

The Pro Scholarship Programme – programme overview and selection process

1. Introduction

The Pro Scholarship Programme (PSP) is approaching the end of its first full year. Evidence to date suggests the programme is making a positive impact on player development. However, we have also identified some elements of the programme which need to evolve to optimise our support to players and their teams.

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the PSP for 2018 and clearly define the selection process.

2. The Pro Scholarship Programme

The PSP is an intensive programme of player support targeted at GB's most promising elite players. It is targeted at those players who, using multiple sources of evidence, are demonstrating the head, heart, legs and weapons to transition into successful top 100 players within 1-5 years.

We will work in collaboration with the player and their team to establish and deliver a world class individual development plan through a significant financial grant and / or the provision of expert science and medicine practitioners at the National Tennis Centre.

The number of new PSP places in 2018 will be limited to 5. The selection process explained in section 5 and appendix 1 will be transparent and rigorous.

The 2018 PSP will have 3 significant differences to the 2017 programme as follows:

- The programme is targeted at players with the potential to reach the top 100 and not the top 200. This shift in aspiration means we will not offer the underwrite scheme to senior pro players in 2018;
- Player's selected for the PSP are eligible for a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 5 years of support, not a maximum of 4 as per 2017. The length of the player agreement will be determined by the PSP selection panel; and
- Player's selected for the PSP may receive up to £70,000 in annual funding investment. This increase is intended to reflect the annual costs for aspiring professional players.

Further headline details of the PSP are given in table 1:

Table 1: The PSP programme

Stage of pathway	Pro Tour pathway
Objective	Enable more British players to reach the world's top 100
Player selection	Centrally selected by LTA selection panel (it is intended that the LTA selection panel will include an independent tennis expert)
Number of players	Up to 5 new players in total for 2018 (players already on the PSP programme are not included in this figure)
Age of players	Normally 16+ but players U16 who meet the shortlisting criteria will also be eligible
Time commitment / eligibility	This is a full time programme of support. Players who are at or have chosen to go to either a British or US university are not eligible for selection through this programme.
LTA case management	Each player will be case managed by the LTA Head Coach (Men's or Women's) or their nominee, and the LTA Head of Science and Medicine.
Staff team / operating model	Each player will use LTA investment to source their own coaching team. LTA Science and Medicine delivery support will be available to those who accept the terms of the

	support outlined in the LTA player agreement. The LTA will not coach players selected for the PSP.
Player review	Formally twice per year against agreed development goals and an individual development plan.
Funding support	Up to £70K per annum for a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 5 years; or until the player finishes in the top 100 on the year end ATP / WTA ranking (in which case the length of agreement may be reviewed and amended).

3. Eligible players

The following players are eligible to apply for the PSP:

- Male and female players aged between 16 and 24 (inclusive) on 31/12/17; and
- Male and female players aged 15 or younger on 31/12/17 who meet the shortlisting criteria

As the PSP is an intensive programme of support for aspiring professional players, players attending (or committed to attending) a US or UK university are not eligible. Players who decide to play university tennis will however be eligible for support through other programmes in the player pathway.

In addition, players who have earned more than US\$1 million in their career (as published on the ATP / WTA website) are not eligible for the PSP.

Players aged between 11 and 20 (inclusive) on 31/12/17 who don't meet the shortlisting criteria may be eligible to apply for support through the National Age Group Programme. The National Age Group Programme is designed to support players aged 12-21 who may fulfil the PSP selection criteria in the next 1-4 years. Support through this annual programme will include National Coach Case Management, Science and Medicine support and a grant to support their coaching / training programme. Further information on this pathway programme and the selection process associated with it will be published in late October 2017.

4. Application and shortlisting process

In order to objectively shortlist players in accordance with the PSP's purpose, ranking criteria have been introduced. Players who meet the shortlisting ranking criteria (stated in appendix 1) will be automatically considered for PSP selection if they 'opt in' via e-mail to Sophie Thomas (Sophie.thomas@lta.org.uk) by 5pm on Monday 30th October. In this e-mail, applicants must confirm that they wish to be considered for selection and, intend to work in collaboration with the LTA and their support team to meet the objectives of the PSP programme.

The shortlisting targets have been created using a combination of the following evidence sources:

- Head Coach of Men's and Head Coach of Women's Tennis' (and their coaching teams) expert opinion;
- Analysis of current players' ATP / WTA rankings (based on the rankings at 25th September 2017) 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 precedent tool which establishes a level of confidence that a player of a certain age and ranking will go on to reach the ATP / WTA top 100 and 200 by tracking those with the same age / ranking profile who have previously done so in the available ranking history.

It is also recognised that there could be outliers to the shortlisting targets. Therefore, the Head Coach of Men's Tennis and the Head Coach of Women's Tennis will be able to make two

discretionary nominations to the Performance Director and the Head of Pro Tour Pathway. Any players not meeting the shortlisting ranking criteria who are 16 or over on 31/12/17 and would like to be considered for such a nomination must e-mail Sophie Thomas (Sophie.thomas@lta.org.uk) by 5pm on Wednesday 1st November. In submitting their nominations, the Head Coaches must outline using relevant evidence sources:

- a) Potential reasons why the player has not achieved the shortlisting ranking targets; and
- b) Why they believe the player has the potential to meet the PSP selection criteria in 2017 setting out which criteria they think they will meet.

