



# England Age Group Programme Selection Policy

## Contents:

	<b>Section</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>Overview</b>
<b>1.</b>	Introduction	<b>2</b>	Outlines the Talent System and the aim of this document
<b>2.</b>	Eligibility	<b>2</b>	Details eligibility criteria
<b>3.</b>	Selection Panel and decisions	<b>3</b>	Details the selection decision making process
<b>4</b>	Selection Framework	<b>3</b>	Details the context and nature of selection in hockey
<b>5</b>	Selection Principles	<b>3</b>	Details the selection criteria
<b>6</b>	Assessment Process	<b>4</b>	Details the assessment process
<b>7</b>	Invitations to England age group activity	<b>4</b>	Details about exposure to England age group training for aspiring athletes
<b>8</b>	Acceptance onto the Programme	<b>5</b>	
<b>9</b>	De-selection	<b>6</b>	Details the circumstances when a player may be removed from the programme
<b>10</b>	2022-23 Talent Academy Cycle	<b>6</b>	Details who should attend
<b>11-13</b>	England Hockey Governance Statements	<b>6</b>	Details England Hockey's commitment to player privacy, anti-doping and dealing with conflicts of interest
<b>14</b>	Appeals	<b>7</b>	Details the grounds and process to appeal a selection decision
<b>15</b>	General Conditions	<b>8</b>	Details additional general conditions applicable to this Selection Policy

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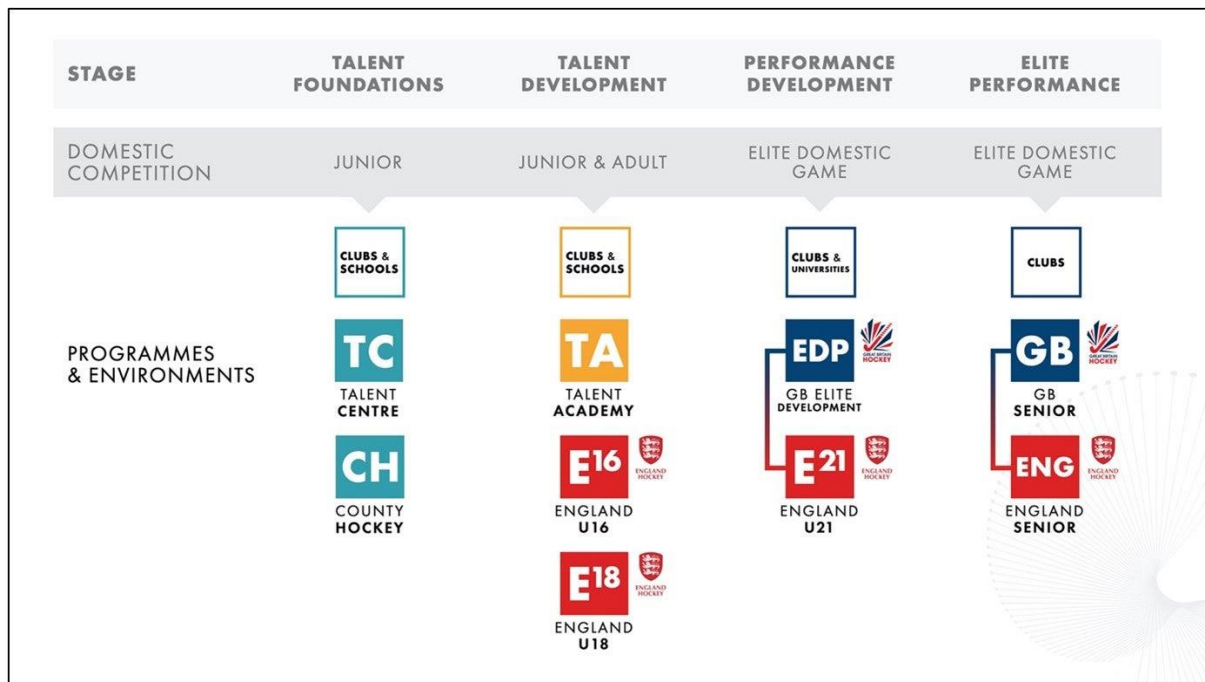


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## 1. Introduction

The **England Hockey Age Group Programme** provides training, domestic and international competition opportunities for the highest potential U16 and U18 including the first introduction to international hockey. It takes a holistic approach to player development based around GB Hockey’s Talent System Framework and it is part of the England Hockey Talent System which consists of a progressive squad structure and a performance focussed environment to help talented junior players realise their potential.

The diagram below shows where the England Age Group Programme sits within the Talent System



The purpose of this document is to set out the qualification and selection criteria for the England Age Group Programme

## 2. Eligibility:

To be eligible for selection for the programme, a player must hold, or be eligible to hold, a British passport and eligible to compete in the U16 or U18 age groups on 1<sup>st</sup> January each year.

Aligning to competition regulations set by the World and European federations, Junior international hockey is based on calendar years, not school years as is the case for all other junior hockey in the Talent System, club and school activity.

