



BRITISH
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**NATIONAL ACADEMIES
GUIDELINES**

PLAYERS

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National Academies Guidelines

CONTENTS

These guidelines are split into four sections, with relevant procedural guidance included in each section. These are Introduction, Personnel (workforce management), Procedures (administrative operations) and Players (athlete management). You can find the other Guidelines [here](#).

SECTION 4 - PLAYERS

29. Squad & Team Information

30. Trials

31. Selection

32. Selection Appeals

33. Membership Information & Expectations

34. Eligibility & Transfers

35. De-Selection

36. Player Feedback

37. Disciplinary Processes



National Academies Guidelines

SECTION 4 - PLAYERS

29. Squad & Team Information

Squad Types

National Academies can be made up of the following groups of squad:

- **Performance System**
 - **Cloth Senior** – Adult performance cloth dodgeball athletes.
 - Train in gendered groups, i.e., Men's, women's or mixed.
 - **Foam Senior** – Adult performance foam dodgeball athletes.
 - Train in gendered groups, i.e., Men's, women's or mixed.
 - **U21/Development** – Under 21's (or under 24 & developing) performance dodgeball athletes.
 - Train in gendered groups, i.e., Men's, Women's or Mixed.
 - Train in one preferred discipline (i.e. cloth).
- **Talent System**
 - **U18** – Under 18's talented dodgeball athletes.
 - Train in gendered groups, i.e., Men's, Women's or Mixed if possible (non-gendered is also acceptable if necessary to support participation).
 - Train in one preferred discipline (i.e. cloth).
 - **U15** – Under 15's talented dodgeball athletes.
 - Train in gendered groups, i.e., Men's, Women's or Mixed if possible (non-gendered is also acceptable if necessary to support participation).
 - Train in one preferred discipline (i.e. cloth).

Squad Sizes

Each gendered squad should consist of a minimum of 10 players and a maximum of 30 players, e.g.:

- One National Academy may have a new foam senior setup of 10 athletes; whereas
- An established National Academy's senior cloth group could consist of up to a men's cloth senior of 30 athletes and a women's cloth senior squad of 30 athletes.

National Teams

Each National Academy will send national teams to represent their nation at competition. Managers and head coaches should ideally select 9-14 athletes per team (depending on the competition demands).

- **Mixed & Single Gender Category Selection** – Selection committees may, at their own discretion, determine to select separate single gender and mixed gender squads, or select a number of athletes who will crossover and play in both a single gender and mixed categories at the same event.
- **Discipline Selection** – Due to the stresses that different throwing mechanics place upon the body, selection committees should make efforts to select separate squads for each discipline (e.g. cloth dodgeball Vs foam dodgeball), and have no athletes who crossover. If this is not possible, any crossover athletes' welfare must be considered and plans put in place to prevent multiple discipline switches throughout a competition day.

National Team Coaches

Ideally, non-players will be allocated as National Team Coaches. If this is not possible, support should be provided to playing coaches through the use of 'box coaches' (e.g. players from other categories) who can time games, provide feedback, facilitate substitutions and implement agreed tactics.

National Academies Guidelines

30. Trials

- National Academies should hold regular trials (2-yearly minimum).
- Managers and Head Coaches may opt to hold Open Trials and Closed Trials, or Closed Trials-only at their discretion.
- **Benefits of Holding Open Trials:**
 - Can refresh or revitalise a programme;
 - Useful to see lots of new players whom staff may not be aware of; and
 - Can support National Academy finances.
- **Drawbacks of Holding Open Trials:**
 - Uses up allocated training dates;
 - Providing feedback to lots of individuals can prove onerous if this is promised; and
 - Can potentially be of little use if the ability of most potential squad members is known.
- A trial fee should cover all trial costs at minimum – generally, £10–£20 is an acceptable amount depending on the length of the trial. Any surplus can be used to help cover other annual squad expenses such as equipment.