The Performance Director and the Head of Pro Tour Pathway will review any 'discretionary nominations' on or around Friday 3rd November to make a decision on which, if any, discretionary nominees will be shortlisted based on the information supplied to them (with the Performance Director having the casting vote in the event of a tie). Only players who receive a discretionary nomination will be notified of the outcome.

Once the outcomes of the discretionary nominations are known and communicated; the final shortlist will be confirmed.

All shortlisted players will then be invited to attend profiling between Monday 6th November and Friday 24th November. Profiling will be a facilitated discussion between the player, their support team and relevant LTA staff. All profiling will be chaired by the Head of Pro Tour Pathway. Full details of the profiling will be sent to the player once the date for the profiling session has been arranged. Please note that some profiling sessions might be arranged before the final shortlist is completed if the player has already achieved the shortlisting ranking criteria.

5. Selection process and criteria

Once all the player profiling has taken place, the performance selection panel will convene on or around Tuesday 28th November to consider all shortlisted players for selection. Up to 5 players will then be selected for the 2018 PSP programme. The full selection criteria for the PSP, and the process that the selection panel will follow is outlined in appendix 1.

6. Communication of selection / non-selection

All shortlisted players will be notified of a decision by Friday 1st December. Shortlisted players who aren't selected will be given reasons why they haven't been, and provided with other sources of player support that may be available to them in 2018. Non-selected players have the right to appeal, the details of which are outlined in the selection policy in appendix 1.

7. Programme induction

All selected players will be expected to attend a programme induction at the NTC during December 2017. This will be a multi-disciplinary induction and will be led by the Head Coach of Men's / Women's Tennis, the Head of Science and Medicine and the Head of Pro Tour Pathway. 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. If player's would like to know more about this prior to entering the selection process then please contact Sophie Thomas (Sophie.thomas@lta.org.uk).

Appendix one: LTA Pro Scholarship Programme (PSP) selection policy

1. Introduction

This policy explains how players will be selected to the Pro Scholarship Programme. The following players are eligible to apply:

- Male and female players aged between 16 and 24 (inclusive) on 31/12/17; and
- Male and female players aged 15 or younger on 31/12/17 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, their responsibilities and their commitments to the LTA's PSP.

Players attending a UK / US university are not eligible to apply for the PSP.

Players who have earned more than US\$1 million (as published on the ATP / WTA website) are not eligible to apply.

2. Shortlisting

Automatic shortlisting

Any players who have met the following criteria at any point between 31st July and 30th October 2017 (inclusive) will be automatically shortlisted for the PSP (the ages referred to in the table below are the age of the player on 31st December 2017). These shortlisting targets have been established using multiple evidence sources (as outlined in section 4 of the LTA Pro Scholarship programme document) 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.

Women

Age	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Shortlisting criteria	WTA 800 or ITF 100	WTA 600 or ITF 50	WTA 500 or ITF 25	WTA 400	WTA 350	WTA 300	WTA 200	WTA 200	WTA 200

Men

Age	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Shortlisting criteria	ATP 1300 or ITF 150	ATP 1100 or ITF 75	ATP 1000 or ITF 50	ATP 600	ATP 500	ATP 400	ATP 300	ATP 250	ATP 200

Players who meet these criteria must confirm via e-mail to Sophie Thomas (Sophie.thomas@lta.org.uk) that they would like to be considered for selection by 5pm on Monday 30th October.

Discretionary shortlisting

The Head Coaches of Men's and Women's Tennis will each be able to make a maximum of two discretionary nominations for shortlisting. These must be submitted, with the relevant evidence to the Performance Director and the Head of Pro Tour Pathway by 5pm on Wednesday 1st November. Any players not meeting the shortlisting ranking criteria who are 16 or over on 31/12/17 and would like to be considered for such a nomination must e-mail Sophie Thomas (Sophie.thomas@lta.org.uk) by Wednesday 1st November at 5pm. In submitting their nominations, the Head Coaches must outline, using relevant evidence sources:

- a) Potential reasons why the player has not achieved the shortlisting ranking targets; and
- b) Why they believe the player has the potential to meet the PSP selection criteria in 2017 setting out which criteria they think they will meet.

The Performance Director and the Head of Pro Tour Pathway will review any 'discretionary nominations' on or around Friday 3rd November to make a decision on which, if any, discretionary nominees will be shortlisted based on the information supplied to them (with the Performance Director having the casting vote in the event of a tie). Only players who receive a discretionary nomination will be notified of the outcome.

