

MEN'S AND WOMEN'S PROGRAMME AND NATIONAL AGE GROUP PROGRAMME U16 SCHOLARSHIPS SELECTION POLICY 2024

1. INTRODUCTION

The Men's & Women's Programme (MWP) provides a range of support to players normally aged 16+ who are not a part of the Pro Scholarship Programme (PSP). It is intended to support players as they progress towards the PSP, competing in Grand Slam competitions in singles and doubles and / or representing Great Britain in Davis Cup or Billie Jean King Cup teams. Full information on all areas can be viewed on the [LTA website](#).

The National Age Group Programme U16 (NAGP U16) provides a range of support to a select group of players normally aged between 14 – 16 who are not at a National Academy, nor are receiving NAGP 14U or Pro Transition (MWP/PSP) programme scholarships.

Both the MWP and NAGP U16 have a number of components of support with the scholarship being one element. This document outlines the shortlisting and selection criteria and process for the Scholarship components only referred to in this document as MWP and NAGP U16 respectively.

Selected players will receive either an MWP Scholarship (normally for players aged 16 and above or for players U16 who meet the ranking criteria for 16+ players) or an NAGP U16 Scholarship (normally for players aged 14-16 who meet the relevant National Academy selection criteria).

Benefits

The LTA Men's and Women's tennis teams will work in collaboration with the players selected for the MWP or NAGP U16 and their teams to establish and support the delivery of an individual development plan (IDP) to help optimise player progression. In addition, players selected for an MWP or NAGP U16 Scholarship will be eligible to:

- Receive a funding grant of normally between £5,000 and £15,000 (NAGP U16) or £15,000 and £35,000 (MWP) to support their coaching programme;
- Receive a funding agreement for minimum of 1 year or maximum of up to 2 years;
- Receive regular visits from their designated LTA National Coach to understand and support the implementation of the IDP and competition schedule;
- Receive targeted Sports Science/Sports Medicine profiling and programme guidance based on the needs identified in their IDP and as outlined in the [NTC Access Policy](#).
- Access to the National Tennis Centre (NTC) facilities in line with the [NTC Access Policy](#)

Players selected for the MWP or NAGP U16 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 to the LTA's MWP or NAGP U16. Selected players are expected to engage with their designated LTA National Coach and the NTC base coach to arrange access to their allocation of training time at the National Tennis Centre (NTC).

Number of places

There is no minimum or maximum number of places available on the MWP and NAGP U16 but there is a budget limit.

Acceptance of a Scholarship place is encouraged but optional. If a player chooses to decline the offer for any reason, they will still be eligible for any of the other elements of the MWP or NAGP U16 but there will be no formal programme support available.

A player will not be eligible for the MWP or NAGP U16 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).

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

2. CONSIDERATION FOR SELECTION (SHORTLISTING) FOR MWP

The MWP will target players aged 16-22 (in exceptional cases younger*) who are showing the potential to meet the selection criteria for the PSP within 1-2 years. In determining the level of grant allocated to selected players, the following factors may be considered:

- Current ranking trajectory relative to the PSP selection targets for age.
- Observations and LTA National Coaches expert opinions (which may include scouting reports, LTA physical testing data, performances at National Camps or official trips and match reports), demonstrating the potential / progress of the player.
- Needs of the player's programme / tournament schedule (where possible linked to an IDP).
- Total budget available.

**Please note, selection for the MWP will normally be available to players 16+. However, players aged 12 to 15 years old who meet the criteria outlined in 2.2.1, will also be considered for selection.*

2.1 Eligibility

The following players are eligible to be considered if they meet the relevant shortlisting criteria:

- Players aged:
 - between 16 and 22 (inclusive) on 31/12/23; or
 - between 12 and 15 on 31/12/23 as outlined in 2.2.1 or
 - up to 23 on 31/12/23 if they have finished at a UK/US University in 2022 or 2023.
- Players are eligible to represent Great Britain.
- Players are expected to be playing a full tournament schedule relevant to their age and stage to be eligible.

Non-British passport holders

Those players who do not currently hold a British passport, but who are eligible for one, will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Such players who are interested in a Scholarship must email Sophie.disley@lta.org.uk by 10 November 2023 and provide: 1) evidence on how they are eligible for a British passport, 2) where they are in the process of obtaining a British passport, and 3) details of their tennis background.

2.2 Shortlisting Criteria

To be considered for selection, players must meet either:

- i. the shortlisting ranking criteria (2.2.1); or
- ii. the NCAA shortlisting criteria (2.2.2); or

Only players who fulfil one of the requirements above will be considered by the Selection Panel unless there are exceptional circumstances (2.2.3).

2.2.1 Shortlisting ranking criteria

Players aged 16-22 inclusive 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.