31. Selection

Types of Selection

National Academy staff will manage two types of selection:

- **National Academy Selection** – These selections are conducted after open trials and closed trials to select athletes for each training squad of the National Academy.
- **National Team Selection** – These selections are conducted at a set point before a competition (usually 4–8 months before an event; more time is recommended for longer or more expensive events which require more planning and financial/time commitment from athletes) to select athletes for competing National Teams.

Selection Panels

- Each selection should be managed by a panel of at least 3 individuals.
- Individuals should be Managers, Head Coaches or Coaches (although team captains/experienced players may be used if necessary).
- Managers may choose to exclude themselves from selection panels so they can manage the appeals process outlined in section 24. Selection Appeals, should this be necessary.

Selection Criteria

Selection panels must use a mixture of the following criteria to select their athletes. They may weight the importance of each criterion as they see fit, depending on the nature of the competition and the squad they are selecting for:

- **Ability in Specific Position(s)** – An athlete's ability in their preferred position(s) on court, and their ability to fulfil various tactical roles in the team to a high quality;
- **Attendance** – Athletes who have not met a stated training attendance target at official training sessions (see section 15. Sessions) may not be selected unless there are exceptional circumstances;
- **Attitude** – Athletes must meet the expectations outlined in the British Dodgeball Code of Conduct and a National Academy's values, or they may not be selected;
- **Potential** – Younger athletes with high potential may be selected to help strengthen the National Academy/National Team in the future;
- **Experience** – Experienced athletes who have strong leadership skills or experience of playing under pressure may be selected to help the National Academy/National Team meet performance goals; and
- **Additional Qualities** – Players who provide additional value to the National Team through performance analysis, physiotherapy, volunteering as a coach etc. may be selected to help the National Academy/National Team meet performance goals.



National Academies Guidelines

Selection Process

1. **Determine Performance Objectives** - Discuss and write down planned objectives e.g., are you likely to be competing for medals or building a squad for the future? This can help to weight to the selection criteria appropriately (and determine who is invited to trial in the case of National Academy selections).
2. **Select Trial Athletes:**
 - a. **National Academy selection** - Use Performance Objectives to determine who should be invited to open/closed trials. You may ask club coaches to nominate players if your knowledge of them is limited.
 - b. **National Team selection** - This will be the National Academy athletes in a specific squad.
3. **Communicate Opportunity** - Inform athletes of the selection dates, the selection panel and the selection criteria. Confirm eligibility/attendance/availability for any competitions before the trial. If appropriate, notify the NAL to share through British Dodgeball platforms.
 - a. **Evaluate Athletes** - Each selector should assess each athlete based on the selection criteria.
4. **Discuss & Select Athletes** - The panel should convene to select the first draft of the National Academy/Squad.
 - a. **Conflict of Interest** - Members of the panel must outline any conflicts of interest before discussing specific players. This may be because they are part of the same club, or are friends away from the National Academy. Any conflicts of interest should be noted and selection decisions made regarding that particular athlete without the input of the selector with the conflict.
5. **Verification (Optional)** - The panel may present their draft selection to a Manager for comment. This is an opportunity for the selection to be challenged and confirmed.
 - a. **Eligibility** - National Team eligibility should be checked at this stage to ensure no athletes are at risk of failing to meet the necessary criteria.
6. **Notify Athletes** - Athletes should be notified of their outcome.
7. **Provide Feedback to Athletes:**
 - a. **National Academy Open Trials** - Open triallists do not need to be supplied with feedback unless the selectors have capacity to do this. Instead, a reminder of the selection criteria may be presented and triallists encourages to self-assess of speak to their club coach to receive feedback about how they can progress in each area in order to improve selection chances in the future.
 - b. **National Academy Closed Trials & National Team Selection** - These triallists should be presented with at least two points of specific feedback relating to the selection criteria, e.g. one strength and one area to develop. More information may be provided if coaches have capacity.
8. **Manage Appeals & Determine Final Squads/Teams** - If any athletes submit an appeal, this must be managed and any outcomes altered if required.
9. **Announce Final Squads/Teams**

National Academies Guidelines

32. Selection Appeals

An appeal against a selection decision may only be brought on the grounds that:

- The procedures detailed in section 23. Selection were not followed; and/or
- The panel made decisions which can not be reasonably rationalised given the evidence available.

