

Paddle UK 2025 Canoe Sprint World Class Programme Qualification Policy

The Paddle UK World Class Programme (WCP) currently has an agreed level of funding from UK Sport until 31st March 2025. The level of UK Sport funding available to Paddle UK for the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2029 will not be known until December 2024. At the time of publication in September 2024, the intention of publishing this policy is to openly and transparently share the principles upon which decisions on future programme places will be made. The number of programme athlete places, extent of the WCP staffing and other resources will only be confirmed in late 2024. Therefore, no commitment can be made to any programme other than subject to continued investment from UK Sport, the principles laid out in the policy will be used to determine how athlete performance during the 2024 season is assessed with a view to future medal potential in Los Angeles 2028.

Introduction

The World Class Programme vision is to develop high performing people, paddlers and performers that are capable of exceptional achievements, both as an individual and part of a team. For the 2025 season there will be three complementary policies published which outline the different levels of support provided to Senior and U23 athletes who are looking to develop within canoe sprint.

1. The Paddle UK 2025 Canoe Sprint World Class Programme Qualification Policy has the objective of selecting athletes to the Canoe Sprint World Class Programme for the 2025 season. The Canoe Sprint World Class Programme is there to support athletes deemed to have the greatest future potential to achieve medal winning performances in either LA 2028 or Brisbane 2032.
2. The Paddle UK Canoe Sprint Performance Academy primarily has the objective of supporting U23 athletes. The aim of the Sprint Performance Academies is to provide athletes with an environment which supports their development from U23 through to senior level, with the aspiration of preparing athletes to transition into, and thrive in, the World Class Programme (WCP).
3. The Canoe Sprint High Performance Community (CSHPC) has the objective of providing an inclusive environment for athletes looking to develop in canoe sprint. The aim of the Canoe Sprint High Performance Community is to provide athletes with access to environments and expertise which support their development, with the aspiration of developing and supporting a wider cohort of athletes in a consistent and transparent way.

1. Purpose and Principles

- 1.1. The World Class Programme is UK Sport's National Lottery funded initiative to enable athletes to achieve excellence and be capable of medal winning performances at the L.A. 2028 or Brisbane 2032 Olympic Games and significant Senior Championship events.
- 1.2. The 2025 Canoe Sprint World Class Programme Qualification Policy ("Qualification Policy") sets out the process that will be followed during 2024 to identify the best athletes in each Sprint discipline towards these objectives and to qualify to the Paddle UK World Class Programme (WCP) from 1 Jan 2025.
- 1.3. This Qualification Policy also sets out how the level of funding provided to athletes qualifying onto the WCP will be determined.
- 1.4. Athlete place decisions will be made on the agreed principles laid out within this Qualification Policy and the final decision will be subjective in nature based on evidence informed insight.
- 1.5. Athletes are assessed for membership of the WCP on an annual basis. During 2025 the WCP will move its programme year from 1st January 2026 start to 1st November 2025 start, therefore subject to the exceptions detailed in 7.1.1 and 7.1.2, an athlete will be offered a WCP Place for a period of up to 10 months and will not be guaranteed membership from one year to the next.
- 1.6. WCP membership is put in place to support an athlete's future performance(s) and is not a reward for past performance(s).
- 1.7. WCP membership is optional. By accepting membership of the WCP and associated APA funding, the athlete is agreeing to the monitoring procedures and conditions outlined in the athlete agreement.
- 1.8. This is not a team selection policy. Paddle UK GBR Team Selection will be determined by the relevant Selection Policies and is separate from WCP membership.
- 1.9. This Qualification Policy is subject to ongoing review and Paddle UK reserves the right to make amendments to reflect arising situations such as restrictions imposed in connection with funding changes and the outcome of the annual investment review with UK Sport.
- 1.10. This Qualification Policy operates in conjunction with all relevant Paddle UK policies including, but not limited to, Pregnancy Policy, Equality Policy, Anti-Doping Policy, Anti Bullying Policy, Transgender Policy, Data Protection Policy, Declaration of Interests and Anti Bribery Policy.
- 1.11. This Qualification Policy operates in conjunction with the UK Sport APA Policy issued 10.3.2021 which is subject to ongoing review.

