

JUNIOR TALENT PROGRAMME



A GUIDE FOR ATHLETES
AND COACHES

INTRODUCTION

England Athletics works to grow opportunities for everyone to experience athletics and running, to enable them to reach their full potential. The Talented Athlete and Coach Pathway provides a progressive support structure for athletes and coaches to develop skills and competencies with the aim of moving athletes on to representative honours at England and GB & NI Level.

From school into club athletics and parallel support through the pathway programmes, the aim is to ensure the journey of the athlete and coach reaches its full potential. Athletics is an inclusive and diverse sport that provides excitement, challenge and lifelong enjoyment. Supporting talented individuals and the wider athletics club community through pathway programmes and talent hubs is the vision.

Following completion of the Youth Talent Programme (YTP) or through direct selection, England athletes (aged 18+ years) will have the opportunity to transition onto the Junior Talent Programme for a period of up to three years. Recruitment and retention to the programme will be through an annual application process.

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BENEFITS FOR THE YOUNG ATHLETE AND THE COACH

Athletes, and coaches, will be supported through practical training camps as well as mentored practice, utilising the data and training information gathered at the camps.

The camp-based programme aims to equip athletes with the necessary skills, behaviours and abilities to progress on the path to being successful senior internationalists.

- Objective feedback on technical and physical development, to meet the specific needs of the athletes and coach in relation to the event(s)
- Workshops tailored towards elite development athletes
- A fun and motivating training environment with event specific curriculum focused on the relevant technical requirements for a developing elite performer
- Opportunities for 1:1 drop-in sessions with specialist performance support staff¹
- England Athletics Talent Event Leads supporting the Individual Athlete Planning (IAP) process and mentoring/support as needed
- Opportunities for further coach development and to be part of an event community of practice



ATHLETE CASE STUDY: CHARLOTTE PAYNE

Coach: Paul Dickenson
Event: Hammer

- Selected for futures in December 2020
- 7th at U20 European Championships
- Personal best of 63.92m (2nd on U20 British all-time list)



