

Canoe Sprint Performance Academy Policy 2024/2025

1. Introduction - Sprint Performance Programme Overview

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 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 a defined number of 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.
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.

This document outlines the support provided by the Sprint Performance Academies (National Performance Centre (NPC) and South) 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 Sprint Performance Academy support athletes must meet the following eligibility criteria listed below:

1. Be eligible to compete as an U23 athlete in 2025, or;
2. Be an U24 or athlete with clear evidence of progression with a demonstrably higher performance level (based on % WLT) than U23 athletes being considered for Academy provision, and;
3. 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
4. Must be a member of Paddle UK or associated home nation.

Additionally athletes that are offered the opportunity to be part of the NPC Sprint Performance Academy will be expected to adhere to an [Athlete Code of Conduct](#).

3. Level of Support & Qualification Criteria

In order to support athletes through their transition from U18, through to Senior, the Sprint Performance Academies can support **up to 20 athletes** and will operate across three tiers as follows:

Tier 1 (Up to 4 places available)

WCP Preparation	For	Athletes delivering on a high level to best prepare them for inclusion onto the WCP.
	Criteria	Meet E band or higher level APA matrix criteria* , or Junior Medal within this or the previous season, as well as being nominated by WCP Coach.
	Support	Full performance programming, UKSI S&C Support, TASS nomination, fully paid international camp, NPC Lake Access, NPC Boat Storage.
	Remote Option	As this level is looking to successfully transition athletes into the WCP, there would be an expectation that athletes are based at the NPC/South Academy for training. Remote support will only be considered upon application and with clear points of regular contact time with Academy and/or WCP coaches.

* Information on APA banding can be found in the 2025 World Class Programme Qualification policy

Tier 2

Academy Tier	For	Athletes who have developed the skills and qualities required to thrive at U23 International competition, to best prepare them to deliver internationally with the aspiration to qualify for A finals.
	Criteria	Have placed top 12* or above in an international competition (U23 Worlds or Euros) or Evidence of performance delivery within 112% of class World Leading Time (WLT) (see appendix 1)** within this or the previous season.
	Support	Access to the team performance plan and coaching, UKSI S&C Support**, TASS nomination, Subsidised international camp, NPC Lake Access, NPC Boat Storage.
	Remote Option	Remote option is available on the provision that athletes attend at least one technical or identified session a week with academy coaches.

* Strength and depth of field will be considered.

** Performances delivered at either a Championship regatta, domestic regatta event or at identified benchmarking events.

***Not currently available to remote athletes

Tier 3

Development Tier	For	Athletes Aged 18-20 who have delivered at junior level to help them transition and develop the skills and qualities needed to excel at U23 & senior level
	Criteria	Have placed top 12 or above in an international competition (U18 Worlds or Euros) within this or the previous season or have placed top 3 or above at the National Championships.
	Support	Access to the team performance plan and coaching, NPC Lake Access, NPC Boat Storage, invite to training camp opportunities, TASS Nomination*
	Remote Option	Remote option is available on the provision that athletes attend at least one technical or identified session a week with academy coaches.

*subject to total number of TASS places allocated to Canoe Sprint

Athletes selected to the development tier will be offered selection for up to a two year period, however continuation on the programme will be reviewed annually.

The above standards can be achieved in different non-Olympic event disciplines, however, it should be noted that the focus of the academy is to develop sprint athletes. It is expected that the standards required to be eligible for the academy system will progressively increase throughout the cycle.

4. Application Process

Up to 20 athlete places will be available across the NPC and South Sprint Performance Academies.

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

5. Decision Making

Inclusion in the NPC or South Sprint Performance Academy will be determined by the Paddle UK Sprint Performance Academy Panel (“the panel”). The panel consists of the six 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
- Anton Vazquez - Canoe Sprint Academy Coach
- Sam Glover - Canoe Sprint Academy Coach
- Gabor Szeltner - South Academy Coach
- A representative from the National Association Development Group

As well as considering each application against the Qualification and Eligibility Criteria set out in this document, the Panel will consider the following three factors when appraising an application:

1. Performance and Progression. The extent of any significant and demonstrable year on year progression.
2. Athlete Utilisation. The value-adding impact that inclusion in the Sprint Performance Academy would have on the athlete’s development opportunities considering their particular circumstances. This assessment will take into account an athlete’s engagement in training opportunities, commitment and investment into the programme of development available to them.
3. Class Strategy. Places are allocated reflective of class strength and depth throughout the pathway as a whole.

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. Additional Notes

- Inclusion in the Sprint Performance Academies will require a high level of commitment and investment. Athletes and their current coaches are expected to contribute to the ongoing process of development and learning, helping to shape and support the programme in order to best meet the individual needs and goals of the athlete.
- The funding for this programme is finite and unfortunately does not meet the full cost of Academy activity. Some contributions will be required for specific events.
- Athletes will be selected to the Sprint Performance Academies 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**.
- Athletes will be notified of Tier 1 WCP Transition Support after WCP nominations have taken place in November 2024.
- Unfortunately, support is finite and 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.
- Athletes who have missed out on a place within a Sprint Performance Academy will be invited to attend regular open sessions which will be made available to all U23 athletes who hold an interest in entering the high performance pathway and are looking to progress towards international selection.
- 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.