2. Eligibility

- 2.1. To be considered for a WCP place, athletes must:
 - 2.1.1. Meet the Paddle UK eligibility criteria and those of the IOC, the IPC, the BOA or BPA and UK Sport (as appropriate) to represent the British Team at the Olympic or Paralympic Games including holding a British Passport;
 - 2.1.2. Meet the criteria as set out in [UK Sport's Eligibility and Rules Policy](#) for athletes in receipt of public funding and/or publicly funded benefits;
 - 2.1.3. Be a member of Paddle UK, or one of the National Canoeing Associations in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland and remain so during their time on the Programme;
 - 2.1.4. Not be serving a ban from participation in any sport for any reason (such as a result of being found guilty of a doping offence).
- 2.2. Athletes meeting the eligibility requirements at 2.1 will only then be considered under this Qualification Policy if they:
 - 2.2.1. raced internationally in 2024 for GB Canoe Sprint Teams and achieved the minimum WCP Race result in Olympic events or identified non-Olympic events as detailed in the Athlete Matrix at Appendix 1 below; OR
 - 2.2.2. were a WCP Canoe Sprint Programme athlete in 2024; OR

- 2.2.3. are one of up to two athletes who have not met the criteria at 2.2.1 or 2.2.2 but are identified by the Performance Director at their sole discretion as having the potential to achieve excellence within the WCP.

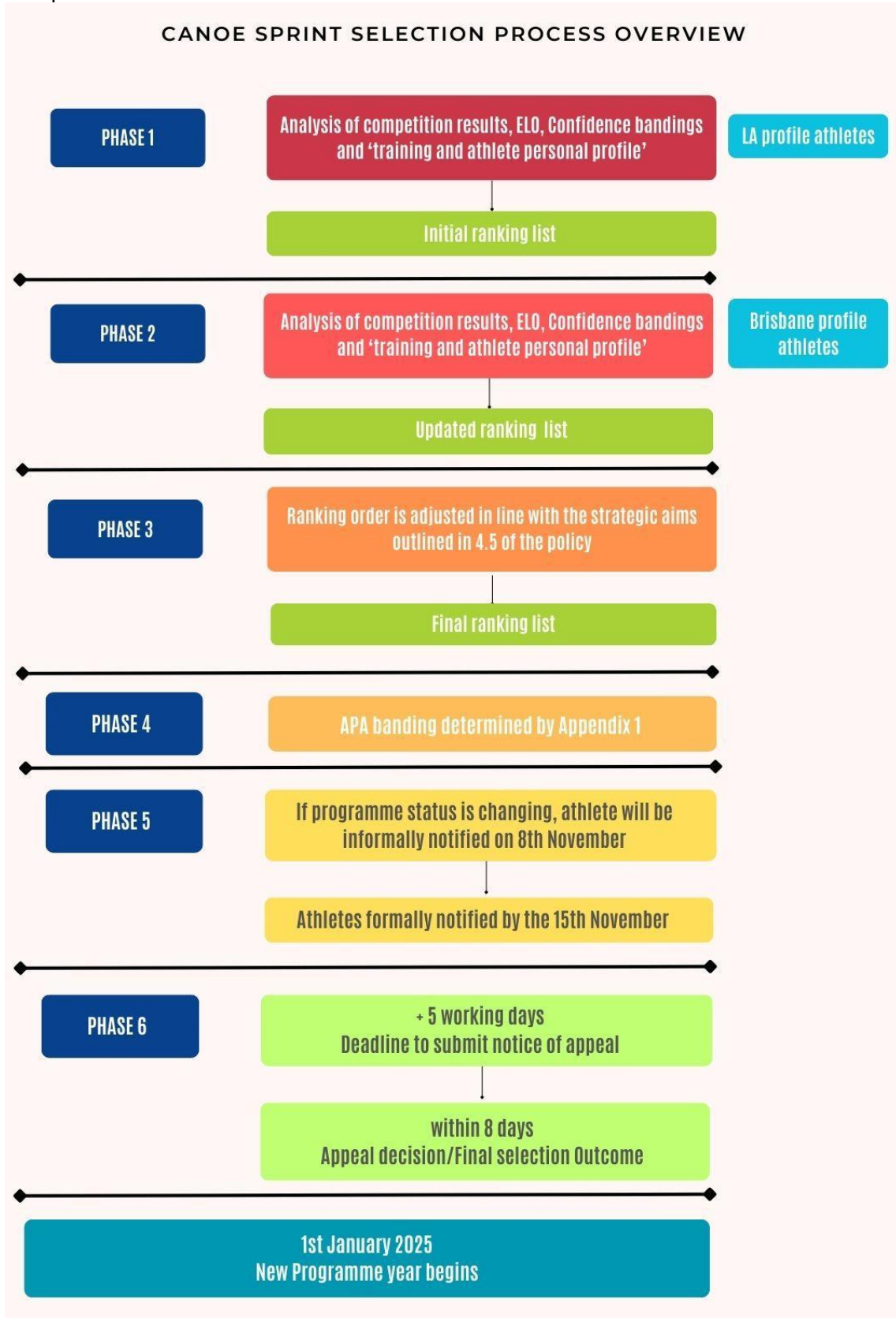
3. WCP Places and Overview of Qualification Criteria