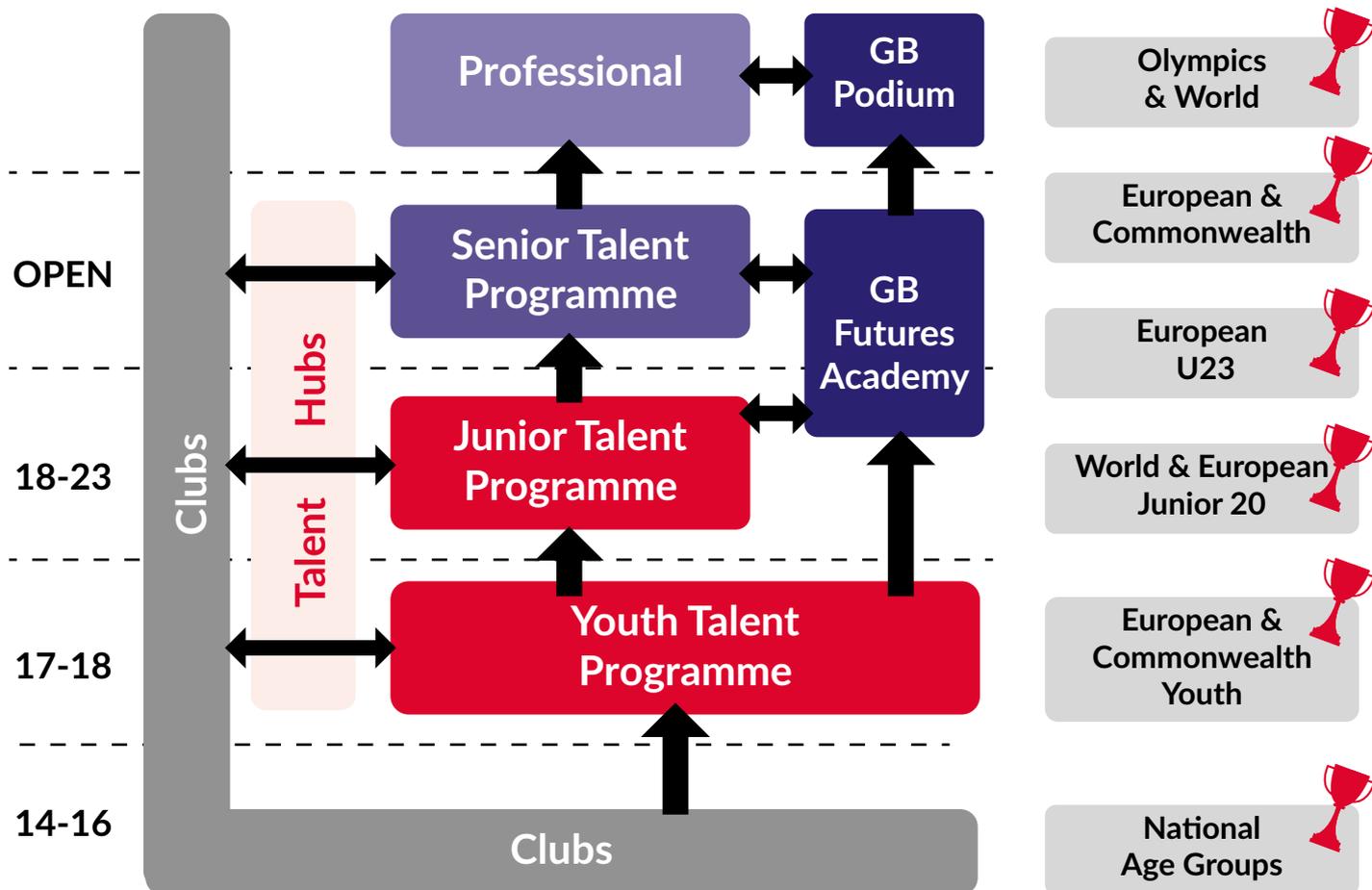
“The Junior Talent Programme was a really exciting step that helped us to develop our knowledge and ability in my event whilst also strengthening our coach - athlete partnership. The programme is a great opportunity to network and meet athletes and coaches from all events and I always left each camp with a list of things I wanted to improve, feeling motivated and buzzing for the next training session. My coach also found it useful to have another perspective on my technique including those of some of the best coaches in the country!”

Charlotte Payne

NOTES: 1. Drop-in sessions will be arranged and available where appropriate.

THE TALENT PATHWAY

The Talent Pathway programme is focused around developing a dual career for the athlete, through fulfilling their potential within the sport and also in their education and employability



KEY PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES



SUPPORT

To add value to the athlete and coach plan and help understand self, developing a broad range of skills, abilities and behaviours needed for senior success.



EMPOWER

Athletes as independent learners to understand the holistic development principles to help transition into a successful senior athlete and also for a career outside of athletics



TRANSITION

On to the next stage in the, Olympic, Commonwealth, Club pathway and/ or transitioning into university or work



ACHIEVE

Reach maximum potential for all, retention in the sport with enjoyment and experience of Athletes, Coaches and parents at the core.

THE DELIVERY MODEL

The Junior Talent Programme will be delivered through a number of practical training sessions, virtual and practical workshops and individual support sessions.

Practical training sessions are designed to create a competitive and supportive training environment with likeminded athletes and a community of practice for coaches, facilitated by the England Athletics Talent Event Leads.

Workshops are designed to provide athletes with the necessary knowledge and skills to develop into a senior international athlete. Individual support sessions will allow access to performance support practitioners such as nutrition and psychology as well as technical coaches who will support both athlete and coach on key aspects of their training and competition plans.