## 3. Selection Panel & Decisions

**3.1** Final selection for places on the Programme will be determined by a selection panel containing as a minimum the U16/U18 Head Coach, one Assistant Coach and the England Hockey Junior Talent Development Manager.



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- 3.2** The selection panel will review each player in relation to the framework, principles and criteria set out in section 4 below when making each selection decision
- 3.3** The England Hockey Junior Talent Development Manager has final approval of all selection decisions.
- 3.4** Players will be notified of their selection or non-selection via email as soon as reasonably possible after each assessment phase and squad lists will be published on the England Hockey website. This will normally be within two weeks of the end of an assessment phase. Notification of any delays will be published on the England Hockey website.

#### **4. Selection framework:**

The selection criteria set out below are those identified by the GB Head of Talent Development, the England Hockey Junior Talent Development and the Programme Head Coaches as fundamental to selection for the Programme.

- 4.1.** In developing this framework, it is acknowledged that hockey is a team sport and whilst players can do a great deal to develop in an individual environment, ultimately, those players have to be able to realise their potential and perform within a team. However, while performing in age group tournaments is an important part of the development process, the primary focus of the England Age Group Programme is to develop individuals who demonstrate the potential to contribute to future international senior team success.
- 4.2.** The multi-faceted nature of team sport makes objective criteria difficult to define, and therefore, it is acknowledged there will always be a component of subjective decision making by experts using their professional opinion and discretion, in relation to the final selection of players for the Programme.
- 4.3.** The selection criteria below may be revised from time to time. Any such revisions shall be notified to the players participating in the Programme and those attending any assessments for selection in the Programme.

#### **5. Selection principles:**

- 5.1.** To select players with the greatest potential regardless of their background, ethnicity, school or club to perform at junior international level and contribute to senior medal winning success in the future.
- 5.2.** The selection process aims to identify players that possess 'super-strengths', who will add a certain physical, psychological, technical, tactical or skill-based strength to the Programme squad.



**5.3.** To conduct a meritocratic selection process based on a players demonstrated potential This process is not necessarily designed to select the highest performing players at the time of assessment.

**5.4.** England Age Group players should be able to demonstrate they are very well developed in the following competencies.

- Effective decision maker
- Willing to be creative
- Plays well under pressure
- Plays at high intensity
- Shows a good level of skill
- Is self-organising and adaptable
- Sees threats and opportunities effectively
- Demonstrates positive attitude and behaviours on and off the pitch aligned to the values and culture of the age group programmes and England Hockey.

**5.5.** There is a high degree of competition for the limited number of places on the England age group programme so an ability in these competencies does not mean a player will be automatically selected.

## 6. Assessment Process

Identification of potential England age group players will take place across the following

- **DiSE Cup**
  - Current England Age Group and DiSE players will be considered for transition from England U16 and DiSE programmes where they meet the age eligibility criteria
- **Performance Centre Challenge Cup / Talent Academy Festival**
  - England Age Group coaches and scouts will attend the event to observe matches and hold dialogue with coaches. Players from each age group and gender will be identified and invited in for further observation and assessment in an England age group training environment.
- **Current Squads**



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- Current England Age Group players will be observed and considered for transition into the England U18 programmes
- **Open Trials**
  - Club, school and county players will be nominated and subsequently invited to attend England Age Group Open Trials.

At the discretion of the England Hockey Junior Talent Development Manager and England age group Head Coaches, previously identified players may not be invited to the observation and assessment camps. This will enable England age group Head Coaches to see a broader pool of talent during this phase. Furthermore, England Hockey reserves the right to invite players, previously not involved, into the England age group environment at any time during the programme.

Current England age group players will be assessed on an ongoing basis against the criteria set out in 5.4 above. Continued membership will be dependent on a player's rate of progress and performance trajectory.

Additional ad hoc assessment opportunities may be conducted at additional times during the year (Ad hoc assessment phases are to be distinguished from situations where additional players may be invited into the Programme). Any ad hoc assessment phase will be agreed between the England Hockey Junior Talent Development Manager and the squad Head Coach and will be communicated clearly in advance to any player involved as well as those players currently involved in the Programme.

Any club or school wishing to nominate a player for an ad-hoc assessment should contact the England Hockey Junior Talent Development Manager in the first instance.

## **7. Invitations to attend England Age Group training sessions**

Opportunities are provided for the highest potential players to experience the England age group environment in preparation for potentially joining the programme in future years.

Individual players will receive invitations to attend activity directly from the England Hockey Performance Administrator

## **8. Acceptance onto the Programme:**

Following the allocation of a place on the Programme, individual players will only be formally accepted onto the Programme once they have signed and returned the England Age Group Player Agreement.