- 3.1. Subject to final confirmation of athlete places and funding from UK Sport in December 2024 there will be **up to 10** APA places in the Canoe Sprint WCP will be split between Podium (A&B APA levels) and Podium Potential (C, D & E APA Levels). The number of athlete places offered under this programme will be influenced by the available places from UK Sport, the ability of the WCP to support and resource the needs of athletes in priority order and the level of athlete performance.
- 3.2. If new WCP places arise during WCP year either as a result of an increase in places or athlete(s) leaving the WCP then the Performance Director may make a recommendation to UK Sport for further athlete nomination(s). Any nominations would be made in line with the spirit of this Qualification Policy.
- 3.3. Athletes selected onto the Canoe Sprint WCP will be determined through the processes outlined in Section 4 of this Qualification Policy.
- 3.4. The level of APA funding allocated to WCP Athletes will be determined by the provisions outlined in Appendix 1 of this Qualification Policy.

4. WCP Assessment and Nomination Process

- 4.1. Following the end of the season and the completion of all competitions and assessment opportunities, Paddle UK will produce an analysis of all relevant information including eligible competition results, ELO Ranking (as explained at **Appendix 3**) Confidence bandings (as set out in **Appendix 5**) %WL Time (as explained in **Appendix 4**), technical, training and athlete personal profile (as set out in **Appendix 2**) and adherence to the WCP athlete responsibilities for all athletes meeting the eligibility criteria in section 2 above (as appropriate).
- 4.2. The World Class Programme Nomination Panel (WCPNP) will consist of the Performance Director, Senior Podium Coach, Head of Performance Support, Programme Pathway Manager and one independent member. Each member of the WCPNP will have one vote with the Performance Director chairing the WCPNP and having the casting vote. A member of the Governance Team may attend as a non-voting observer and at the Performance Director's discretion non-voting observers including but not limited to the BEAA and UK Sport may also be invited to attend a meeting of the WCPNP.
- 4.3. Once all information has been gathered as per 4.1, the WCPNP, in consultation with section coaches and relevant senior practitioners, will meet to determine a first filter of all eligible athletes ('Ranking Order') in line with criteria set out in 4.1 for athletes with an LA 2028 profile. This initial ranking ensures consideration for a WCP place but is not a guarantee of any offer of a WCP place.
- 4.4. Once an initial ranking list of athletes is compiled, athletes with a Brisbane 2032 profile will be assessed in line with criteria set out in 4.1. This ranking ensures consideration for a WCP place but is not a guarantee of any offer of a WCP place.
- 4.5. Once all eligible athletes have been assessed against criteria set out in 4.1 in relation to LA 2028 and Brisbane 2032 the WCPNP may adjust the Ranking Order to take into account (in no priority order):
 - 4.5.1. If the athlete has demonstrated a profile in more than one Olympic event;
 - 4.5.2. The need to ensure strength and depth within a targeted Olympic event;
 - 4.5.3. How long the athlete has been a member of the WCP;
 - 4.5.4. The progression in funding band the athlete has made whilst on the WCP;
 - 4.5.5. Specific placing of athletes in the Minimum Race Results events set out in the Athlete Matrix;
 - 4.5.6. The need to balance L.A. 2028 Objectives and Brisbane 2032;
 - 4.5.7. Adherence to any conditions of ongoing funding/WCP place;
 - 4.5.8. Exceptional circumstances accepted pursuant to section 8 of this Qualification Policy

