



ENGLAND VOLLEYBALL

SELECTION AND ELIGIBILITY POLICY

This selection policy should be read in conjunction with the annual Volleyball Performance Plan, which provides the detail and dates relating to the selection process. An Annual Performance Plan may be updated or amended by the Performance Director with the approval of the CEO of Volleyball England.

1. WHO THIS POLICY APPLIES TO

This policy applies to:

- **Senior England Athletes:** Named members of the England national volleyball programme. This group includes U22s England athletes.
- **England Talent Pathway Athletes:** U20 and U18 age groups.

2. PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

This policy aims to:

- Define the eligibility requirements and ensure a fair, transparent process for selecting Senior England Athletes and England Talent Pathway Athletes to represent England in competitions.

3. THE COMPETITIONS THIS POLICY APPLIES TO

This policy applies to:

- NEVZA Championships
- CEV Volleyball Competitions
- Invitational Competitions
- Domestic International Competitions
- Domestic Competitions
- All Age Group Competitions

This policy does not apply to:

- The Olympic and Commonwealth Games and associated youth events or multi-sport Games – these events are instead covered by bespoke selection policies and processes.

4. SUBJECTIVE NATURE OF SELECTION DECISIONS

Volleyball England does not consider it effective to select athletes based on hard-edged criteria (for example match statistics). Such an approach would not take into account factors such as injury or illness which may have prevented performance.

Volleyball England recognises that selection decisions should be made on a fully informed basis considering a variety of factors, as laid out in this policy.

5. PURPOSE OF SELECTION DECISIONS

The aim of each selection decision is to:

- select the athletes who give the team the best chance of achieving the highest placement at the relevant competition; and/or
- to achieve any further sporting goals set out in the Volleyball England’s Annual Performance Plan(s).

6. SELECTION PANEL

Selection decisions for Senior England Athletes and England Talent Pathway Athletes will be taken by a Selection Panel comprising of a minimum of three selectors.

The Selection Panel will consist of:

- The Volleyball Performance Director or their nominee.
- The relevant Head Coach or their nominated coach for the relevant team or event.
- Volleyball England Senior Leadership Team Member or their nominee.

If a panel member is unable to fulfil their duties a suitable nominee may be appointed by the Volleyball Performance Director.

The Volleyball England Senior Leadership Team Member in their role alongside the Performance Director or their nominees, will:

- Ensure that the selection process is followed
- Highlight any semblance of bias and provide an opportunity to answer this with further evidence/explanation
- Actively contribute to the discussion

The Selectors shall:

- be expected to attend any selection event, unless the Performance Director communicates that attendance is not required.

- participate in all meetings of the Selection Panel for the relevant competition
- If an actual, potential or perceived conflict relating to a member of the Selection Panel, these shall be declared. Where a member of the Selection Panel declares a conflict, the remaining Selection Panel members shall decide if such conflict requires action. Where the Performance Director may issue a directive for a suitable nominee to assume the role of the conflicted individual for the purpose of considering the decision in question

7. SELECTION MEETINGS

Selection meetings may take place in person or via video conference. Where selection meetings are called on short notice, they may take place via telephone.

In preparation for the selection meetings the Head Coach or their nominee shall have provided the Panel with the relevant documentation and analysis.

Selection meetings shall be attended by the Selection Panel, who may also invite a notetaker.

The Selection Panel may also request reports from, or the presence of, any person it considers will help it, including but not limited to the athlete's doctor, Volleyball England Talent Team or a personal coach.

The selection decisions must be taken by the Selection Panel and not by any other person or persons.

Selection decisions shall be communicated to athletes promptly in an appropriate manner by the Volleyball Performance Director or their nominee.