Appeal Process

- 1. First Appeal Submission** – An appeal shall be commenced by contacting the relevant National Academy Manager via email within five days of the outcome of the selection being announced or communicated. The appeal must be signed by the appellant and must:
 - Set out the grounds on which the appeal is made and the remedy sought; and
 - Provide details of the basis of the appeal.
- 2. First Appeal Management** – The first appeal will be managed by the relevant Manager.
 - A Manager cannot manage an appeal if they have a conflict of interest, e.g. they sat on the panel in question. In such cases, the first appeal will be managed by the relevant Safeguarding Officer.
 - The first appeal should be resolved within five working days of its appointment.
- 3. First Appeal Outcome** – There are two possible outcomes of the first appeal:
 - a. Appeal Upheld** – If the first appeal is upheld, the selection panel will be asked to reconsider their original selection by applying the selection criteria correctly, follow the correct process and consider the correct information. It is possible that selectors may reach the same decision.
 - b. Appeal Unsuccessful** – In the event that the first appeal is unsuccessful, the player will be:
 - Informed that their appeal has been unsuccessful in writing within five working days;
 - Provided with reasons for the dismissal; and
 - Provided with a secondary opportunity to make a second appeal.
- 4. Second Appeal Submission** – If a player would like to commence the second appeal, they must notify the Head of Performance via email within two working days of the first appeal decision. The second appeal must be signed by the appellant and:
 - Set out the grounds on which the appeal is made and the remedy sought;
 - Provide full details of the basis of the second appeal; and
 - Be accompanied by any documentation which the appellant relies on in support of the appeal.
- 5. Second Appeal Management** – The second appeal will be managed by the Head of Performance and a panel of two other individuals who are suitably experienced and independent of the original decision.
 - The selection decision will remain in force pending the outcome of the appeal.
 - If the panel is notified that the parties have reached an agreement to settle the appeal following a mediation process then the appeal shall be stayed.
 - The appeal panel will usually base decisions on written submission from the appellant and the selection panel, but has the power to set its own processes, e.g. requesting further information.
 - The second appeal should be resolved within five working days of its appointment.
- 6. Second Appeal Outcome** – There are two possible outcomes of the second appeal:
 - **Appeal Upheld** – Rescind the selection decision and either:
 - i. Remit the matter back to the selectors with a direction to make a new decision within a prescribed time scale; or
 - ii. In the event that the panel concludes that the selectors did not follow the procedures set out in the selection policy and that it is plain that if they had done so the player would have been selected, direct that the selectors to select the player to the relevant National Team or National Academy Squad.
 - **Appeal Unsuccessful** – Confirm the selection decision and reject the appeal.



National Academies Guidelines

33. Membership Information & Expectations

Player Agreement

The following information should be provided to a successful National Academy triallist as part of a player agreement. Acceptance of the following items is required to join a National Academy squad:

- **Membership Fees** - Information on costs and how to obtain National Academy membership through Gameday (unless joining an academy late);
- **National Academy Behavioural Expectations** - Players must understand they are role models to others. Link to British Dodgeball code of conduct and National Academy-specific expectations;
- **National Academy Training Dates and Attendance Expectations** - Players/guardians should be provided with official and additional training dates, an attendance expectation relating to official training dates and given the opportunity to notify coaches in advance if they cannot attend a specific date due to prior commitments;
- **Image Capture & Distribution Consent** - Players/guardians must give consent to be photographed/filmed and have their images distributed on National Academy, British Dodgeball, EDF and WDBF platforms;
- **Eligibility Confirmation** - Players must confirm they continue to meet national eligibility requirements (see section 26. Eligibility); and
- **Read & Agree to Policies** - Players must confirm they have read and agree to adhere to British Dodgeball [Policies](#) and [National Academy guidance](#), including the Anti-Doping Policy; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy; Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy; Social Media Policy and the National Academies Guidelines.

