

GBR SENIOR SELECTION POLICY

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 2021

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

Date Approved by Board: 29th March 2021

Last Updated: 26th March 2021

1. PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

This document lays out the BF selection policy for the 2021 Senior European Championships.

The overall aim and purpose of selection is to maximise the opportunities to:

- 1) win individual or team medals at the European Championships 2021
- 2) provide an appropriate development opportunity for individual athletes and teams on their journey to future Olympic qualification and medal success (Paris/LA).

The 2021 European Championships will provide an opportunity for those athletes who have qualified for Tokyo to gain additional international competitive experience as part of their preparation. Both in the individual and team events.

The Senior European Championships is a target competition for athletes that are stage T4 or above in the BF Athlete Development Pathway.

2. IMPACT OF COVID-19

In light of the current COVID-19 situation it may not be possible to send athletes to this event. This will depend on the travel restrictions put in place by the Government and the related advice and guidance relating to the use of exemptions.

This document outlines the process by which an athlete is selected for the Senior European Championships. Selection decisions will be performance led, taking into account the historic performance and trajectory of an athlete, alongside their current training, competition plans and most recent athlete assessment document.

The decision whether to send/enter a selected athlete will be taken separately. This decision will be taken by the Board, in light of legislation and guidance, a minimum of 5 weeks prior to the event.

3. COMPOSITION OF 2021 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS SELECTION PANEL

1. **Voting members.** The selection panel will consist of an odd number of members. All voting members must have a fundamental technical understanding and experience of the event being selected for, and the athletes under consideration.

	#	Voting	
Chair (Head of Pathways)	1	Y	Steve Kemp
Head of Olympic Team	1	Y	Johnny Davis
Weapon Leads	3 (min)	Y*	Jon Salfield John Rees Chris Galeslout
Additional Representative (GBR Selection Panel Reps)	3 (min)	Y	Pat Aiyenuro Lindsey Bottoms Anna Ward
Independent Member	1	Y	Clare Halstead
ADP Sport Science & Medicine Rep	1	N	Maria Goriup
Independent Observer	1	N	Head of People & Culture (tbc)
Data Analyst & Note taker (*Stand-in 1)	1	N	Rob Cawdron
Data Analyst (*Stand-in 2)	1	N	Ian Lichfield

Note (see * above): A selector who has a personal coaching relationship (even in the recent past) with any of the athletes under consideration provides a risk of allegations of bias. Where this is unavoidable, the coach will not have a vote in regard to this athlete(s) and may only be present to give their opinion on the respective merits of each eligible athlete with others making the final decision. There are two stand-ins identified that may be co-opted by the Chair to act in a voting capacity should this situation arise.

2. **Chair.** A chair is required to lead the process (briefing members, applying the policy and criteria, and overseeing the communication of the results). The chair needs to have proven 'chairing skills' and experience of being a selection panel member. The chair is responsible and accountable to the Chief Executive for the operation of the selection panel. The Chair of the Selection Panel will be Steve Kemp, Head of Pathways. The Chair is also a voting member.
3. **Recording of decisions and outcomes.** A note-taker is required to record the decisions and outcomes of the selection panel. This will take the form of a decision log. All decisions and outcomes must be agreed and recorded before the selection panel is concluded, which includes any areas of conflict of opinion. Notes must be factual and not contain personal observations.
4. **Independent member or observer.** An independent member or observer will be present to provide confidence to athletes about the fairness and objectivity of the process. The independent member or observer must be familiar with high performance sport, either as an athlete, coach or legal expert. Their role is to act as an observer – scrutinising the process, holding the panel accountable to the policy and its criteria, and ensuring the principles of fairness and acting without bias are upheld.

5. **Data Analysis.** Where appropriate, data analysis should support the operation of a selection panel.

4. DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

This document is approved by the BF Board.

The BF Board delegates the implementation and execution of the policy including any related selection processes, procedures and structure to the CEO.

In turn, the CEO delegates responsibilities as follows:

2021 European Championship Selection Panels: Senior European Championship 2021 Individual and Team Selection.

Pathway Leadership Team: Overseeing and ratifying the Selection Panels European Championship selections. Ensuring consistency of application of any discretion across the weapons and between athletes.

This document will be reviewed annually, and any changes approved by the BF Board.