Women

16*	17	18	19	20	21	22	23**
WTA 900 or ITF 100	WTA 750 or ITF 50	WTA 600 or ITF 25	WTA 450	WTA 375	WTA 350	WTA 300	WTA 300

Men

16*	17	18	19	20	21	22	23**
ITF 150	ITF 75	ATP 850 or ITF 35	ATP 600	ATP 450	ATP 400	ATP 350	ATP 300

*Players younger than 16 years of age who meet the 16+ ranking criteria will be deemed to meet the shortlisting ranking criteria and therefore will be shortlisted for consideration.

**Please note, the ranking criteria for players aged 23 on 31 December 2023 is only applicable to those who have finished at a US or UK University in 2022 or 2023.

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

- The expert opinions of the LTA National Junior Coaches and the LTA Men's and Women's National Coaches.
- An analysis of current players on the ITF junior ranking broken down by age and ranking bracket; and
- A ranking prediction tool which establishes a level of probability that a player will reach a certain ranking in the future based on their current age and ranking. This takes into account all weekly ATP / WTA ranking data from January 2000.

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 on the ITF Junior, ATP and WTA rankings.

2.2.2 Shortlisting criteria for NCAA players

Players who will finish 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 between 101-250 ATP when finishing NCAA of 20 (as of the published ranking in June post NCAA Individual Championships)
- Achieving the average ATP ranking of players between 101-250 ATP when finishing NCAA of 700 (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, 2 finals of ITF 25k event, winner of 2 ITF 15k events, winner or finalist of 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 MWP minimum ranking criteria at 2.2.1
- Minimum of two LTA National Coach nominations. In making a nomination, the nominator must outline using match observations from 2023 (international and/or relevant domestic events) and, if relevant, consideration of ranking / game progression over the last 12-24 months (including significant ranking progress in relation to their age and ranking targets outlined in 2.2.1). This must be supported by evidence and include why they believe the player should be considered for the MWP taking into consideration the criteria outlined at 2.3.2.

Women's shortlisting criteria:

- Achieving the average NCAA ranking of players between 101-250 WTA when finishing NCAA of 10 (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 800 (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 MWP minimum ranking criteria at 2.2.1
- Minimum of two LTA National Coach nominations. In making a nomination, the nominator must outline using match observations from 2023 (international and/or relevant domestic events) and, if relevant, consideration of ranking / game progression over the last 12-24 months (including significant ranking progress in relation to their age and ranking targets outlined in 2.2.1). This must be supported by evidence and include why they believe the player should be considered for the MWP taking into consideration the criteria outlined at 2.3.2.

2.2.3 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 consecutive 3 months of the 2023 season due to another exceptional reason, then they must supply in writing to the Performance Operations Manager (by 5pm on Friday 17 November) via e-mail to Sophie.disley@lta.org.uk.

- 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 LTA National Coaches and the Head of Performance Science and Medicine (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 2.2.1.

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 criteria 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 either the ranking targets in 2.2.1 or the criteria in 2.2.2.

All shortlisted players will then be considered for selection by the Selection Panel.

2.3 The Selection Process

2.3.1 The Selection Panel

The Selection Panel will consist of the following (or their nominees):

- Performance Director (Chair)
- Head of Men's Tennis
- Head of Women's Tennis

The Performance Director will chair the Selection Panel. The Selection Panel may also have an independent professional tennis expert (typically a leading coach, senior administrator or former player). 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 Chair to formally sit on the Panel then they will have a vote.

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. A member of the LTA Performance Operations Team may also be invited by the Chair to attend and record selection decisions.

2.3.2 Selection criteria

The selection criteria below will be applied with consideration to the overall objective of the MWP (specifically the likelihood of a player achieving the selection criteria for the PSP in the next 1-2 years):

1. **Strengths & 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.

In order to formulate a decision on whether a player has achieved the criteria, the Panel may reflect on the following sources of information:

- Performance at National Camps, NTC training sessions or on LTA Official Trips between January 2023 and the selection date;
- Existing scouting data, match and training reports from observations in 2023;
- Results in ITF junior, ITF Pro Circuit, ATP / WTA or Tennis Europe team competitions and relevant domestic events;
- Match footage and statistics from video captured by the LTA Performance Analysis team or other verified sources (e.g. ATP / WTA / ITF / IBM etc.);
- LTA physical testing data and relevant match / training monitoring information;
- Expert opinion of LTA National Coaches and Head of Men's/Women's Tennis (including but not limited to player visits)

Players who successfully achieve three or more of the criteria will be deemed to have met the

selection criteria.

The Selection Panel will meet during the week commencing the 27 November 2023 to consider all shortlisted players for selection.