8. ELIGIBILITY - CRITERIA

Senior England Athletes and England Talent Pathway Athletes must:

- Be a current member of Volleyball England.
- Be a British citizen.
- Hold a valid British Passport and be able to travel to events and training camps.
- Be eligible under FIVB Sports Regulations for nationality, age, and gender.
- Have England listed as their Federation of Origin.
- Not be subject to any current disciplinary proceedings or ban.
- Fulfil any other eligibility rules or requirements from FIVB, WADA or any other relevant international or national governing body or organisation.
- Not be subject to any period of ineligibility or provisional suspension due to an antidoping rule violation.
- Be a fit and proper person to represent Volleyball England by remaining compliant with the Volleyball England Codes of Conduct and not being subject to any other, conduct, disciplinary or safeguarding investigations.
- Complete the relevant registration requirements.

- Complete, or be exempted from, each element making up the Selection Process as set out in the Annual Performance Plan. *
- Have no outstanding financial debt to Volleyball England.
- Comply with any requirements or criteria set out in the Annual Performance Plan or communicated by Volleyball England.

Any individual who ceases for whatever reason to be eligible may be excluded from consideration.

9. SELECTION STANDARDS AND RATIONALE FOR SELECTION

In reaching their decisions, the Selection Panel will select athletes who, in their judgement, meet one or more of the following criteria:

Performance

- Athletes who are expected to contribute most effectively to achieving the strongest possible team result.

Future Potential

- Athletes who may not yet meet the performance level outlined above but clearly demonstrate the potential for future high-level success.

Testing and Performance Development

- Athletes may be selected to support the evaluation of team combinations or to progress specific performance-development objectives in preparation for key events during the season.

Alignment with Strategic Performance Objectives

- Athletes assessed by the Selection Panel as contributing to broader programme aims (e.g., CEV qualification) as outlined in the Annual Performance Plan or otherwise communicated by Volleyball England.

The Selection Panel retains the right not to enter a team in any event.

10. SELECTION FACTORS

Volleyball is a team sport, and although individual development matters, athletes must also show they can work well within a team. When selecting a squad, the Selection Panel considers more than individual skill and performance. They also take into account factors such as positional needs, how playing styles complement one another, communication skills, leadership qualities, and each athlete's ability to contribute to overall team cohesion and strategy.

The factors that may be considered by the Selection Panel in making their selection decisions include:

- Performance in training and trials.

- The competitive level at which the athlete is currently performing.
- Ability to maintain training loads.
- Technical ability, level of skill and fitness.
- Any past, current or recurring injury or condition (physical or otherwise) which has or may have the potential to inhibit the performance of an athlete (or group of athletes).
- Team-role considerations, including—though not limited to—compatibility with others, individual characteristics, and personal attitude.
- Team balance.
- Ability or willingness to train and compete within the Volleyball England programme at times and places required or designated by Volleyball England.
- Findings from consultations with relevant coaches and/or support staff.
- Findings from medical examinations, psychological evaluations, or physiological analysis.
- Potential for future development.
- Any extenuating circumstances that may have impaired an athlete's performance or excluded an athlete from an event or trial.

Volleyball England recognises the subjective nature of selection decisions and in making these, the Selection Panels, in their sole discretion and reflecting their expert opinion, may give what they consider to be appropriate weight to any one or more of the factors above as appropriate.

In relation to the selection of reserve athletes, the Selection Panel shall take into account the needs of the team as a whole. The role of the reserve athlete is to support the training needs of the team. If a substitution is required, the needs of the team will be prioritised, and the next best available athletes will be selected. This will not necessarily be a named reserve.

An athlete's performance will be presumed to be their best. If there is a medical or other reason why an athlete cannot perform at their best, the Volleyball Performance Director must be notified in writing, together with a medical certificate if appropriate. While the Selection Panel may take account of any factor affecting performance, Volleyball England is not bound to delay or alter the selection process as a consequence.

11. SELECTION PROCESS

The timeline for the selection process will be published in the Talent and National Team Calendar to include the stated Selection Date for each event.

Late nominations to the process may be accepted at the sole discretion of the relevant Selection Panel.

If an athlete cannot take part in selection events for either medical or other reasons, they must inform the Performance Director in writing, providing evidence if necessary. Failure to comply is likely to result in an athlete becoming ineligible for selection.