5. GENERAL PRINCIPLES/ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

1. Fencers will only be considered for selection if they have a satisfactory disciplinary record. The selection panel(s) reserve the right to omit a fencer from selection for any particular event if they deem that fencer's disciplinary record to be unsatisfactory.

"disciplinary record" means the record of
 - the status, outcome and resulting sanction of any disciplinary cases and complaints relating to breaches of BF Codes of Conduct and/or BF Policy within the last 18 months.
 - any current disciplinary sanction imposed by BF, Home Country Associations, FIE and/or any other relevant authority.
2. No fencer will be eligible for selection if, at the relevant selection date, that individual has an overdue and unauthorised debt to British Fencing. An "overdue debt" will be considered one that has not been paid within 30 days of notification that an amount is owed to British Fencing, by British Fencing or one of the appointed Team Managers.
3. Fencers are expected to maintain a satisfactory level of training and fitness and be able to evidence this if necessary (for example on production of a training diary). The selection panel(s) reserves the right to request a fitness test or omit a fencer from selection for any particular event if they deem that their fitness or training record to be unsatisfactory.
4. In making any selection decision the selection panel(s) shall not be obliged to have regard to the fact that selection (or non-selection) may affect a fencer's ranking in any ranking scheme.
5. If any conflict occurs between the above rules and anything published or appearing on the BF

GBR Senior European Selection Policy 2021

website these rules will have precedence.

6. Applications for the correction of errors in the calculation of points should be submitted in writing using the appropriate forms available on the British Fencing website. These should be sent to the selection panel(s) via headoffice@britishfencing.com, cc'ing steve.kemp@britishfencing.com) no later than two weeks **before** the identified selection date.
7. For the purposes of the 2021 European Championships the requirement to compete in the relevant category at the National Championships is suspended.
8. Entry to the 2021 European Championships will be governed by the conditions of the particular competition and the associated EFC and FIE regulations. Any fencer must meet any such conditions/ regulation to be considered for selection including holding a BF Compete Membership and an FIE license.
9. According to EFC & FIE rules, a financial penalty can be imposed if an athlete fails to turn up to an event. The athlete will be liable for this penalty.
10. To be considered for selection athletes must complete an online 'Request to be considered for Selection' form by the published date. This includes uploading the most recent BF Athlete Assessment document, which is expected to be completed by the athlete and their personal coach. Any mitigating circumstances or discretionary case which an athlete wishes to be taken into account in the selection decisions should be uploaded as part of completing this form.

6. EUROPEAN 2021 INDIVIDUAL QUALIFICATION

11. Selection to fence in the individual events at the European Championships 2021 will initially be made from those fencers who have reached the necessary qualifying standard, subject to meeting the eligibility selection criteria listed above and the provisions of the following paragraphs.

1. The qualifying standard for individuals for the 2021 European Championships will be 2 x L64s or 1 x L32 from the FIE international WC / GP competitions held between 1st July 2019 and 1st March 2021.
2. In the event that more athletes qualify than places available, athletes will be selected according to the number of points achieved in the 1st July 2019 and 1st March 2021 FIE WC/GP/World Championship events as appropriate.

Result	Points Awarded
L64	5
L32	15
L16	30
L8	45

GBR Senior European Selection Policy 2021

L4	60
L2	75
1 st	90

3. In the event that two athletes qualifying for the last place have the same number of points the selectors will use the discretionary factors based on the BF Pathway Stage Components and Performance Standards, informed by the individual Athlete Assessments to make a selection.
4. Fencers selected for the individual competition shall not automatically be selected to fence in the Team event.

7. TEAM QUALIFICATION

12. Notwithstanding the qualifying standard for individual events, any weapon which stands in the **Top 16 of the world cup team rankings as at 1st March 2021** may send a full team of four fencers. All other Team selections will be discretionary.
13. Discretionary decisions to send a team to the European Championships will be based on the following factors:
 - a. Team Performance at World Cups
 - b. Evidence of commitment of team members to training
 - c. Current fitness/injury status of team members
 - d. Pathway Stage assessment and Olympic trajectory of team members
 - e. International performance depth of potential team members who have not met the individual qualification criteria
 - f. Behaviour, professional approach, team mentality and resultant impact on wider GB squad (athletes, officials etc)

The decision-making process will include reviewing the submitted Athlete Assessment which are based on the published BF Pathway Stages, Components and Performance Standards.