National Academy Behavioural Expectations

National Academies may set additional behavioural expectations beyond that which is set out in the British Dodgeball Code of Conduct. This may contain expectations relevant to high-performance athletes including:

- Tactical application and not sharing strategies or tactical resources;
- Off-court preparation (physical, mental, nutrition etc.);
- Professionalism & role modelling; and
- Additional expectations regarding fair play.

Any additional expectations should be communicated to the National Academy Lead to add to the National Academy webpage.

National Academy Attendance Expectations

National Academies should set attendance expectations of between 50-80% with regards to official training dates.

- This expectation may be set at the Manager and Head Coach's discretion, and may vary depending on the level and frequency of squad, and some flexibility may be given depending on injuries etc. Injured players should be encouraged to continue to attend each session in order to benefit from tactical and technical input from coaches.
- No expectation should be given with regards to additional training dates. Coaches may however determine to accept a player's attendance at additional training dates in place of attendance at official dates, e.g. An attendance rate is set at 70%. A player who only makes 6/9 official dates (67%) but 3/3 additional dates (equating to 9/12 in total - 75%) may be selectable for a National Team as they meet the required attendance rate. Choosing to count additional dates is at the selectors' discretion.

34. Eligibility & Transfers

National eligibility and transfer regulations are determined by the EDF and WDBF for their respective competitions:

- [EDF Eligibility Regulations](#)
- [WDBF Eligibility & National Status of Players](#)

Players must demonstrate they are eligible, or will become eligible before the next upcoming competition where timeframes are involved, in order to be eligible for selection to a National Academy squad.

National Academies Guidelines

35. De-Selection

Athletes can be de-selected from National Academies and National Teams in the following instances;

- **Anti-Doping Violations** – Athletes suspended by British Dodgeball, the EDF or WDBF due to ongoing or concluded antidoping violation allegations, will not be nominated or considered for selection. If already nominated or selected, they will be deselected from a National Academy;
- **Injury** – If injury issues are identified at the time of or after selection, a fitness test or medical input may be required to determine whether the athlete is capable of performing to the level that they were selected for the National Team or National Academy. It is recommended that injured athletes remain as part of the National Academy and still attend training sessions, but this may not be possible where long-term injuries are concerned;
- **Breaches of Conduct** – Athletes in breach of British Dodgeball or National Academy policies, code of conducts or athlete agreements may be deselected as per Section 30. Disciplinary Processes; or
- **Sustained Drop in Performance Levels** – Athletes who display a sustained loss of performance levels, i.e., over the course of a few months, may be deselected.

Athletes who are de-selected from a National Academy are not eligible to receive refunds on their membership fee. Athletes who are de-selected from a National Team are not eligible to receive a refund on any items already paid for or committed to (e.g. accommodation/flights/entry fees), although efforts should be taken to refund players where possible (such as if a reserve player accepts their place and can cover the relevant costs).

36. Player Feedback

Written feedback should be provided to athletes at least two times per year. This may be provided as part of trials and National Team selection processes. Feedback should be:

- **Positive and Constructive** – Provide 1-3 observations on both the player's strengths and areas for improvement. Frame critical feedback as an opportunity for growth;
- **Balanced Feedback and Feedforward** – Provide both feedback on past performance/current ability levels and suggestions for future actions (feedforward) to help players plan for their development; and
- **Focused on the Holistic Athlete** – This is an opportunity to provide feedback around more than physical skills and tactical understanding; coaches may share other observations of a player should they feel it will help them to develop further, e.g. physical conditioning, mental resilience, discipline, accountability, coachability, impact on team spirit etc.



