

ATHLETE REPRESENTATION PANEL

Last Updated: 31st May 2022

1. PURPOSE

As detailed in the [Code for Sports Governance](#), Tier 3 National Governing Bodies (NGBs) “should ensure there are suitable mechanisms to capture and reflect their (athletes) views in relevant decisions.”

As BF does not run a World Class Programme, the ARP is intended to cover all athletes on the GBR international performance pathway to Olympic success, in particular those involved with the BF Athlete Development Programme (ADP).

The purpose of the Athlete Representation Panel (the ARP) is to

- Provide a group for athletes on the performance pathway to share their feedback on all aspects of the GBR system and structure (as delivered by the BF Athlete Development Programme, excluding the elements delivered by the EIS Para-Fencing WCP).
- Provide athletes with a mechanism for ensuring their views on important matters are heard and communicated to the BF Senior Leadership Team and Board.
- Provide a two-way communication link between the athletes and the Senior Leadership Team and British Fencing Board.

2. MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF OFFICE

The Athlete Rep Panel (ARP) shall comprise of a maximum of seven elected athlete members; including male, female athletes and where possible at least one athlete from each of the 6 disciplines, with a minimum of one para fencing athlete.

The members of the ARP shall elect a Chair and Vice Chair to serve for a maximum of two years.

Athletes will be elected until **April 2025**. Athletes will be eligible to serve through a maximum of 8-year term, subject to re-election and aligned with the Paris 2024 and LA 2028 Olympic and Paralympic cycles. There is no requirement to stay for the full term. In the event an athlete rep would like to step down within the first year, a place will be offered to the next person on the election list (based on the equivalent discipline). Should an athlete rep wish to step down after one year, an election will be held for the vacancy.

3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Members of the ARP must:

- Hold a current BF membership as well as a GBR FIE or IWAS license.
- Be 18 and over.
- At the date of nomination*
 - EITHER have represented GB in the current or previous season at FIE or IWAS Senior World Cup/Grand Prix/Euros/World level and (for non para disciplines) be ranked in the Top 20 in the Senior Rankings
 - OR have represented (or been selected to represent) GB in the current or previous season at Junior European or World Championship, or U23 European Championship.

* Considerations will be taken into account if an athlete has been unable to compete during the last 12 months due to illness or injury.

4. PANEL DUTIES

- To represent the rights and interests of BF GBR athletes, in particular those athletes on the BF Athlete Development Pathway.

Engage with Athletes

- Establish a means of engaging with and seeking athlete's opinions between and prior to ARP meetings
- Make themselves available in-person to other ADP athletes where possible, with this schedule clearly communicated via appropriate channels (eg What's App/email)
- Where possible, agree and manage a mechanism for athletes to report concerns anonymously if necessary
- Participate in Athlete Development Programme activities (to be agreed individually). Panel members are expected to attend a minimum of two activities per year.
- Where required, signpost athletes to the British Athletes Commission (BAC)

Engage with the Panel

- Attend ARP meetings
- Discuss any matters of interest and concern during ARP meetings
- Act and respond on relevant ARP communications
- Participate fully in the Annual Review Process conducted by an independent person
- After completion of term support any newly elected Athletes Panel athletes

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Report, Feedback & Make Recommendations

- Provide feedback to the Senior Leadership Team on both positive aspects (to allow BF to build on elements of the ADP which are effective/popular with athletes) and issues or concerns.
- Make recommendations on issues of significance from the perspective of the athletes
- Feedback opinions of athletes anonymously (unless athletes have provided permission to do otherwise) to the Senior Leadership Team
- Report formally to the BF board at least twice a year through the production of a written report which should be presented to the meeting in person.
- Produce a written report for inclusion in the BF Annual Report.
- Represent the ARP at BF Board meetings (The ARP has the right to send a member to attend all BF Board meetings as observer)

Other

- All members must attend the BAC's Athlete Rep Induction Training Day within their first year and at least one other CPD opportunities for each year of their term. BF will cover reasonable travel expenses (in accordance with BF Expenses Policy)
- Support the British Fencing Safeguarding policy and raise all concerns to the NGB welfare officer.

Rep contact details will be communicated to existing athletes in a formal way, and new athletes as part of the induction process.

5. PANEL MEETINGS

- The ARP will meet a minimum of four times per year either in person during training camps and/or post competitions or via Skype/Facetime/Teams/Zoom.
- The person taking the minutes will be agreed prior to the meeting, minutes should be shared with members (no later than 14 days post ARP meeting)
- If the Chair is absent, the Vice Chair of the ARP shall act on his/her behalf
- Agenda to be compiled by the Chair and sent out to all ARP members at least two weeks prior to the agreed meeting date
- Post meeting views to be fed back to the Senior Leadership Team (best method of this to be discussed by ARP members)
- Members must attend an annual meeting with British Fencing CEO to discuss progress of the ARP and review TORs
- Members must meet with the BAC AR Manager at least once a year to discuss Athlete Rep role and CPD opportunities
- Hand over meeting to take place after two-year term to support newly elected athletes onto the ARP

6. FEEDBACK MECHANISM

The ARP will be offered a quarterly meeting with the BF CEO and Pathways Director at a mutually agreed time. Between these meetings any member of the ARP can request a meeting to raise issues on behalf of the ARP.

The ARP has the right to send a member to attend all BF Board meetings as observer. Board meetings dates and times are listed on the BF website.

Appropriate channels will also be kept open between athletes and staff members, in order for athletes to be able to report personal concerns away from the athlete representation mechanism.

7. OVERSIGHT

- BF will appoint an independent person (likely to be a BAC staff member) to oversee the running of ARP
- Senior staff members will be made aware of the identity of the independent figure appointed to oversee the system, so that any concerns and issues can be flagged
- The independent person will conduct annual reviews covering both the panel and the individual panel members

8. PANEL ELECTIONS

- The formal election process will be administered by the NGB and the British Athletes Commission
- Athletes will be given a time period of 14 days to express their interest of being part of the ARP and put forward a short supporting statement
- All candidates and their supporting statements will be published on the BF website
- A confidential vote will take place using an online voting process and for a period of 14 days.
- Votes will be counted and the top athletes in each discipline will make up the ARP
- The members of the ARP must elect a Chair and Vice Chair during their first meeting
- If a member of the ARP leaves the British Fencing athlete development pathway during their two-year term, another election process to fill that position will take place at the start of the new cycle

Nomination Criteria: see section 3. above

Voting Criteria: athletes

- must hold a current BF compete membership as well as a GBR FIE or IWAS license.
- must be a member of the BF ADP or the EIS WCP

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