The Selection Panel will also meet at the time of the National Academy Selection meeting to discuss any existing National Academy players who met the MWP shortlisting and the selection criteria at the 2023 MWP selection meeting (Q4 2023). They may be offered a place on the MWP at this time if the player chooses not to attend the National Academy for a further year(s) as agreed with the Head of Men's/Women's Tennis or their nominee and would start from July 1 and be pro-rata.

2.3.3 Calculating the level of support

Once the rank order list has been agreed based on the number of criteria met and the aim of the programme, the Selection Panel will consider the level of funding for players who have met the selection criteria in accordance with the factors listed in section 1. All of the evidence presented to the Selection Panel will be taken into account as well as the total budget available and an appropriate programme being agreed.

3. CONSIDERATION FOR SELECTION FOR NAGP U16

The NAGP U16 has a number of components including:

- Scholarships for players who are deemed to be on track to meet purpose A of the National Academy selection policy.
- Potential selection for official LTA camps, trips and junior grand slam grants for players who are deemed to be on track to meet either purpose A or B as outlined in the National Academy selection policy

The National Academy selection policy can be viewed on the LTA website [here](#).

NAGP U16 scholarships will target players aged 14-16 (in exceptional cases younger*) who are showing the potential to meet purpose A of the National Academy selection policy and transition onto PSP by the age of 18. Scholarships are normally between £5,000 to £15,000 per year and will be offered for between one to two years until the end of the players 15th year. In determining the level of grant allocated to selected players, the following factors may be considered:

- Current ranking trajectory relative to the MWP & PSP shortlisting and selection targets for 16 year olds
- Observations and LTA National Coaches expert opinions (which may include scouting reports, LTA physical testing data, performances at National Camps or official trips and match reports), demonstrating the potential / progress of the player
- Needs of the player's programme / tournament schedule (where possible linked to an IDP)
- Total budget available

**Please note, selection for the Scholarship will normally be available to players 14 - 16. However, players aged 12 and 13 years old who meet the below criteria, will also be considered for selection.*

Eligibility

Players can only be considered for NAGP U16 support if they meet The National Academy selection criteria and are deemed to be on track to meet purpose A as outlined in the National Academy selection policy at the time of the National Academy selection meeting (end of Q1/start of Q2 2024). A scholarship will only be awarded in this instance if the player chooses not to attend the National Academy as agreed with the Head of Men's/Women's Tennis or their nominee and subject to available budget and an appropriate programme being agreed. Any player meeting the National Academy shortlisting criteria but not the selection criteria will automatically be considered for non-scholarship support.

Players selected onto the NAGP U16 from the National Academy Selection Meeting will be given contracts of between 12 – 24 months, and only up to the end of their 15th year.

4. POST SELECTION PROCESSES

4.1 Reselection and non-renewal of existing MWP & NAGP U16 players

At the end of each player's agreement period, 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 progress against their IDP.
2. A player's ranking trajectory against the Pro Scholarship Programme (PSP) shortlisting targets outlined in appendix 2, and the likelihood of them achieving the selection criteria for the PSP in the next 1-2 years.

In the event a player is aged 15 or under at the time of renewal, a recommendation from the men's or women's team which will also be considered when making this decision.

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 4.3.

4.2 Deferral of MWP or NAGP U16 selection

If a player is selected onto the MWP at the end of the year 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. A player will normally be selected onto the NAGP U16 at the National Academy Selection Meeting (end of Q1 / start of Q2) and normally their agreement will commence from July 1. However, the Performance Team have the discretion to defer the start date if deemed acceptable

by the Head of Men's or Women's Tennis.

4.3 Recording and Communication of Decision

Across both MWP and NAGP U16 selections, each decision to select or not select a player will be recorded.

The Chair of the relevant 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 Men's and Women's Tennis Teams (or their nominee). Players will be informed that they have either been selected or not selected with all decisions being confirmed in writing.

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

4.4. Agreement and Programme Induction

All selected players must sign the LTA's MWP or NAGP U16 Player Agreement in order to receive any benefits selected players are eligible to receive. All selected players will be required to attend a programme induction. This will be a multi-disciplinary process and will be led by the National Coach of Men's Tennis, the National Coach of Women's Tennis and the LTA Senior Performance Lifestyle Advisor. This will clearly explain the relationship between the LTA and the player for the duration of the Player Agreement as well as highlighting what players should expect from LTA support team as a MWP or NAGP U16 player. 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).

5. 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 2.2.3), 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

- Non-British passport holders to email information by 10 November 2023.
- Players with exceptional circumstances to submit their applications by 17 November 2023 at 5pm.
- The exceptional circumstances will be considered the week commencing 20 November 2023.
- The Selection Panel will meet the week commencing 27 November 2023 to consider all shortlisted players for selection.
- All shortlisted players will be notified of a decision within 7 days of the Selection Meeting.

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

Appendix 2 – PSP shortlisting ranking criteria

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.