Topics covered include:

- Physical Preparation
- Performance Nutrition
- Psychological Demands of Athletics (inc. Mental Health and Wellbeing)
- Performance Lifestyle
- Biomechanical Analysis
- Anti-doping
- Physiological support²

The aim is to maintain engagement with all athletes after the YTP but at various levels of support dependent on progression. These are best described as follows:

- Talent
- National (sport scholars/university performance teams BUCS)
- Regional (Student/athletes)

Talent Support

- Tailored athlete-coach partnership support based on the IAP
- Access to support services via Talent Hubs (where applicable)
 - Leeds/Birmingham (current pilots)
- On-camp/drop-in based support services¹
 - Physical Preparation
 - Musculoskeletal profiling
 - Performance Nutrition
 - Performance Lifestyle
 - Performance Psychology
 - Performance/Field-based testing
 - Video analysis
- Competition biomechanical data³
- International competition opportunities (where appropriate)

National Support

- Continuation of curriculum content + testing / monitoring / tracking
- Access to coaching expertise
- Coach and athlete development (athlete centred, coach led)
- Camp based support (e.g. physiotherapy/ performance/ video analysis, S&C)
- Train in a competitive environment with peers
- Develop relationships; coaches and athletes
- Access to support resources e.g. Believe Perform
- National coaching network

Regional support

- Curriculum of content and delivery with technical excellence frameworks and physical competency assessments
- Access to coaching expertise
- Coach and athlete development (athlete centred, coach led)
- Train in a competitive environment with peers
- Develop relationships; coaches and athletes
- Regional coaching network

NOTES: 1. Drop-in sessions will be arranged and available where appropriate.
2. Physiological testing will be for the endurance athletes, with delivery out of the Talent Hubs.
3. Data provided from the British Championships indoors and outdoors, subject to event group.

PROFILING THE NEEDS OF EACH ATHLETE

The Junior Talent Programme uses profiling to provide a comprehensive overview of individual athletes and their development needs, whilst tracking and support progress through the pathway journey. The profiling process looks at a range of factors, including:

ATHLETE

- **Person**

This looks at the athlete as an individual, focusing on their home life, education, work, post athletic career, finances, positive distractions and coach/athlete relationships

- **Psychological**

Psychological characteristics of developing excellence (PCDEs) are a range of mental skills and behaviours that have been identified across performance domains that support the athlete journey through the various transitions, equipping them with the necessary characteristics to be successful in whatever domain they choose.

- **Capacity**

Capacity offers the opportunity to understand the athletes over a range of factors pertaining to maturation. This information helps build a picture of the sort of experiences an athlete may have had and therefore inform the type of experience you may want them to have. Factors include injury history, relative age, sporting and training history

PERFORMANCE

- **Performance on the day**

Carrying out of specific physical routines on the day of competition. Performance is influenced by a combination of physiological, psychological, and socio-cultural factors.

- **Preparation for performance**

The physical, lifestyle attributes and behaviours that are necessary to ensure sustainable daily preparation to support development and performance. The act of preparing – getting ready, planning, training, or studying with an goal in mind.

- **Technical Excellence**

The key technical requirements for the event that are necessary to execute in preparation and performance.

- **Event Profile**

The yearly performance progression profile in the event, taking into consideration position on the relevant performance funnel; major competition history, consistency in performances and national/international event trends/progression.

ATHLETE CASE STUDY: LIA RADUS

Coach: David Lowes

Club: Shaftesbury Barnet

Event: 1500m



"I really enjoyed the workshops because the breakout rooms were very interactive and that meant we got a very personalised and enriched experience as we could ask a lot of questions to the experts. The information we have been give so far is very useful for me and my coach. Having experts on hand to call or email is invaluable."

Lia Radus

"We very much appreciated the advice given to us on how to prepare for competition and between rounds on competition day"

Sue Keen

INDIVIDUAL ATHLETE PLANS

The Junior Talent Programme uses a number of tools to assess and improve performance. Key to this process are Individual Athlete Plans for each athlete.

Individual Athlete Plan

- Identify and agree long term goals in the sport
- Work up a plan to deliver on identified agreed goals

Success Factors

- Technical, Tactical, Physical, Lifestyle, Nutrition, Psychological & Environment

Necessary Conditions for Progress

- What can the Hub or venue put in place to support existing infrastructure?

Athlete and Coach Review

- Utilise National event specific days/camps to review technical performance supported by England Athletics Event Group Team

Year End Review

- A review process will take place at the end of each year with the athlete and coach.



Further progression

At the end of three years the athlete has a number of potential avenues:

- If progression is continuing towards an elite level the athlete may be selected to continue on the programme or, if accelerating, may be considered by the British Athletics World Class Programme.
- The athlete continues to work with their personal coach and makes access to the regional and national level activities organised by England Athletics as well as competing for their club at national and international level.

