

Netball Northern Ireland Selection Policy

Version: 2026

Review Cycle: Annual

Owner: Performance Pathway Manager & Executive Manager

1. Objective

Netball Northern Ireland (NNI) selects and manages national squads and teams to represent Northern Ireland in international netball matches and World Netball (WN) sanctioned events.

Events may include, but are not limited to:

- Netball World Cup (NWC)
- World Youth Netball Championships (WYNC)
- Commonwealth Games*
- Europe Netball Championships (EN)

The National Programme consists of:

- NNI Warriors
- NNI Performance Pathway Squads

The purpose of the National Programme is to:

- Select athletes and teams aligned to the NNI Performance Pathway;
- Provide athletes with development opportunities within the pathway;
- Ensure fair, transparent and objective selection processes; and
- Provide the best opportunity for international success.

*For the Commonwealth Games, Netball Northern Ireland will nominate athletes to Commonwealth Games Northern Ireland in accordance with the relevant nomination policy.

2. Selection Panels

2.1 Selection Panel Composition

Selection panels for national squads will normally consist of:

Squad	Selection Panel
NNI Warriors	Head Coach, National Selector 1, National Selector 2
Emerging Warriors	Head Coach, National Selector 1, National Selector 2
U21	Head Coach, National Selector 1, National Selector 2
U19	Head Coach, National Selector 1, National Selector 2
U17	Head Coach, National Selector 1, National Selector 2

The Head Coach or designated National Selector will act as Chair of the Selection Panel.

The Pathway Manager will oversee the selection process to ensure compliance with this policy but will not take part in final selection decisions.

2.2 Appointment of National Selectors

National Selectors will be appointed through a recruitment and selection process conducted by the Pathway Manager and an identified senior NNI representative.

Selectors should demonstrate:

- Performance-level coaching and/or selection experience;
- A minimum Level 2 coaching qualification or equivalent experience;
- Experience as a national or international athlete and/or coach; and
- The ability to apply objective and athlete-centred decision-making.

2.3 Amendments to Selection Panels

NNI reserves the right to amend the composition of any Selection Panel where required, including:

- Replacing unavailable selectors;
- Appointing trainee selectors for development purposes; or
- Managing conflicts of interest.

Where a Head Coach is unavailable, an additional National Selector or appropriately qualified individual may be appointed.

Any unavailable coach may continue to provide relevant athlete information to the Selection Panel.

2.4 Conflicts of Interest

Selectors must declare any actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest to the Pathway Manager as soon as reasonably practicable.

Declared conflicts will be recorded in selection documentation and managed appropriately by NNI.

Where necessary, NNI may appoint an alternative selector.

3. Athlete Eligibility

3.1 World Netball Events

To be eligible for selection for World Netball sanctioned events, athletes must:

- Be born in Northern Ireland or have at least one parent or grandparent born in Northern Ireland;
- Be a registered member of Netball Northern Ireland;
- Be eligible to represent Northern Ireland under World Netball regulations; and
- Not participate in unaffiliated events, competitions or fixtures that conflict with NNI or World Netball regulations.

3.2 Commonwealth Games

Eligibility for Commonwealth Games selection is governed by the Netball Northern Ireland Commonwealth Games Nomination Policy.

4. Selection Opportunities

Athletes may be observed and assessed through a range of environments including, but not limited to:

- National trials;
- National squad camps;

- Domestic league competitions;
- School, university and academy competitions;
- International fixtures and tours;
- Athlete performance reviews;
- Physical testing;
- Video analysis and performance footage.

NNI reserves the right to identify athletes through any appropriate performance environment.

5. Squad and Team Composition

5.1 Squad Selection

Athletes may be selected as:

- Squad members;
- Competition team members; or
- Training partners.

Athletes may move between squads where appropriate to support athlete development and programme needs.

5.2 Team Size

Unless otherwise specified by competition regulations, official competition teams will consist of 12 athletes.

Where competition rules require an alternative team size, NNI will comply with the relevant regulations.

5.3 Movement Between Squads

Where an athlete is selected into a more senior squad, their place within another squad may be replaced at the discretion of the relevant coaching and selection staff.