## **9. De-selection:**

Players progress in the England Age Group Programme is continuously monitored against their skill and tactical application, their rate of improvement, progress against their Individual Development Plan and strength and conditioning benchmarking data. If a player's rate of progress and performance trajectory is not commensurate with the required standards / rate of progress, this may lead to the player being released from the programme following discussion with the player and their parents. Players will then return to their Talent Academy, club or school environments as appropriate

NB: non-selection to an England U16/U18 training match or tournament does not constitute de-selection from the England Age Group Programme.

## **10. 2022-23 Talent Academy Cycle**



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All age eligible 2021-22 England Age Group players will be initially allocated to a Talent Academy for 2022-23.

Any player who is nominated for Talent Academy assessments and taken forward to England Age Group assessments will prioritise England Age Group activity in the case of a clash of activity

## **11. Conflicts of Interest**

England Hockey is committed to upholding high standards of integrity and as such any person who is part of the selection decision making process shall declare any conflicts or potential conflicts and shall refrain from participation in the discussion in respect to inclusion 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.

## **12. Data Protection**

England Hockey is a privacy conscious organization and is strongly committed to your right to privacy. That is why we have drafted a Privacy and Data Protection Statement, which follows guidelines set out in the 2018 General Data Protection Regulations which can be found on our [website](#)

Please note that any data gathered in the course of the selection process will be used in accordance with this Statement and in particular will only be shared when England Hockey has a legitimate interest to do or where necessary consent has been obtained.

## **13. Policies**

For the avoidance of doubt this selection policy operates in conjunction with all relevant England Hockey policies including but not limited to its Anti-Doping Policy and Inclusion and Diversity Policy.

## **14. Appeals**

After reading this Policy it is hoped that players will understand why and how a decision has been made.

If a player does have concerns about a selection decision concerning them, they should contact the England Hockey Talent Development Manager to discuss these concerns and to seek clarification about the rationale behind the decision.

However, should a player wish to appeal the decision of the selection panel an appeal can be bought on any (either individually or cumulative) of the following grounds:

- The decision was not in accordance with this Policy (as published);
- The Policy has been misapplied and/or applied in circumstances where the application of the Policy was unfair;
- The Selection Panel has shown bias or the appearance of bias or the decision has otherwise been demonstrably unfair.

An initial Notice of Appeal should be submitted to the GB Head of Elite Talent Development within 48 working hours of the outcome of the application being announced or communicated. The Notice of Appeal should 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.



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**Outcome of First Appeal:** The Head of GB Elite Talent Development will consider whether one or more of the grounds of appeal have been met. There are two possible outcomes of the First Appeal:

### **1) Appeal dismissed**

In the event that the First Appeal is dismissed, the player will be (i) informed that his or her appeal has been dismissed in writing within 5 working days, (ii) provided with reasons for the dismissal, and (iii) provided with a secondary opportunity to appeal to a panel independent of the England Age Group Programme (the "Second Appeal"). If a player would like to commence the Second Appeal they must notify in writing ("Notice of Second Appeal") the Head of Governance within 3 working days of the First Appeal decision (England Hockey in its sole discretion may decide to extend this deadline). The Notice of Second Appeal must contain the grounds of appeal outlined above.

### **2) Appeal upheld**

In the event that the First Appeal is upheld, the selectors will be asked to reconsider their original selection by applying the selection criteria correctly. Selectors are required to ensure that they follow the correct process and consider the correct information. It is possible that selectors will reach the same decision.

## **Second Appeal**

In receipt of the Notice of Second Appeal the Head of Governance will convene a three person Appeal Panel as soon as is practicable to determine the appeal made up of suitably independent and experienced members who have not been involved in the selection process so far. The Player will be given the opportunity to challenge the composition of the Appeal Panel.

The Head of Governance shall contact the England Hockey Junior Talent Development Manager to inform them of the Appeal, provide them with a copy of the Notice of Appeal and request that they provide any additional information they wish the Appeal Panel to consider within 48 hours of receiving the Notice of Appeal.

The Appeal Panel will ordinarily determine the appeal based on the written submissions of the Player and the England Hockey Junior Talent Development Manager without a hearing or the calling of witnesses or the giving of oral evidence. However the Appeal Panel will have the power to set its own processes and give directions including but not limited to, requesting further information, setting up a teleconference, determining if a hearing is required and if it is, establishing the date, time and place, and format to be followed in such a hearing.

The Appeal Panel will seek to reach its conclusion within 5 working days (or an earlier date if that has been decided and communicated by the Head of Governance) of its appointment and will inform all interested parties in writing.

The Appeal Panel shall be entitled to;

- a) Rescind the decision and confirm the inclusion of the Player in circumstances where it is clear that the grounds of the Appeal have been upheld.
- b) Confirm the decision and reject the Appeal.

## **15. General Conditions**

England Hockey reserves the right to amend this Selection Policy at its sole discretion and will make any amended version available to all players who are at that time a member of the



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Programme. A player's continuing membership of the Programme shall be deemed as continued acceptance of this Selection Policy as amended from time to time.

If a player is in breach of the England Age Group Programme Player Agreement, England Hockey may in its absolute discretion exclude the player from programme activity until such time as the player remedies such breach.

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