TALENT HUBS

The introduction of talent hubs provides another level of support for JTP athletes and their coaches as well as local clubs. Two pilot Talent Hubs have been established and supported by British Athletics and England Athletics in Leeds and Birmingham. The aim is to support athletes and coaches over a 6-year period, helping manage the transition from youth to senior success.

The Hubs, in partnership with Leeds Beckett University and the University of Birmingham, will aim to provide an environment that supports elite training, education and personal development for athletes, 16 to 23+ years.

Individual coach support, access to training facilities, sport science and medicine specialists will be part of the pathway. Wider coach development and community club and school engagement are an integral part of the Hub aspirations. The pilot programme of two Hubs will establish best practice.



University of Birmingham

Leeds Beckett University



VENUES

The Junior Talent Programme plans to use a range of venues (virtual if needed) around the country to make the practical days as local as possible, as well as national events for larger get-togethers.

ATHLETE CASE STUDY: JOEL CLARK-KHAN

Coach: Deirdre Elmhirst

Club: Worcester

Event: High Jump

- British Outdoor Champion – 2020
- 1st European Indoor Trials
- GB&NI representation to European Athletics Indoor Championships
- Personal best of 2.23m



“Personally, I have found that the JTP/ talent hub has been extremely helpful on my journey to success. Having access to therapists, medical professionals, and other coaches has created a team and network that allows me to receive professional help in all areas. I have already seen brilliant results from the support the JTP/talent hub has provided me with, and I believe this is only the beginning.”

John Clark-Khan

“Being part of the JTP gives us that extra support we need to continue to develop as a high-performance coach-athlete pair. Specialist support in areas such as strength & conditioning, physiotherapy and sports psychology will give Joel that extra edge he needs to perform at a higher level and to fulfil his potential as a high jumper. Receiving mentoring from Fuzz Caan, who has coached Olympic medallists, will help me learn and grow as a coach. The opportunity to network regularly and share thoughts, whether virtually or face-to-face, helps drive my development. As a result, I can ensure Joel has the right environment and support team to nurture and develop his abilities”.

Deirdre Elmhirst

ELIGIBILITY & SELECTION

ELIGIBILITY

- Athletes are eligible to compete for England at the Commonwealth Games
- Athletes hold a British Passport and are eligible to compete for Great Britain & Northern Ireland at an international Championships, the Olympics or Paralympic Games

CRITERIA

- Athletes have graduated from the Youth Talent Programme (YTP)
- Were not part of the Youth Talent Programme (YTP) (DiSE/ASEE) but their profile meets the rising performance profile for the event.
- Athletes and coaches will be expected to show commitment to the programme and consideration will be given to evidence submitted in the application, in the areas detailed below.

CONSIDERATION FACTORS

- Performance Profile
- Technical & Physical Profile
- Behavioural Profile
- Environment

PROGRAMME EXPECTATIONS

Athletes and coaches on the programme engage with it, attend the training camp days where appropriate, and relevant work with the England Athletics event group team. Athlete performance will be monitored as will training data. The expectation is that the athlete and coach will be on the programme for up to three years. Athletes are expected to re-apply to the programme each year.

SELECTION PROCESS

The application process is an important element of the process as it enables the programme to understand the athlete/coach goals for the season and where the programme could potentially add value.

Stage 1: Athlete/Coach Application

Stage 2: Selection Panel

Stage 3: Selection Confirmation

Stage 4: Induction

ATHLETE CASE STUDY: BEN WEST

Coach: Kyle Bennett

Club: MK Distance Project



"I find the JTP training days every useful and insightful. For the last day the physio provided answers to why I may have had some of the niggles I experienced over lockdown and gave me some solutions to help prevent them in the future"

Ben West

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

Athletes who are not successful through the initial selection process will be offered the opportunity to attend the England Athletics national and regional programme (where applicable). There are also multiple pathway entry points for athletes to join programmes at a later date.



FOR FURTHER DETAILS PLEASE CONTACT:

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