

# **Paddle UK Paracanoe Academy policy 2024/2025**

## **1. Introduction**

The World Class Programme (WCP) 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 two complementary policies published which outline the different levels of support provided to athletes who are aiming to develop within Paracanoe.

1. The Paddle UK 2025 Paracanoe World Class Programme Qualification Policy has the objective of selecting athletes to the Paracanoe World Class Programme for the 2025 season. The Paracanoe 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 2025 Paracanoe Academy Policy has the objective of identifying athletes who are working towards future WCP inclusion. The aim of the Paracanoe Academy is to provide athletes with opportunities to engage in the Paracanoe environment and support their continued development through national based camps, educational workshops, technical support on water, adaptation support and exposure to the wider Paracanoe community of athletes, with the aspiration of preparing athletes to transition into, and thrive in, the World Class Programme (WCP).

This document outlines the support provided by the Para Academy as well as the commitment required by athletes to receive this support. This policy also outlines the principles and decision-making processes that will determine how athletes are allocated to the available spaces.

## **2. Eligibility Criteria**

To be eligible for the Paracanoe Academy or invitation to Paracanoe Academy Camps, athletes

must meet the following eligibility criteria listed below:

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. Must be a member of Paddle UK or associated home nation.
3. Be Partially or fully classified, or have a classification date within the next 9 months.

### 3. Level of Support & Qualification Criteria

In order to support athletes through their transition from participation, through confirmation, the academy will operate as follows, and can support **up to 10 athletes**:

Paracanoe Academy	For	Athletes who have met 125% of WLT in their classification and are looking to progress through their confirmation and ultimately work towards WCP inclusion
	Criteria	125% of WLT in the relevant classification
	Support	Access to monthly Para Academy camps including accommodation costs. Access to Hotpots & race simulations. Nomination to TASS support (includes S&C, Performance Lifestyle and reactive Physio and Medical support) Access to Psychology support through Paracanoe Academy workshops. (Individual support may be available but will be considered on a case by case basis)

Invitation to Paracanoe Academy Activity	For	Athletes who have not yet met 125% of WLT in their classification but are demonstrating progression towards this with the aim of reaching this within the coming season.
	Criteria	Have demonstrated progression towards 125% of WLT in their classification
	Support	Invitation to monthly Para Academy camps, where appropriate* Access to Hotpots & race simulations. Nomination to TASS may be considered where spaces allow <i>(consideration will be given to the time the athlete has been engaging with the programme and proximity to TASS locations)</i> Access to Psychology support through Paracanoe Academy workshops.

\*invitations will be deemed appropriate in the case that we are able to provide appropriate coach/athlete ratios to not only cover safety but also provide an inclusive learning and development environment for all athletes attending the camp

### 4. Application Process

Eligible athletes are invited to apply by completing the application form [HERE](#) by **Sunday 22nd September**.

### 5. Decision Making

Inclusion in the Paracanoe Academy will be determined by the Paddle UK Paracanoe Academy Panel (“the panel”). The panel consists of the five members named below with each panel member having one vote. The Panel will consist of the following persons:

- Alex McKeown - Canoe Sprint Performance Pathway Manager
- James Train - Canoe Sprint and Paracanoe Senior Podium Coach
- Matt Lawrence - Paracanoe Podium Coach
- Gary Quittenton - Paracanoe Academy Coach

- Attila Herbent - Paracanoe Pathway Coach

Decisions will be made by majority vote with the Canoe Sprint Performance Pathway Manager holding the casting vote in the event of any split decision.

The Panel welcomes and encourages the input of club and personal coaches to help advise and provide contextual evidence in support of an athletes application. In this first instance this should be through supporting athletes to fill out the application form referenced in section 4.