- 4.6. The final ranking order will then be determined by the WCPNP to recommend which athletes should be nominated for a WCP place.
- 4.7. The Director of Paddlesport, on behalf of the Paddle UK Board, will approve the list of athlete nominations to be put forward to UK Sport.
- 4.8. All nominations are subject to final approval from UK Sport and will be communicated to athletes in writing (via email) by Friday 15th November 2024 following confirmation from UK Sport.



5. Athlete Performance Award (APA)

- 5.1. Athletes qualifying and being approved by UK Sport for a WCP place will be entitled to direct funding to contribute to their living and sporting costs (Athlete Performance Award, or 'APA').
- 5.2. Athletes will be nominated for APAs at the levels aligned to the bandings set out in the Athlete Matrix in **Appendix 1**.
- 5.3. Athletes in receipt of an APA may be encouraged to use some of the APA sporting costs allocation to contribute towards additional programme activity or services beyond the core programme offer.
- 5.4. All APA amounts are subject to UK Sport's ability to pay and the provisions of UK Sport's APA Policy, including means testing.

6. Conditions upon athletes in receipt of UK Sport lottery funding

- 6.1. Qualification and continued retention of a WCP Place is conditional upon the Athlete signing an Athlete Agreement and adhering to its terms. Failure to sign the Athlete Agreement will result in the withdrawal of an Athlete's WCP place. Failure to adhere to the terms of the Athlete Agreement may result in an Athlete being removed from the WCP as further set out in Section 7.
- 6.2. Further detail on the Athlete Agreement and expectations of a WCP athlete can be found on the [Wellbeing pages](#) of the Paddle UK Website.
- 6.3. Any new or returning Athlete nominated for a WCP athlete place for 2025 will be required to undertake a medical screening process prior to final acceptance onto the WCP and will also need to take part in an induction process.

7. WCP Term

- 7.1. Athletes qualifying under this Qualification Policy are entitled to a WCP Place for a period of up to 10 months commencing on 1st January 2025 subject to the following exceptions:
 - 7.1.1. The Performance Director may nominate an athlete achieving a medal at the Paris Olympic Games to receive the same level APA funding for up to four years subject to the athlete demonstrating clear and compelling evidence-based performance data indicating World Championship and/or L.A. 2028 results profile and compliance with objectives or actions agreed with the Performance Director.
**Not applicable for this season, but will remain in the policy for consistency.*
 - 7.1.2. The Performance Director may nominate an athlete achieving A or B band APA funding through the Paris Olympic Games or World Championship performances to receive the same level APA funding for up to two years subject to the athlete demonstrating clear and compelling evidence-based performance data indicating World Championship and/or L.A. 2028 results profile and compliance with objectives or actions agreed with the Performance Director.
**Not applicable for this season, but will remain in the policy for consistency.*
 - 7.1.3. The Performance Director may nominate an athlete achieving LA Potential APA funding to receive the same level APA funding for up to two years in the first two years of the Olympic Cycle subject to the athlete demonstrating clear and compelling evidence-based performance data indicating World Championship and/or L.A. 2028 results profile and compliance with objectives or actions agreed with the Performance Director.
- 7.2. Paddle UK reserve the right to withdraw an Athletes WCP Place and associated APA funding if any of the following non-exhaustive factors apply:
 - 7.2.1. The Athlete fails to meet the eligibility criteria at section 2 of this Qualification Policy;
 - 7.2.2. A Paddle UK Disciplinary Panel determine the WCP place should be removed in accordance with Paddle UK's Athlete Disciplinary Policy or Safeguarding Procedure;
 - 7.2.3. Specific performance targets provided within the athlete WCP place offer letter are not met by the Athlete;
 - 7.2.4. The Athlete, pursuant to section 9, is not considered fit to train and/or compete for a period exceeding three consecutive months or it is considered that continued participation in the WCP would constitute an unacceptable risk of causing injury or