14. All athletes must submit a Selection Application Form for selection two weeks prior to the selection date. Athletes that have qualified for the individual event will automatically be considered for the team event. Athletes that do not submit a Selection Application Form have no right to be considered for selection.
15. Fencers who decline selection for the team event will not be permitted to fence in the individual event.
16. Up to four fencers for each Team event will be selected by the Selection Panel, taking into account the following discretionary factors.
 - a. BF Pathway Stage Assessment* and development trajectory to 2024/2028 Olympics
 - b. Current levels of fitness and training
 - c. Medical reason/injury/illness eg an athlete returning from injury
 - d. A track record of performances in individual and team events at Senior World Cup and Grand Prix events, demonstrating the ability in these events to win Direct Elimination bouts and team relay bouts against a reasonable standard of international opponent.
 - e. Commitment to an agreed appropriate level of fitness and training, including detailed

GBR Senior European Selection Policy 2021

- training plan for the weeks prior to the event
- f. Team Strategy eg skills to perform a specific role within the team event
 - g. International Performance & Ranking Trajectory
 - h. Athlete Development Programme Activity
 - i. Demonstrable commitment to BF values
 - j. Evidence of ability to act as a supportive squad member and have a positive impact on the team mentality and overall professional culture of the GB team.

*The decision-making process will include reviewing the submitted Athlete Assessment which is based on the published BF Pathway Stages and components. Athletes will be assessed against the T4 Pathway Standards, including the following performance standards:

- A L8 place in a Junior European/World Championships 1st September 2019 and 1st March 2021
 - Top 40% finishing place across FIE Senior World Cup or Grand Prix Individual Event between 1st September 2019 and 1st March 2021
 - Senior World Ranking 120
17. If fewer than three fencers present a credible case for team selection using the factors listed above, the Selection Panel reserve the right not to select a team, or to defer team selection until a later date.
 18. If only three fencers present a credible case for team selection, the selectors will defer selection of a team reserve until such time that all selected fencers accept their places.
 - a) Once all three fencers accept their place, a fourth fencer will be nominated by the Athlete Development Programme (ADP) as a reserve for the team event. The ADP will support the nominated athlete to ensure that they receive the maximum development benefit and are able to meet the professional behaviour standards expected of a member of the Senior team. The ADP will consider performances at prior Junior European and World Championships and U23 European Championships supported by a completed Pathway Stage Assessment and athlete trajectory towards future Olympics.
 - b) If all three fencers do not accept their team selection, a team will not be entered, however the remaining selected fencers will still be able to compete in the individuals, provided that they do not displace a qualified fencer from competing in the individual event.
 19. Fencers who have not met the individual qualification standard and accept selection for the team event are also eligible to fence in the individual event provided that in doing so they do not displace a qualified fencer from competing in the individual event.
 20. For the purpose of selection for both the individual and team events at the 2021 European Championships, the selection panel(s) and the CEO may in their absolute discretion modify the rules for points and the qualifying standard retrospectively where special circumstances affect the result of any particular competition (e.g. significantly reduced participation, walk-over result, or minimal entry).

8. MANAGEMENT OF INJURY, ILLNESS, LOSS OF PERFORMANCE AND DISCIPLINARY ISSUES

21. All post-selection issues (including injury, illness, loss of performance and disciplinary issues) will be considered by the BF Pathway Leadership Team who will decide whether an athlete is to be de-selected.
22. De-selection decisions on the basis of injury & illness should be taken in consultation with appropriate medical professionals, ADP Sports Science & Medicine team and the BF Chief Medical Officer. Athletes may be required to undergo medical assessments (at their cost).
23. De-selection decisions on the basis of disciplinary issues/breaches of BF Code of Conduct will be taken in consultation with the Disciplinary Chair/CEO.

9. TIMING AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF DECISIONS

24. Selection decisions will be announced within 3 working days of the published selection date on the BF website.
25. Athletes will have 72 hours to appeal.
26. Once the window for appeals has passed, athletes will receive confirmation that they can go ahead with (for example) booking travel, or that there is an appeal in their weapon which they should await the outcome of.