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 via email from the Canoe Sprint Performance Programme Manager by Monday 30th September, 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.

Appendix 1

World Leading Times (WLT) WLT across events and ages are captured below to give an indication of performance standards. The times are typical for medal winning performances at major championships. These times will be constantly reviewed and subject to regular updates to reflect current World Leading Times in each class.

Event	Senior WLT Time	WLT Time (in seconds)	1%	2%	3%	4%	5%	6%	7%	8%	9%	10%	11%	12%	
			Senior Championships A and B final standard- Good Conditions* in HPP, Nottingham												
						U23 Championships A and B final standard- Good Conditions* in HPP, Nottingham									
									Junior Championships A and B final standard- Good Conditions* in HPP, Nottingham						
K1W 200m	00:38.93	38.93	39.32	39.71	40.10	40.49	40.88	41.27	41.66	42.04	42.43	42.82	43.21	43.60	
K2W 200m	00:36.47	36.47	36.84	37.20	37.57	37.93	38.29	38.66	39.02	39.39	39.75	40.12	40.48	40.85	
K1W 500m	01:47.63	107.63	108.71	109.78	110.86	111.94	113.01	114.09	115.16	116.24	117.32	118.39	119.47	120.55	
K2W 500m	01:37.65	97.65	98.63	99.60	100.58	101.56	102.53	103.51	104.49	105.46	106.44	107.42	108.39	109.37	
K4W 500m	01:30.12	90.12	91.02	91.92	92.82	93.72	94.63	95.53	96.43	97.33	98.23	99.13	100.03	100.93	
K1W 1000m	03:53.54	233.54	235.88	238.21	240.55	242.88	245.22	247.55	249.89	252.22	254.56	256.89	259.23	261.56	
K1M 200m	00:34.01	34.01	34.35	34.69	35.03	35.37	35.71	36.05	36.39	36.73	37.07	37.41	37.75	38.09	
K2M 200m	00:31.00	31.00	31.31	31.62	31.93	32.24	32.55	32.86	33.17	33.48	33.79	34.10	34.41	34.72	
K1M 500m	01:35.96	95.96	96.92	97.88	98.84	99.80	100.76	101.72	102.68	103.64	104.60	105.56	106.52	107.48	
K2M 500m	01:27.64	87.70	88.58	89.45	90.33	91.21	92.09	92.96	93.84	94.72	95.59	96.47	97.35	98.22	
K4M 500m	01:18.57	78.57	79.36	80.14	80.93	81.71	82.50	83.28	84.07	84.86	85.64	86.43	87.21	88.00	
K1M 1000m	03:24.37	204.37	206.41	208.46	210.50	212.54	214.59	216.63	218.68	220.72	222.76	224.81	226.85	228.89	
K2M 1000m	03:07.90	187.90	189.78	191.66	193.54	195.42	197.30	199.17	201.05	202.93	204.81	206.69	208.57	210.45	
C1M 500m	01:46.75	106.75	107.82	108.89	109.95	111.02	112.09	113.16	114.22	115.29	116.36	117.43	118.49	119.56	
C2M 500m	01:38.37	98.37	99.35	100.34	101.32	102.30	103.29	104.27	105.26	106.24	107.22	108.21	109.19	110.17	
C1M 1000m	03:46.21	226.21	228.47	230.73	233.00	235.26	237.52	239.78	242.04	244.31	246.57	248.83	251.09	253.36	
C2M 1000m	03:27.33	207.33	209.40	211.48	213.55	215.62	217.70	219.77	221.84	223.92	225.99	228.06	230.14	232.21	
C1W 200m	00:45.35	45.35	45.80	46.26	46.71	47.16	47.62	48.07	48.52	48.98	49.43	49.89	50.34	50.79	
C2W 200m	00:43.55	43.55	43.99	44.42	44.86	45.29	45.73	46.16	46.60	47.03	47.47	47.91	48.34	48.78	
C1W 500m	02:05.99	125.99	127.25	128.51	129.77	131.03	132.29	133.55	134.81	136.07	137.33	138.59	139.85	141.11	
C2W 500m	01:55.42	115.42	116.57	117.73	118.88	120.04	121.19	122.35	123.50	124.65	125.81	126.96	128.12	129.27	

	Senior Course Records at HPP, Nottingham
	Junior Course Records at HPP, Nottingham. Note: Where course records are not noted they are outside of 112% of WLT.
	*Good Conditions are defined as a tail wind of between 1-2.5m/s, water temperature of 18 °C.