

## Welsh Fencing Selection Policy

This document sets out the Welsh Fencing (WF) Selection Policy for individual & team selection for representing Wales at international competitions (Commonwealth Fencing Championships, 5 Nations Events) and Winton Cup events. It covers selection for Cadets (U17), Juniors (U20), Seniors and Veterans.

It will come into effect in 2023 at the start of the month following the World Championships for each age group. Specifically:

- Cadets & Juniors – May 2023
- Seniors - August 2023
- Veterans – November 2023

The focus for Welsh Fencing is on team performance at international and national events and the selection policy is aimed to reflect this. If selected for the team event, fencers will also be entered into the relevant individual event. The intention is to send full teams of 4 fencers with an option to add a 5<sup>th</sup> fencer at the Board's discretion if the competition allows.

### Process

#### Cadets, Juniors, and Seniors

The lead coaches of the Athlete Development Programme – Cymru (ADPC) are responsible for ensuring that all athletes being put forward for consideration by the Selection Panel are eligible under the policy.

The ADPC lead coaches will create the list of athletes nominated for selection to the Selection Panel in accordance with this Policy.

#### Veterans

The veteran selection group are responsible for ensuring that all athletes being put forward for consideration by the Selection Panel are eligible under this policy.

The veteran selection group will create the list of athletes nominated for selection to the Selection Panel in accordance with this Policy.

#### The Selection Panel

The selection panel will be comprised of the Welsh Fencing Board except for any directors also involved in producing the list of athletes nominated by the ADPC/veteran selection panel. An independent observer will also be invited to the panel. They will review the nominations and check that the selection policy has been correctly followed. The lead ADPC coach/member of the veteran selection panel for each weapon may be invited to the selection meeting to provide further insights or clarification that the selection panel may need. Neither the ADPC coach/veteran selection panel member or independent observer will have a vote on final selection.

This 2-stage process ensures that the policy is followed consistently and there is separation between the ADPC coaches/veteran selection group and final selection.

Members of both groups will declare any conflicts of interest. This will include family, club links, and coaching links within the preceding 12 months. The Welsh Fencing Board recognise that we have a small fencing community in Wales which has the positive aspect of coaches and selectors being familiar with our fencers. It does present a challenge however in minimising conflicts of interest, hence the addition of an independent observer of the selection panel. The independent observer may be e.g., a non-Board WF member, a BF member, a representative of Sport Wales, a representative from another Welsh NGB.

The names of the individuals involved in the selection process (i.e., the ADPC Coaches, veteran selection panel members, members of the Selection Panel, and independent observer) will be published on the WF website in advance of selection.

#### Acceptance of selection – All age groups

Selections will be announced on the Welsh Fencing website, and any costs and subsidies associated with the event will be communicated at this time.

Fencers will be invited to accept their selection via the TEAMO app, and acceptance must be made within 2 weeks, or the place may be offered to another athlete. TEAMO / STRIPE will be used to securely collect any payments required for events. Deadlines for payments will also be communicated by TEAMO, and non-payment by the deadline may result in a fencer's place being withdrawn and the place offered to another athlete. Any fees already paid will not be refunded unless the athlete withdrawal is due to exceptional circumstances.

#### General Eligibility for Selection

- Athletes must be eligible to represent Wales (see Eligibility Criteria on <https://fencing.cymru/selection-criteria/eligibility-to-fence-for-wales>).
- Athletes must hold a current BF Compete Membership at the time of selection and/or the key selection dates. Any athlete who does not have a current membership will not be considered for selection.
- Athletes must have suitable medical and travel insurance (for any non-UK based event).
- Athletes must have read and agreed in writing to abide by all British Fencing (BF) and WF Policies and Codes of Conduct.
- Athletes will only be considered for selection if they have a satisfactory disciplinary record where any ban or measures that were sanctioned at the time, have been completed. The Selection Panel reserve the right to omit an athlete from selection for any event if they deem that the risk of the athlete's inclusion to that event, exceeds an acceptable level of risk and would negatively impact on the other athletes or staff invited.
- Athletes 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

reserves the right to request a fitness test or omit an athlete from selection for any event if they deem that their fitness or training record is unsatisfactory.