illness as assessed by Paddle UK Sports Science and Medicine Staff. In such cases, an athlete would be given at least 3 months' WCP support and funding before their WCP place ended.

- 7.3. WCP Athletes for 2024 who have not qualified for a WCP place in 2025 under this Qualification Policy or whose WCP place ends for any reason except 7.2.1 or 7.2.1 above, will be communicated with directly by the Performance Director and receive a minimum of 1 month APA transitional funding (beginning the 1st of the month following the notification of programme end) and will continue to have access to performance lifestyle support for up to 6 months after their last APA payment. Athletes may also be entitled to additional transitional funding from UK Sport at their APA award level dependent on the total continuous period of programme membership as follows: This additional transitional funding will be provided as follows:
- 7.3.1. More than 1 year but less than 2 years = 1 month transitional award;
 - 7.3.2. More than 2 years but less than 3 years = 2 months transitional award;
 - 7.3.3. More than 3 years = 3 months transitional award.
- 7.4. Any new athlete entering the programme, will do so as a funded confirmation athlete and will complete a 'probationary period' of up to 2 years prior to full confirmation as an academy athlete (C, D&E APA Levels).

8. Athlete Programme Breaks

- 8.1. An athlete may request "time away" from their sport.
- 8.2. Typically, athlete programme breaks will be undertaken in the first two years of a cycle (typically four years).
- 8.3. In the event of an athlete taking a programme break, the APA can continue to be received for a maximum of 12 months. For breaks of up to 6 months, the athlete will receive their full APA (subject to means testing) from the point the break is agreed with the Performance Director. For requests of between 7 and 12 months, the athlete will receive 50% of their APA.
- 8.4. Each case will be considered on its own merit, reflecting on but not be limited to the following criteria:
 - 8.4.1. The athlete's performance trajectory and selection expectations, considering any impact on World rankings, qualification (should the request be made in cycle), and any other considerations that might materially impact on the athlete's ability to meet agreed Games targets. Athletes should acknowledge the impact this may have on the APA nominated for at the formal athlete review.
 - 8.4.2. A strong performance rationale for the break.
 - 8.4.3. An agreed fitness programme being in place, ensuring an appropriate level of fitness is retained to enable a smooth transition back into the programme at a mutually agreed time.
 - 8.4.4. Touch points with the programme being agreed.
- 8.5. Upon agreement of a programme break, the athlete will need to be renominated for an APA on the Athlete Nomination Portal, up to a maximum 6 months. At 6 months, an athlete review will be conducted, and a renomination is required.

For programme breaks of less than 3 months, nominations are not required.

- 8.6. Continued access to the APA post programme break will be dependent on:
 - 8.6.1. The athlete's intention to return to the sport and the programme being discussed and confirmed no later than one month before the programme break end date.
 - 8.6.2. At the point where the intention of the athlete is clear, forming a mutually agreed plan/timetable for return to training and competition.
 - 8.6.3. Monitoring, reviewing and confirming that the athlete has made the necessary commitment to this plan and is on track to return.

- 8.7. If the level of commitment and or progress against this plan are not demonstrated, the athlete would be given notice and offered a period of transition before the APA funding stops (see Athletes Leaving the Programme).
- 8.8. An athlete may request "time away" from their sport only once in an Olympic or Paralympic cycle (typically four years).

