

Talent Academy Appointment Panel

Terms of Reference

Dec 2025

Introduction

Talent Academies are intended to develop the highest potential players, per gender, aged 14-18 years.

There will be opportunities most weeks for high-quality coaching and training through a combination of dedicated sessions and integration with other activity delivered by the host. Each Talent Academy will have a squad of players selected through a robust process based on the England Hockey player profile.

We estimate that our current talent pool means that around 650-700 players per gender are ready for the intensity and commitment of a Talent Academy.

The current network of 24 Talent Academies strikes a balance between accessibility and ensuring a critical mass of high-quality players in each academy. The design of Talent Academies is based on offering the best possible talent development environment - ensuring best with best in training, best v best in competition, and stretching the highest potential young players.

Of the current 24, one is led by England Hockey. Our aspiration is for all academies to be hosted within local clubs or universities. As we progress through the 2025-8 licensing period, we wish to transition the remaining England Hockey led programmes to club hosted programmes. In exceptional circumstances England Hockey may continue to lead one or more in geographical locations where there are no applications which meet the minimum criteria.

In awarding Talent Academy Licences, all applications submitted will be reviewed against the Talent Academy Framework. The additional factor not detailed in the Framework is geographical distribution. This will continue to be a critical factor, with the aim of ensuring optimal population coverage and accessibility.

Licenses awarded in 2026 will be valid for two years subject to satisfactory progress, an annual Quality Assurance review in May each year and the host continuing to meet the requirements sets out in the partnership agreement e.g., up to date Clubmark, Talent Certification in place.

The Talent Academy appointment process is a four-stage process:

Stage 1: Application

Stage 2: Assessment against a set of pre-requisites (creation of a longlist)

Stage 3: Assessment against the full application criteria (creation of a shortlist)

Stage 4: Appointment by the Talent Academy Panel from shortlisted applications

Full details of the Talent Academy criteria and the application and appointment process can be found in the Talent Academy Framework and the Talent Academy Application and Appointment Process document and supporting video/application form. These are published on the England Hockey website [here](#).

Purpose

The purpose of the Talent Academy Appointment Panel is to carry out Stage 4 of the Talent Academy appointment process. I.e., review the shortlisted applications against the assessment criteria, and award Talent Academy licenses to deliver a Talent Academy from September 2026.

It is anticipated that the panel will meet once although this may be split into more than one session. This is a time bound panel created for the sole purpose of appointing Talent Academy licenses for 2026.

The appointment process will be reviewed each year.

Membership

Membership will comprise a combination of England Hockey staff and members external to England Hockey. Members will be required to understand England Hockey's Talent Strategy and possess an up to date understanding of the hockey infrastructure in England including knowledge of clubs and performance hockey.

Panel members must have no personal or business interest in the applications being considered by the panel.

There will be one panel, which will consider shortlisted applications from two England Hockey Areas.

The panel will consist of five members:

- Interim Interim Business Projects & Talent (Heather Williams) who will Chair the panel

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- A member of England Hockey Finance and Administration Directorate
- A member of the England Hockey Development Directorate
- Two members recommended by the England Hockey Area Standing Committee (ASC) who are either members of the ASC or members of the hockey community with and understanding of performance hockey put forward by the ASC.

Any connections to applicants must be declared and will be considered. If the connection is a conflict of interest, a prospective panel members may be excluded from parts of the discussion or decision or not approved as a panel member.

At the request of the Chair, additional England Hockey staff may be invited to attend the meeting to take minutes or to provide information.

Voting

Only panels members have a vote. Each panel member will have one vote.

Each panel will not make final decisions but will make recommendations about the shortlisted applications in the geographical area under consideration.

The Chair will present the recommendations to the England Hockey Executive who will make the final decision.

December 2025