 5 November.

For all key dates in this selection process, please see appendix 3.

### **2.2 LTA Coach Nomination**

Due to the impact of COVID-19 on international competition and therefore ranking progression, for 2022 selections, players may be nominated for consideration for the PSP where there has been significant progression towards the shortlisting targets outlined in 2.1. Players can be nominated by members of the LTA Men's or Women's Tennis Teams. Players must receive a minimum of two nominations in order to be shortlisted. In making a nomination, the nominator must outline using match observations from 2021 (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 Physical requirements for shortlisting**

All players who have met the shortlisting ranking targets (2.1) or received a LTA Coach Nomination (2.2) must then also meet the minimum physical standard (within the 16 weeks prior to 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.

Any players who have met or are likely to meet the ranking targets or who have received a LTA Coach Nomination must complete the LTA physical testing protocol at the NTC by the 29 October 2021. Players should contact Chris McLeod ([chris.mcleod@lta.org.uk](mailto:chris.mcleod@lta.org.uk)) to arrange testing. This can either be done at the NTC or videoed and sent for analysis, please note it is the players responsibility to arrange this process.

## ***2.4 Exceptional circumstances***

2.4 If a player has had a long term injury / illness (minimum of 3 consecutive months) during 2021, or has missed a minimum of 3 consecutive months of the 2021 season, then they must supply in writing to the Performance Operations Manager (via email [mary.joyner@lta.org.uk](mailto:mary.joyner@lta.org.uk)), by 5pm on Friday 5 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 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 2021, 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 factor that prevented the player from meeting the shortlisting 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 (2.1), received a LTA Coach Nomination (2.2) or have met the minimum physical standards (2.3). Players will be informed by 5 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***

All players shortlisted for the PSP will be considered by the Selection Panel in a formal selection meeting during the week commencing 8 November 2021. 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 four of the Type 2 criteria.

#### *Type 1:*

Players must have achieved the Type 1 criteria at any point between the 26 July 2021 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 2021). 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):

- 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.
- 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.
- Heart:** The player consistently gives their best effort and shows composure in key moments.
- 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.
- Athlete:** The player:
  - Consistently demonstrating good court movement, robustness and on court endurance; or
  - demonstrates physical strengths by meeting the A standard in at least one of the three functional area tests (as defined in appendix 2) and the B standard for the remaining two functional areas (based on physical testing completed within 16 weeks prior of the selection date).

### 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 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;
- 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***

Normally there are up to 4 new places available for the PSP each year. However if more players meet the selection criteria than there are places available and budget allows then additional players may be selected. If more players meet the criteria than there are places 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, 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 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 plan 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 (see appendix 4). In such circumstances the financial value of deploying that coach will be deducted from the grant that is available. Based on all of the above, the level of support available will differ from player to player.

All selected players will be offered an initial 2 year term with the overall length of support available (subject to the renewal process outlined in 3.6) normally being a maximum of 5 years.

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. This may be extended for a further year if they sustain a significant injury which results in them dropping outside of the top 100.

### **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 or 4), each player will be formally reviewed by the Selection Panel in 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.

### **3.7 Players at the end of their 5-year PSP funding**

The PSP is normally a 5 year programme of support. If at the end of year 5 a player remains on track to achieve the objective of the PSP programme (according to evidence, expert opinion and consideration of the LTA prediction tool which will be used to inform the decision making in line with 3.3), the Selection Panel may at their absolute discretion offer a one year extension to the existing funding agreement, renewable on an annual basis.

## **4. RECORDING AND COMMUNICATION OF DECISION**

Each decision to select or not select 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 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. Such an appeal is to be made in writing (with full reasons and supporting evidence) within 7 days of the applicant receiving his/her selection decision to the nominated member of the LTA Executive Team or their nominee (the Appeal Chair) 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 2.4) or not receiving a LTA Coach Nomination (as outlined in 2.2) 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 – Explanation of Athlete physical tests and criteria (linked to Physical requirements for shortlisting section 2.3).

To support tennis players we are aiming to develop players who are great movers, powerful and robust. Within this context, all players who are being considered for selection will be evaluated against their testing results in these three areas.

The specific tests and standards can be seen below. It should be noted that targets in each area are derived from on court elite player analysis and supported by age group/programme norms.

### Selection Criteria – Athlete

The information below gives clarity and additional context to the underpinning areas that support the athlete element of selection.

- a) Consistently demonstrating good court movement, robustness and on court endurance through meeting the required standard in 2 out of the 3 areas below

	Robust	Powerful	Movement
<b>Metric</b>	12 month match count	On court endurance	On court movement
<b>Source</b>	Match count	Scouting	Scouting
<b>Standard</b>	Evidence across a 12 month period	Consistent scouting 'Good' or above (seen through average score of >4 across a 12 month period)	Consistent scouting 'Good' or above (seen through average score of >4 across a 12 month period)

### OR

- b) demonstrates physical strengths that underpin movement, robustness and power by meeting the A standard in at least one of the three functional area tests (as defined in appendix 2A) and the B standard for the remaining two functional areas (based on physical testing completed within 16 weeks prior of the selection date).

	Robust	Powerful	Movement
<b>Metric</b>	SL 3 hop	Ability to repeat power	Change of direction ability
<b>Source</b>	3 hop test	LTA Shuttle and 10m time	Change of direction test
<b>Standard</b>	A standard - >4x body height B Standard - > 3.5 x body height	A Standard - >150sec shuttle AND <1.75 10m (m) - >160sec shuttle AND <1.85 10m (f) B Standard - >160sec shuttle AND <1.85 10m (m) - >170sec shuttle AND <1.95 10m (f)	A Standard - <2.4 sec* (m) - <2.5 sec* (f) B Standard - <2.5* sec (m) - <2.6* (f)

\*Specific protocols and additional test information can be requested by contact [chris.mcleod@lta.org.uk](mailto:chris.mcleod@lta.org.uk)

### Appendix 3 – Key dates in PSP Selection process (all 2021) \*

Date	Milestone
Between 16 July – 5 November	Any players meeting the ranking targets must meet the physical shortlisting targets during this period.
Between 26 July – 8 November	Players need to achieve the shortlisting ranking criteria during this period.
Before Friday 29 October	Physical testing available for shortlisting (e-mail <a href="mailto:chris.mcleod@lta.org.uk">chris.mcleod@lta.org.uk</a> to arrange)
Friday 29 October @ 5pm	Deadline for members of the LTA Men's or Women's Tennis Team to nominate players as outlined in 2.2
Friday 29 October @ 5pm	Deadline for players with exceptional circumstances to inform the Performance Operations Manager via e-mail ( <a href="mailto:mary.joyner@lta.org.uk">mary.joyner@lta.org.uk</a> ) (as outlined in section 2.4)
Friday 5 November @ 5pm	Players will be informed by this date if they have or have not been shortlisted due to exceptional circumstances.
Friday 5 November @ 5pm	Deadline for players to e-mail <a href="mailto:mary.joyner@lta.org.uk">mary.joyner@lta.org.uk</a> if they meet the shortlisting criteria but do not wish to be considered.
Week commencing 8 November	PSP selection meeting
Within one week of the selection meeting	PSP communication of decisions
Within one week of the selection decisions being communicated	Deadline for any appeals to be submitted to <a href="mailto:mary.joyner@lta.org.uk">mary.joyner@lta.org.uk</a>
TBC	PSP player induction (NTC)

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

## **Appendix 4 – 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 taken into account. 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.