All changes will be communicated to relevant athletes and staff.

6. Selection Criteria

Selection decisions will be made using evidence-based assessment and may include consideration of the following:

- Current and previous performance level;
- Technical and tactical ability;
- Physical preparation and fitness;
- Consistency of performance;
- Potential for future development;
- Ability to fulfil role requirements;
- Team balance and positional coverage;
- Behaviour, professionalism and training standards;
- Injury or illness status and expected return to performance;
- Commitment to the programme environment; and
- Any other factors considered relevant to international performance.

Selectors are not required to weight each criterion equally.

6.1 Late or Referral Athletes

Athletes unable to attend formal trials may request consideration for selection.

Requests must include supporting evidence such as:

- Match footage;
- Physical testing results; and/or
- Coach references.

Acceptance of late or referral athletes remains at the discretion of the Selection Panel.

7. Selector Responsibilities

Selectors are expected to:

- Act with integrity, fairness and objectivity;
- Apply this policy consistently;
- Maintain confidentiality throughout the process;
- Base decisions on performance evidence and programme needs; and
- Declare and appropriately manage conflicts of interest.

The final selection decision rests with the appointed Head Coach in consultation with the Selection Panel.

NNI reserves the right to amend squads due to:

- Injury or illness;
 - Failure to meet physical or behavioural standards;
 - Availability issues; or
 - Programme requirements.
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8. Communication and Athlete Welfare

8.1 Selection Outcomes

Successful and unsuccessful athletes will be informed of selection outcomes prior to public announcement where reasonably possible.

NNI aims to communicate selection outcomes within seven (7) days of the relevant trial or selection event.

8.2 Feedback

Athletes may request feedback following competition squad selection.

Feedback will focus on:

- Strengths demonstrated;
- Areas for future development; and
- Alignment with programme expectations.

8.3 Athlete Agreements

Selected athletes must comply with:

- The NNI Player Agreement where applicable;
- Relevant codes of conduct; and
- All applicable NNI policies.

Selection in previous squads does not guarantee future selection.

9. Deselection

An athlete may be removed from a squad or team due to:

- Injury or illness affecting their ability to meet programme requirements;
 - Failure to comply with NNI policies, agreements or codes of conduct;
 - Breach of integrity, safeguarding or anti-doping regulations;
 - Failure to meet performance, fitness or behavioural expectations; or
 - Becoming ineligible to represent Northern Ireland.
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10. Appeals

10.1 Grounds for Appeal

An athlete who is not selected for a squad or team may appeal only on the basis that the Selection Panel did not follow the procedures outlined within this policy.

Appeals cannot be submitted solely on the basis of disagreement with a selection decision.

10.2 Informal Resolution

Athletes are encouraged to first seek informal clarification through discussion with:

- The Pathway Manager; and/or
- A member of the Selection Panel.

Where possible, this discussion should take place within 48 hours of notification of selection.

10.3 Formal Appeal Process

Formal appeals must:

- Be submitted in writing to the Executive Manager;
- Be lodged within three (3) working days of the selection outcome; and
- Include a clear summary of the grounds for appeal and supporting evidence.

Failure to comply with the stated timeframes may result in the appeal being dismissed.

10.4 Appeals Panel

Where an appeal proceeds, the Executive Manager will appoint an Appeals Panel consisting of individuals independent from the original selection decision.

The Appeals Panel may include:

- A person with knowledge of high-performance netball;
- A legally qualified chairperson or governance representative; and
- An appropriately experienced independent member.

Individuals directly involved in the original selection decision may not sit on the Appeals Panel.

10.5 Appeals Outcomes

The Appeals Panel may:

- Dismiss the appeal where insufficient grounds exist; or
- Refer the matter back to the Selection Panel for reconsideration.

The Appeals Panel does not have authority to directly select or deselect athletes.

11. Policy Review

This policy may be amended by Netball Northern Ireland from time to time to ensure alignment with:

- World Netball regulations;
- Competition requirements;
- Governance standards; and
- The strategic objectives of the NNI Performance Pathway.