- Any athlete wishing to be selected for Wales at any International competitions must compete in the most recent Welsh Championships in the relevant category.
  - For Cadets this is the Welsh Cadet Championships
  - For Junior and Senior fencers, this is the Welsh National Championships
  - For Veterans, this is the Welsh Veterans Championships. Veterans must also compete at the Welsh National Championships.

In addition, Junior and Senior fencers must compete at the Welsh Open event.

Cadet, Junior and Senior fencers must also compete at the most recent British National Championships at their age group.

For the avoidance of doubt for seniors, this must be at least one of the British National Championships or the British Open Championships.

For cadets a minimum of 4, and for juniors a minimum of 3 additional age group appropriate BRCs must also be competed at (this can include BF nominated EFC or FIE events).

For seniors, a minimum of 3 additional open competitions carrying ranking points must also be competed at (this can include recognised international ranking events).

For veterans, a minimum of 2 additional appropriate competitions must also be competed at. These could be veteran's events or senior open competitions.

The purpose of the requirement to compete at, at least 6 (4 for veterans) events is to demonstrate to the selectors a minimum level of commitment to fencing and to provide evidence of performance and performance trajectory.

Reasonable exceptions for not fencing in the nominated events above may be granted. The reason for non-attendance of the named events above must be sent in writing to [secretary@fencing.cymru](mailto:secretary@fencing.cymru) at least two weeks in advance of the event. The Selection Panel will send a response confirming the status of acceptance or otherwise.

In the event of illness or injury preventing an athlete from entering the named events above, an email self-certifying to this effect will be required to be sent to [secretary@fencing.cymru](mailto:secretary@fencing.cymru) within one week of the date of the event.

- Athletes must be compliant with the BF Anti-Doping Policy. Failure to comply will normally result in non-selection or de-selection.
- The Board is aware that in some weapons we will not be able to send full teams from a particular age group which may result in discretionary selection of athletes from a lower age group (i.e., cadets fencing up in the junior age category and juniors fencing in seniors). Where selections are not automatic, the selection panel will carefully consider the maturity and readiness of such athletes to be part of the team environment as an additional element of the discretionary process.

## **Selection Criteria – Cadets, Juniors and Seniors – International Events**

### Places 1 & 2

- Automatic selection where possible. The top 2 fencers within the top 30 of the age appropriate British Fencing ranking lists will be selected, provided those rankings are within the top 25% of the fencers on the ranking list with more than 6 points.
- Fencer's 6 best results will be used.
- The selection point (date at which future events results will not be included in the rankings) will be published on the Welsh Fencing website once the date of the event being selected for is available.
- If there are no fencers that meet the criteria, then discretionary selection will be applied.

### Places 3 & 4

- Discretionary selection.

## **Selection Criteria – Veterans – International Events**

It is recognised that rankings are not produced for veterans in the same way as for the other age groups. So, points will be allocated for the Welsh Veterans Championships, the BVF Championships and veteran and senior open events as per the table below.

The selection point (date at which future events results will not be included in the rankings) will be published on the Welsh Fencing website once the date of the event being selected for is available.

Places 1 & 2 – Automatic selection for the top 2 ranked fencers.

- Fencer's 4 best results will be used.