National Academies Guidelines

37. Disciplinary Processes

General Complaints: The process for sending general complaints about a National Academy's operations is outlined in the [Complaints & Feedback Policy](#).

National Academy Disciplinary Offences: If it is alleged that the conduct of a National Academy Athlete or volunteer has fallen short of the British Dodgeball Code of Conduct or National Academy-specific expectations as per Section 26. Members Information & Expectations, an internal disciplinary process should be followed. This is outlined below:

1. **Reporting** - A complaint should be submitted to the relevant National Academy Safeguarding Officer via e-mail. The complaint should be signed by the complainer and include:
 - a. Details of what occurred and when/where the occurrence took place;
 - b. Details of any witnesses; and
 - c. Names of any others who have been treated in a similar way (provided that those people consent to their names being disclosed).
2. **Complaint Management** - The complaint will be managed by the relevant Safeguarding Officer.
 - a. A Safeguarding Officer cannot manage an appeal if they have a conflict of interest. In such cases, the complaint will be managed by the relevant Manager.
 - b. The complaint should be resolved within five working days of its appointment where possible.
3. **Complaint Review** - There are two possible outcomes of the complaint:
 - a. **Complaint Dismissed** - In the event that the complaint is dismissed, the complainer will be:
 - i. Informed that their complaint has been unsuccessful in writing within five working days;
 - ii. Provided with reasons for the dismissal; and
 - iii. Provided with an opportunity to make an appeal.
 - b. **Complaint Upheld** - If the complaint is upheld, the Safeguarding Officer will form a disciplinary panel consisting of themselves and two other individuals who are suitably experienced and independent of the circumstances of the complaint. The panel will determine the relevant course of action to be taken.
4. **Panel Investigation** - The disciplinary panel have the power to:
 - a. Request that all parties of the complaint submit written evidence regarding the incident(s);
 - b. Decide to uphold or dismiss the complaint without holding a hearing;
 - c. Hold a hearing (whether or not such a hearing is requested by either party) at which both parties will be entitled to attend and present their case with representation if desired; or
 - d. Decide to award sanctions without holding a hearing.
5. **Complaint Outcome** - The disciplinary panel will outline their decision to all parties via email.
 - The disciplinary panel should resolve the complaint within five working days of its appointment.

Disciplinary Measures

- Any sanctions awarded by the disciplinary panel should be proportionate to the offence committed.
- Sanctions may include:
 - An informal/verbal warning;
 - A formal written warning;
 - Suspension of membership and/or from participation in National Academy activities for a specified period;
 - De-Selection from the National Academy or a National Team until the next trial period; or
 - Permanent De-Selection from the National Academy.



National Academies Guidelines

Disciplinary Offence Appeal Process

- **Appeal Submission** - If any individual (complainant or complainant) is dissatisfied with the outcome of a Disciplinary Offence complaint and would like to submit an appeal, they must notify the National Academy Lead via email within two working days of the complaint decision. The appeal must be signed by the appellant and:
 - Set out the grounds on which the appeal is made and the remedy sought;
 - Provide full details of the basis of the appeal; and
 - Be accompanied by any documentation which the appellant relies on in support of the appeal.
- **Appeal Management** - The appeal will be managed by the National Academy Lead and a panel of two other individuals who are suitably experienced and independent of the original decision.
 - The disciplinary decision will remain in force pending the outcome of the appeal.
 - If the panel is notified that the parties have reached an agreement to settle the appeal following a mediation process then the appeal shall be stayed.
 - The appeal panel will usually base decisions on written submission from the appellant and the disciplinary panel, but has the power to set its own processes, e.g. requesting further information.
 - The appeal should be resolved within five working days of its appointment.
- **Second Appeal Outcome** - There are two possible outcomes of the second appeal:
 - **Appeal Upheld** - Rescind the selection decision and amended the original disciplinary panel decision.
 - This may involve awarding an amended sanction or removing a sanction.
 - **Appeal Unsuccessful** - Confirm the disciplinary panel decision and reject the appeal.