An athlete will be expected to produce their best performance at all selection events and training. If there is a medical or other reason why an athlete cannot perform at their best, the Performance Director must be notified in writing in advance, together with a medical certificate if appropriate. The nature of the illness or injury or other reason will be established and monitored at an early stage by the Chief Medical Officer or their nominee, who will advise the relevant Coach and Performance Director accordingly.

While the Selection Panel may take account of any factor affecting performance, Volleyball England is not bound to delay or alter the selection process as a consequence.

Where there is disruption to the Selection Process and/or other events (for example, due to illness), selection should be made using the factors available to the Selection Panel.

The Head Coach, with the approval of the Selection Panel, may organise additional and compulsory assessments, tests and trials with reasonable notice given.

12. CHANGES TO TEAMS / DESELECTION

Following selection, an athlete may be de-selected by the relevant Selection Panel or Volleyball England if:

- The athlete ceases to comply with the eligibility criteria set out in this Selection Policy.
- Where the relevant Selection Panel considers another athlete or selection decision is likely to lead to better results against the stated outcome targets or aims in the Annual Performance Plan.

If there is a concern about the ability of an individual to be able to compete to the best of his/her ability at an event due to an injury or illness, pre- or post-selection the following procedure will be followed

- The Volleyball England Chief Medical Officer (“CMO”) can require an athlete to undergo a medical examination to decide their fitness to take part. This examination will be carried out by the CMO or another Doctor delegated by the CMO. If it is the opinion of the nominated doctor that the athlete is not able to compete for medical reasons, he/she will be withdrawn from the event and if appropriate, a replacement will be selected in accordance with the Selection Policy.
- If the athlete passes the medical examination but the coaching and/or support staff still have concerns over whether or not the athlete is able to compete to the best of his/her ability due to the underlying injury or illness, the Performance Director or Head Coach can require the athlete to undergo a set of sports specific performance tests where the results will be compared to the athlete’s previous relevant results. The tests can be repeated more than once and within a short timeframe if required and will be carried out by designated support personnel. If as a result of the injury or illness the athlete does not meet the required test levels, he/she will be withdrawn from the event on medical grounds and, if appropriate, a replacement will be selected in accordance with the Selection Policy.

If a situation arises where the timing dictates that it is not possible for the relevant Selection Panel to meet, the decision will be taken by the Head Coach and Performance Director, with the decision of the Head Coach being final if there is any disagreement.

13. APPEALS

An athlete only has the right to appeal against any decision of the Selection Panel in respect of the implementation of the Policy where the athlete believes that:

- there has been a failure to apply the applicable selection/nomination/deselection criteria; and/or
- there has been a failure to adhere to the procedure set out in the applicable selection/nomination/deselection Policy.

An athlete does not have a right of appeal against any judgement or discretion exercised in the course of making selection/nomination/deselection decisions, or against the content of the applicable selection/nomination/deselection criteria.

Appeals process

Appeals must be submitted in writing and must clearly outline the grounds for the appeal. All appeals should be sent to the Chief Executive Officer at c.ford@volleyballengland.org. Each appeal will be reviewed by an independent panel, and the appellant will be informed of the outcome. The decision of the appeal panel is final and not subject to further review.

The deadline for submitting an appeal, along with the date on which the outcome will be communicated, will be specified in the selection and non-selection letters for each event.

14. STAFF APPOINTMENTS

For events where Volleyball England supply staff, such as the coaches and support staff, these will be appointed by the Performance Director. The decision on the individuals appointed to this role will be made in communication with, and in the best interest of the athletes.

All appointed staff must be a member of Volleyball England and adhere to all Volleyball England, FIVB and CEV policies and procedures.

14. AMENDMENT TO THIS POLICY

This Selection Policy may be amended by the Board of Volleyball England at any time at its sole discretion.

15. QUESTIONS ABOUT THE POLICY

Questions about this policy should be directed to talent@volleyballengland.org