## 6. Notes

- Inclusion in the Paracanoe Academy will require a high level of commitment. Athletes are expected to attend the monthly Para Academy Camps and to contribute to their ongoing process of development and learning.
- The funding for this programme is finite, contributions may be required for camps for those invited to attend
- Athletes will be selected to the Paracanoe Performance Academy for the 2025 season from **Monday 30th September 2024 until 1st September 2025** (subject to ongoing Athlete Development Reviews).
- Athletes will be notified of the outcome of their application via email by **Monday 30th September**.
- The Panel need to be selective to ensure that appropriate programme places are offered to those individuals whose performance will respond most favourably to development opportunities afforded to them.
- This Policy is not created in isolation. The intention is to be as fair and transparent as possible but there may need to be some flexibility to ensure that these principles remain applicable and relevant to future circumstances as well as taking into account individual extenuating circumstances (such as illness, injury, bereavement)

## 7. Conflicts of Interest

Paddle UK is committed to upholding high standards of integrity, and as such any person who is part of the decision making process in this Policy shall declare any conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest and shall refrain from participation in the discussion in respect to athletes in which they have a conflict of interest.

If a person is unsure whether they have a conflict or potential conflict they should consult the Head of Governance.

## 8. Data Protection

Paddle UK is a privacy conscious organisation and is strongly committed to an individual's right to privacy. All data gathered during the course of any Academy qualification consideration process will be processed and stored in compliance with the Paddle UK Data Protection Policy and in accordance with all applicable Data Protection laws in effect at the time of publication of this document, including but not limited to, the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Further information on Paddle UK's approach to privacy and data protection, including our privacy notices, policies and contact details, can be located in our [Privacy Centre](#) Should an individual wish any data we hold relating to them to be deleted at any point, they should contact us at [GDPR@paddleuk.org.uk](mailto:GDPR@paddleuk.org.uk).

## **9. Policies**

For the avoidance of doubt this document operates in conjunction with all relevant Paddle UK policies including but not limited to, Equality Policy, Anti-Doping Policy, Anti Bullying Policy and Anti Bribery Policy.

## **10. Communication**

Paddle UK is committed to providing open and informative communication. All athletes will receive formal confirmation of their application outcome, and for those athletes who wish to discuss the outcome of decisions made, coaches will be available to speak informally to athletes and parents.

## **11. Request for Review**

11.1. We hope that having read this Policy an Athlete will understand why and how a decision has been made. However, should an Athlete remain dissatisfied with the decision not to nominate them to the Sprint Performance Academy, then we would encourage them to engage with the Panel who can help the athlete understand the decision taken and how the Policy was applied.

11.2. If following these discussions, an Athlete remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the decision made, they may make a Request for Review of the decision. A written request for a review should be submitted, in the first instance, by the Athlete or Parent/Guardian to the Canoe Sprint Performance Pathway Manager who will carry out a review of the Panel's decision and the process by which it was made. This request must be submitted within 48 hours of the nomination being formally announced to the Athlete. Within 5 working days of receiving the Request for Review, the Canoe Sprint Performance Pathway Manager will advise in writing the outcome of the review and the decision reached.

## **12. Appeal**

12.1. Following the conclusion of the review stage detailed in clause 11.2 above, should an Athlete wish to formally appeal the decision not to nominate them to the Sprint Performance Academy they may formally appeal by submitting a Notice of Appeal to the Paddle UK Performance Director within 48 hours of the nomination being formally announced to the Athlete.

12.2. An appeal can be brought on any (either individually or cumulative) of the following grounds:

- The decision was not in accordance with this Policy (as published);
- The Panel has reached a decision on the basis of an error of fact;
- The Panel has shown actual bias or an abuse of their discretion;
- The decision is one that no reasonable decision maker could ever have reached.

12.3. The right to appeal the nomination decision is provided on these limited grounds only and must not be seen as an opportunity to dispute the opinion of the Panel where they have followed the proper procedure and selection criteria as stated in the Policy. In reaching their decision the Panel are acting as experts and athletes agree that in so doing the Panel exercises judgement and discretion which are not in themselves capable of challenge.

12.4. The Athlete's Notice of Appeal must therefore clearly set out the grounds of the appeal and should include full details of which ground(s) detailed above the appeal is based upon and the manner in which the ground(s) have been met. By entering the appeal process the applicant is accepting that the decision of the Paddle UK Performance Director will be final and binding.

12.5. Having considered the Notice of Appeal the Performance Director will either uphold the original decision or conclude that the application for nomination to the Sprint Performance Academy should be reconsidered. The Paddle UK Performance Director will advise the applicant in writing of the outcome of the appeal within 5 days of receipt of the initial Notice of Appeal.