Places 3 & 4 – Discretionary selection

## **Points Table**

Points will be allocated as follows to the Welsh veteran fencers for their relative ranking in events:

1st Ranked Welsh Fencer	50
2nd Ranked Welsh Fencer	43
3rd Ranked Welsh Fencer	37
3rd Ranked Welsh Fencer	37
5th Ranked Welsh Fencer	27
6th Ranked Welsh Fencer	23
7th Ranked Welsh Fencer	19
8th Ranked Welsh Fencer	16
9th Ranked Welsh Fencer	13

## **Selection Criteria – Winton Cup – All age groups**

The Winton Cup is an inter-regional, rather than an international event and as such priority will be given to those who are resident or actively fencing within the region. Fencers who have strong links to another region (e.g., those who are resident outside Wales) may choose to represent that region at the Winton Cup without fear of affecting their selection chances for Welsh 5 Nations or Commonwealth teams.

Rankings will offer a guide, but selection will be a balance of fencers who show development potential and more experienced fencers. Selection for this event is entirely discretionary.

This will give an opportunity to developing fencers to gain experience at a challenging and competitive team event.

The selectors reserve the right to alter this approach (e.g., in a Commonwealth Championships year when the opportunity to bring those teams together may be considered important.)

### **Discretionary Selection**

Definition – Discretionary selection is based on specific subjective and/or objective measures used to inform selection decisions for individuals and team events.

The factors that the selectors may include in this are:

- meaningful past performance
- current performance trajectory
- team player skills
- leadership
- demonstration of commitment to Welsh Fencing and ADPC
- demonstration of the Welsh Fencing Values
- specific weapon / team strategies for the event

### **Appeals**

The only ground for appeal is a material inaccuracy in the rankings used for selection. Cadet, junior and senior fencers are responsible for reporting ranking inaccuracies to the British Fencing ranking coordinator from where the rankings will be taken.

For the Veteran rankings, fencers are responsible for reporting ranking inaccuracies to [secretary@fencing.cymru](mailto:secretary@fencing.cymru)

Any such appeal should be made in writing to the Chairperson of Welsh Fencing within one week of the publication of the relevant ranking. Appeals will be decided by the Selection Panel, whose decision shall be final.

There will be no appeals considered for discretionary places. However, a constructive 2-way dialogue to provide feedback and areas for improvement will be available if requested.

### **Commonwealth Fencing Championships Specific – Cadets, Juniors, and Seniors**

To support logistical and financial planning for Welsh Fencing, fencers and parents, selection for the Commonwealth Championships will be made approximately 6 months in advance of the event.

Approximately 3 months prior to this, fencers will be invited to send in an expression of interest to Welsh Fencing indicating their desire to represent Wales at these championships. If you are intending to send an expression of interest, please take careful note of the information in the General Eligibility for Selection section above.

In this intervening period and post-selection, fencers are expected to continue their preparations by competing in appropriate events. Not competing in this period is likely to have an adverse impact on their selection, even if in an automatic selection position. The selectors reserve the right to rescind an automatic selection if a fencer does not prepare for the Commonwealth Championships by continuing to compete at an appropriate level.

If you are in any doubt as to the appropriate events to be entering, discuss this with the lead ADPC coach for your weapon.

If there are mitigating factors, such as injury or work commitments etc, it is the fencer's responsibility to inform the selectors on [secretary@fencing.cymru](mailto:secretary@fencing.cymru). All fencers should be aware that this will be included in the discretionary factors used for selection.

### **Commonwealth Championships Selection for the Team events**

#### **Cadets, Juniors and Seniors**

Selection for the team competition will be made following the relevant individual event. Where there are more than 4 fencers eligible, the intention will be for the 4 highest ranked fencers following the individual competition to be selected. The coach/TM/captain may choose an element of discretion should specific strategies be required to give the best opportunity for a victory in a match, but this will be an exceptional circumstance and will be discussed with all fencers involved.

#### **Veterans**

Due to the differing entry criteria for the Veteran Commonwealth Championships, selection for the team events will be determined solely by performance in the individual events. The top 4 ranked fencers after the individual competition will be selected.

The Board of Welsh Fencing reserves the right to make changes to this policy in exceptional circumstances and the right to not send a team or individuals for an event, should they feel it not appropriate, or a risk to the welfare of those attending.