10. APPEALS & COMPLAINTS

27. Any athlete who has not met the performance criteria in paragraph 19 for automatic qualification for the 2020 European Championships, shall have no right of appeal against non-selection for these competitions.
28. Any athlete who has not completed and submitted a Selection Application Form, shall have no right of appeal against non-selection for these competitions.
29. Any athlete who has not provided a completed Athlete Assessment Form (submitted as part of the Selection Application Form), shall have no right of appeal against non-selection for these competitions.
30. Submitting the Selection Application Form is the opportunity for the athlete to provide any relevant data to the Selection Panel. An athlete shall have no right of appeal against non-selection on the grounds that the data supplied by the athlete was missing or inaccurate.
31. Any athlete who has not achieved the criteria in paragraph 11 for automatic selection for Senior World Cups/Grand Prix, shall have no right of appeal against non-selection for these competitions.
32. The Appeal Policy and Procedure will be published on the BF website.

33. Outside of matters that fall under the Appeal Policy and Procedure, general comments and complaints relating to selection can be sent to headoffice@britishfencing.com and will be handled according to the Comments and Complaints Policy.

11. APPENDIX A - GOOD PRACTICE FOR SELECTION PANELS

The following good practice underpins the way in which selection panels operate.

Apply selection criteria fairly and consistently. The Chair should provide a thorough briefing on the standards expected and that selectors understand and agree to their responsibilities.

- The panel must follow the published policy and not be influenced by any other interests. All eligible athletes should be given a fair chance of selection using all of the criteria identified in the selection policy.
- BF (or any individual associated with delivery of the Athlete Development Programme) must not reach verbal or written agreements with any individual athlete which conflict with the published criteria.
- Acting fairly requires that where discretion needs to be exercised, then it should be restricted to the area and scope identified. For example, if no athletes have met the criteria outright or all selection places have not been filled, then the policy may allow selectors to use their discretion to select the athlete they consider most suitable to fill the place(s), or not to make a selection, as consistent with the overall aims set out for the particular selection.

Act honestly, in good faith and in an unbiased manner. The selectors must act reasonably, rationally and with integrity and professionalism. They must be impartial and not show bias or favouritism, or even appear to show it. They must not pre-judge the outcome but must let their consistent application of the agreed criteria and processes drive their decisions.

- Selectors should have no personal or business involvement with any of the competitors in question – they should not stand to gain (or lose) personally or financially as a consequence of the decisions. They must not be related to the competitors or have any personal preference as to which of them is selected.
- A selector who has a personal coaching relationship (even in the recent past) with any of the athletes under consideration provides a risk of allegations of bias. Where this is unavoidable, coaches must not have a vote in regard to this athlete(s) and may only be present to give their opinion on the respective merits of each eligible athlete with others making the final decision.

Declare any conflict of interest. If selectors are concerned that they may have a conflict of interest (or potential conflict of interest) - including as acting as a personal coach to any eligible athlete - they should declare it. This gives the Chair and other selectors the opportunity to consider the conflict, assess the risk and agree how to manage it. Whenever possible, the person with the conflict should be replaced by another suitably qualified person. If this is not, then the other selectors will need to

consider the recommendations or opinions of the conflicted selector, keeping in mind how the conflict may be influencing his/her views. The conflicted panel member cannot vote.

Communicating decisions respectfully. The outcome of a selection decision can be life changing for an athlete. For example, WCP selection may be the point at which an athlete commits to around a decade of full-time training and puts their education or career path on hold. Even when a selection policy has been well communicated in advance, the decision itself, particularly on occasions when close calls have to be made, can be devastating for athletes who are not selected.

- The Chair of the Selection Panel must give careful consideration about how the decisions are communicated, especially to those who are not selected.
- The formal decision should be conveyed in writing and, if practical, should include the offer of a de-brief with an informed coach. The timing on this de-brief will be depend on the proximity of the selection to the event and in some circumstances may have to take place afterwards. The athlete should be invited to bring a companion. For some athletes, this will provide the necessary understanding and acceptance of the decision, for others it may provide a focus on future performances and selection opportunities.
- BF will refer athletes to additional sources of support at this time including:
 - Performance Lifestyle, whose advisers are specially trained to support athlete transitions;
 - the BAC for any athlete thinking of making an appeal.
- Selection decisions must be described as 'provisional' until the end of the appeal process relevant to the particular selection process.