Exceptional circumstances

If a player has had a long term injury / illness (minimum of 3 months) during 2017, then they must supply in writing to the Head of Pro Tour Pathway (by 5pm on Wednesday 1st November), please send this via Sophie.thomas@lta.org.uk :

- Details of the injury including the full period missed; and
- Medical / physio reports confirming the injury

The Head of Pro Tour Pathway, the Head of Science and Medicine and the Head Coach of Men's / Women's Tennis will then consider the evidence and impact of the injury and decide whether this factor alone prevented the player from meeting the shortlisting targets. If that is deemed to be the case then the player will be shortlisted due to exceptional circumstances. If not, then they will be notified accordingly.

All shortlisted players will then be profiled and considered for selection by the selection panel.

3. The selection process

The selection panel

The selection panel will comprise of the Performance Director and the following (or their nominees):

- Head Coach of Men's Tennis
- Head Coach of Women's Tennis
- Head of Pro Tour Pathway

The selection panel may also have an independent Pro 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.

A member of the LTA's legal team shall 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 Team may also be invited by the chair to attend to record selection decisions.

Selection criteria

All players shortlisted for the PSP will be considered by the selection panel in a formal selection meeting on or around Tuesday 28th November. 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. This must include number 3.
- 2) The player doesn’t achieve the Type 1 criteria but does achieve four of the ‘Type 2’ criteria. This must include number 3.

Type 1:

Players must have achieved the Type 1 criteria at any point between the 31st July 2017 and the date of the selection meeting (inclusive) (the ages referred to in the table below are the age of the player on 31st December 2017). 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 650 or ITF 40	WTA 550 or ITF 20	WTA 300 or ITF 10	WTA 250	WTA 200	WTA 200	WTA 175	WTA 150	WTA 150

Men

Age	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Type 1 target	ATP 1100 or ITF 50	ATP 950 or ITF 25	ATP 700 or ITF 10	ATP 400	ATP 300	ATP 250	ATP 200	ATP 150	ATP 150

Type 2:

The following Type 2 criteria will be applied with consideration to the objective of the PSP programme (for British players to reach the top 100 ATP / WTA singles ranking):

1. 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.
2. The player has clearly defined and consistently applied weapons (consistent with their game style) which can be successful now and in the future at Tour level.
3. The player fights and competes unconditionally in competitive (and training) situations.
4. The player has physical attributes that either:

- a) Overall positively influence performance and the outcome of matches; or
 - b) Demonstrate excellent physical qualities (based on physical testing) for their age and stage.
5. The player consistently makes good decisions, finds solutions (and ways to win) and retains focus in match situations.
 6. The player is committed to a training plan that has the appropriate volume and intensity for elite performance and that targets any limitations identified during observations.

Using evidence and expert opinion to support decision making

The following sources of evidence and expert opinion alone will 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;
- Statistical analysis of game styles at the top of men's and women's professional tennis;
- Head Coach of Men's and Women's Tennis expert judgement;
- Expert coaching panels (made up of the men's or women's coaching teams and independent coaches);
- Outputs of the player profiling; and
- LTA Physical testing data.

In the case of a tie as to whether a particular criterion has been met, the Chair will have the casting vote.

Finalising numbers

There will be 5 new places available for the PSP in 2018. If more players meet the selection criteria than there are places available, the following priority order will be applied to establish a rank order of candidates:

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 there are still too many players for the number of places available, or there is a tie, the Chair will have the casting vote.

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 the current and potential performance level of the player as well as consideration of the training and competition plan agreed in the profiling session and the overall PSP budget.

The length of the contract will be guided by the age of the player (on 31/12/17) in relation to the age parameters of the PSP programme. All selected players will be offered a minimum of 2 years support with the overall length of the term ordinarily calculated in line with the following guidelines with exceptions made by the panel where they deem it appropriate:

Age	Length of agreement
16	5 years
17	5 years
18	5 years

19	5 years
20	5 years
21	5 years
22	4 years
23	3 years
24	2 years

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.

4. Recording and Communication of Decision

Each decision to select or not select will be recorded on a Selection Panel Decision Form. The form is provided at Appendix 2.

The Chair of the Selection Panel will make reasonable efforts either himself or through his senior management team to ensure that the shortlisted players are notified within one week of the conclusion of the selection meeting. Players will be informed that they have either been selected or not selected.

Once decisions have been communicated, successful candidates will be invited to a planning / induction to discuss support for 2018. All players will be expected to sign a player agreement before any funding will be released.

5. Appeals

Applicants who have not been selected by the panel are entitled to appeal against the selection panel's decision. Such an appeal is to be made in writing (with full reasons) within 14 days to the Legal Director or his nominee (the Appeal Chair) of the LTA 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 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.

Appendix 2: Selection Panel Decision Form

Date of Selection Meeting:		
Present:		
Players Name:	Year of Birth:	Age:
Currently on contract YES/NO		
Current Ranking	WTA/ATP	ITF
Date of rankings		
Information Considered		
Summary of discussion		
Give reasons for selection or non-selection based on the criteria outlined in the PSP selection policy:		
Selected for PSP	YES / NO	Grant offered