9. Exceptional Circumstances

- 9.1. It is recognised that there may be exceptional circumstances affecting an athlete's ability to meet the qualification requirements set out within this policy yet they can still demonstrate, in both training and racing, an evidence-based performance profile towards L.A. 2028.
- 9.2. If an athlete considers they have a case for exceptional circumstances they must apply for consideration of these in writing to the Performance Director setting out:
 - 9.2.1. Full details of the exceptional circumstance(s);
 - 9.2.2. The impact during the season;
 - 9.2.3. How the circumstances were raised and managed with their coach during 2024.
 - 9.2.4. How the athlete demonstrates an evidence-based performance profile towards Los Angeles 2028; and
 - 9.2.5. Provide any supportive evidence (which may include medical evidence or performance data).
- 9.3. Any application for consideration under this clause MUST be received by email to the Performance Director chris.furber@paddleuk.org.uk by midday on 28th October 2024.
- 9.4. Any request for exceptional circumstances will be considered by the Performance Director at their absolute discretion. If the Performance Director considers exceptional circumstances apply, this will be considered by the WCPNP in the Ranking Order adjustment process in accordance with 4.4.

10. Long term injury and illness (Physical and Mental) and athlete pregnancy

- 10.1. In the event of injury/illness (both physical and mental), and specifically in cases where an athlete is considered likely to recover to full fitness for training and competition, an athlete may continue to receive their full APA up to three months from the point the injury/illness occurred.
- 10.2. If after a period of three months the athlete remains unavailable for full selection or training the Performance Director, Senior Podium Coach, Head of Performance Support and CMO will review the athlete's case and assess the likelihood of the athlete returning to full training and to the desired level of performance. They will also consider the athletes adherence to prescribed rehabilitation and timelines for projected return.
- 10.3. Each case will be considered on its own merits and further expert opinion may be sought to inform the decision. The athlete's progress will need to be reported to UK Sport every three months thereafter, until the athlete has resumed full training the WCP membership ends.
- 10.4. Subject to satisfactory evidence of likely return to training and performance level, the APA may continue to be paid for up to a period of one year from initial occurrence. The final decision to continue funding will be made by the Performance Director at their absolute discretion.
- 10.5. Where there is informed opinion that the injury/illness will affect the performance level of the athlete or the athlete has not been able to show progress nor commitment to the agreed rehab programme, the athletes WCP membership will end following a notice transition period which will be communicated by the Performance Director.
- 10.6. In the case of an athlete pregnancy, we will follow the [UK Sport pregnancy Guidance](#). Athletes in receipt of APA funding will remain eligible to access their full APA (subject to means testing) for the duration of the pregnancy at the APA level they were on at the time of becoming pregnant and for up to nine months post childbirth. Continued access to the APA post childbirth will be dependent on:
 - 10.6.1. The athlete's intention to return to the sport and the programme being discussed and confirmed no later than six months post childbirth

- 10.6.2. At the point where the intention of the athlete is clear, forming a mutually agreed plan/timetable for return to training and competition – this plan will acknowledge the athlete’s experience of pregnancy, the impact on them physically and mentally and the nature of the event they are returning to
- 10.6.3. Monitoring, reviewing and confirming that the athlete has made the necessary commitment to this plan and is on track to return.
- 10.6.4. If the level of commitment and or progress against this plan are not demonstrated, the athlete would be given notice and offered a period of transition before the APA funding stops (see athletes Leaving the Programme).
- 10.6.5. At nine months post childbirth the potential of the athlete will be assessed and confirmed to UK Sport in order to continue to access the APA. This assessment will indicate the athlete’s future medal potential and not necessarily performance outcomes.
- 10.6.6. An athlete who announces retirement from their sport during pregnancy or in the initial six months post childbirth, will not be given a further period of notice before the APA terminates.
- 10.6.7. In the event of complications either during the pregnancy or post childbirth, this policy will be flexed as is reasonable to accommodate these circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

11. The Appeals Procedure

- 11.1. In the event of an athlete wishing to Appeal against a decision under this policy (except there is no right of appeal to clause 8.4), they may appeal in accordance with the Appeals Procedure in place at the relevant time. The Appeals Procedure can be found [here](#).
- 11.2. The British Elite Athlete Association (BEAA) can provide independent advice and support to WCP Athletes via support@britisheliteathletes.org. Further information can be found [here](#).
- 11.3. Athletes who have questions regarding the decision may also access support either through the Performance Director or athletes may also access support through the Paddle UK Governance Team appeals@paddleuk.org.uk

- End of policy –

APPENDIX 1 - ATHLETE MATRIX (to be applied only after the completion of the assessment process in section 4)

2024 Season	Result	Additional Criteria	APA Band	APA Award Level
Podium	Olympic or Senior World Championship Medal	Achieved more than once across two consecutive seasons from 01.01.2023	A+	£28K
	Olympic or Senior World Championship Medal		A	£26.5K
	Olympic or Senior World Championship Top 8	Achieved more than once across two consecutive seasons from 01.01.2023	B+	£23K
	Olympic or Senior World Championship Top 8		B	£21.5K
	A 2024 WCP Podium athlete without a Podium Level competition result in the 2024 season.	Must have a demonstratable trajectory towards medal success in LA based on APA nomination criteria.	LA Potential	£19K
Podium Potential	Senior World Championship Top 18 Senior World Cup Top 16 Senior European Championships Top 16 SNR World, World Cup or European Top 8 in MK1 500m, WC1 500m or MC1 500m		C	£16K
	Senior World Cup Top 18 U23 World or European Championship Top 10 Senior World, World Cup or European Top 12 in MK1 500m, WC1 500m or MC1 500m.		D	£13K
	N/A	All athletes enter the WCP at E Level regardless of results/rankings. Confirmation period can be up to two years.	E	£7.5K
Continuity of Funding:				
Olympic medalists with a strong LA trajectory may be eligible to up to four years funding subject to meeting the criteria set out in Section 7.1.1. of the Paddle UK Canoe Sprint World Class Programme Qualification Policy.				
All A, B level athletes with a strong LA trajectory may be eligible for two years funding subject to meeting the criteria set out in Section 7.1.2. of the Paddle UK Canoe Sprint World Class Programme Qualification Policy.				
LA Potential awards are normally made for no more than one year, however, may be extended in the first year of a new funding cycle to recognise an athlete's developmental requirements during this period subject to meeting the criteria set out in Section 7.1.3. of the Paddle UK Canoe Sprint World Class Programme Qualification Policy.				

APPENDIX 2 - TECHNICAL/TRAINING/ATHLETE PERSON PROFILE

Technical Application Parameters	What?	Process
Platform	Athlete has a set up that allows them to effectively absorb instability and produce force through their body.	
Positions	Athlete can consistently access required positions and angles across the whole stroke cycle.	
Patterning	Athlete works from the lowest point of connection. There is coordination of legs/trunk/arms through the stroke cycle.	
Power (Peak)	Athlete can produce forces and stroke rate to achieve required peak speeds.	
Power (Sustained)	Athlete can sustain forces and stroke rates to maintain required boat speeds across race durations.	
Training Capacity Parameters	What?	<p>Athlete's will meet with coaches and relevant support staff to discuss these areas and come to a combined score that will be used within the athlete nomination process.</p> <p>This process will be part of identifying gaps that will inform athlete's develop plans for the 2025 season.</p>
Training Volume	Athlete is consistently accumulating the required training volume that is appropriate to their stage and age of development.	
Intensity Tolerance	Athlete can tolerate the required intensities (both number of sessions and consistency within sessions) for their stage and age of development.	
Training Quality	Athlete is addressing all underpinning qualities required to deliver sprint performance.	
Rating Scale	In relation to International Peers who are operating at A Final Level:	
5	Well above average level in this area (Truly World Class)	
4	Above average level in this area (Genuine area of strength)	
3	Average level in this area (Sufficient but could still be improved)	
2	Below average in this area (Limits performance)	
1	Well below average in this area (A significant gap that limits performance)	
Athlete/Person Parameters	What?	
Person	The athlete has considered and developed broader qualities of lifestyle which can influence training and racing.	
Athlete	The athlete has developed key qualities that support elite performance in training and racing.	
Rating Scale	Descriptor	
10	Truly world-class at this skill or quality	
9		
8	Well honed, at the level at which you need and are consistently able to use it for your benefit	
7		
6	Basic skill or quality or aspects of it, but is inconsistent or incomplete in its application	
5		
4		
3	Not seen this skill or quality currently	
2		
1		

APPENDIX 3 - ELO RATING SYSTEM EXPLANATION

What is ELO?

Statistical analysis has shown that by using an athlete's ELO ranking or comparing their PB time to % WL time we can assess greater or lesser levels of confidence in their likelihood of success in the future. Using this evidenced based process provides a way to objectively evaluate and compare given paddlers potential of progressing further in the pathway.

The ELO Rating system is an objective method for calculating the relative skill of athletes and teams, based on their results in competition. Over the last 10 years ELO systems have been developed in many sports to better understand the relative performance level of athletes and teams compared to their competitors. Elo Ranking systems are now used as the basis for Official World Ranking systems in multiple Sports.

Why do we need ELO in Canoe Sprint?

Canoe Sprint is a sport where the strength of the field from one competition to the next can change dramatically depending on who attends and competes in which events and how different nations approach international competition. This means it becomes increasingly difficult to evaluate performance level based on overall finishing position. e.g. 1st position at World Cup 1 may represent a different level of performance to 1st position at World Cup 2, depending on who raced at each event and the relative strength of field. The ELO system developed for Canoe Sprint accounts for the strength of field at a competition when calculating the new ratings post competition. As a result, for example, a boat that wins competitions of higher quality, will be ranked higher than a boat that wins competitions of lower quality.

Elo Rankings therefore, provide an objective way to evaluate and compare the performance level of athletes and crews based on their performance history. They can also be used to understand the strength of the field an individual athlete has competed in to better assess performances.

How does the ELO Ranking system work in Canoe Sprint?

ELO is a points based ranking system. All athletes/crews are assigned the same skill rating at the start of their international career. Those skill ratings will increase or decrease after each competition they compete in, based on the athlete/crews that they beat or lose against in that competition. Points are transferred from losing boats to winning boats, with the number of points transferred relative to the difference in points between the boats pre competition.

Is the ELO Ranking system in Canoe Sprint valid and reliable?

The ELO Rankings in Canoe Sprint have been validated both statistically, and by staff within Canoe Sprint using their knowledge of the Sport. There is a strong correlation with ELO Rankings and performances at competitions, especially at previous Olympic Games. That is, those with higher ELO ranks heading into the Olympic Games tend to perform better than those with lower ELO ranks. There is also a relationship between the ELO Ranks of boats at each year out from the Games with performance at the Games.

APPENDIX 4 – WORLD LEADING (WL) TIME EXPLANATION

What is World Leading Time?

World leading time is a metric created for each event in Canoe Sprint. This is calculated from a database of official times from heats, semi-finals and finals of international racing. World Leading time is the calculated average of the fastest 40 ever times in that event.

Why do we need World Leading Time?

Canoe Sprint is a sport where a race time can be greatly influenced by environmental conditions both positively and negatively. Often world best/record times can be outliers achieved in optimal conditions. By taking the average of the fastest 40 times ever recorded in the event, we account for the extreme outlier we might have in a world best/record time whilst still providing a good indication of what a competitive time in that event would be.

Why the fastest 40 times?

Paddle UK teamed up with the UK Sport Sports Intelligence Team during 2020 to better understand the metrics that can be used to evaluate performance in Canoe Sprint. One of the best indicators of performance was how close an athlete's personal best time was to the fastest ever 40 times in the event..

Can a previous year PB be considered for use in the %WL Time criteria?

It is accepted that performance progression is not a linear process. A PB will be considered from the previous racing year.

How can an athlete achieve a PB for consideration in the %WL Time criteria?

- Any official national or international race time on a regatta course.
- Any GPS time trial or race practice done at the same time as at least one other athlete/boat for validation purposes. (Must be processed by PUK PA Mike Mustoe)

APPENDIX 5 - ELO & WL CONFIDENCE BANDS BY YEARS TO GAMES

(Note: The data and bands will be reviewed following the conclusion of the 2024 season and before the nomination meeting) - the up to date information can be found [HERE](#)