

Guide to selection for European & World Games

This document outlines the process by which Special Olympics GB will select members of a GB Team to attend Special Olympics European and World Games¹.

Step 1: Notifying the Special Olympics GB membership

Application Forms along with the duties and responsibilities/guidance notes are distributed to the membership from Special Olympics GB National Office via Special Olympics GB Club and Regional Main Contacts. The available roles and details on how to apply are also shown on the Special Olympics GB website (under '[Jobs & Opportunities](#)' and '[Event Calendar](#)').

Step 2: Making an Application

Application Forms from those that wish to apply are completed by Special Olympics GB registered Athletes/Unified Partners/Volunteers and must be signed off by the relevant Special Olympics Regional Steering Group/Committee (unless otherwise noted below) before being submitted to Special Olympics GB National Office by a designated deadline.

Late applications will only be considered if positions cannot be filled with the applications that were submitted on time.

When applications are received, Special Olympics GB National Office will send an acknowledgement email to the person who submitted the form (or via post if no email address is provided) as well as to the relevant Special Olympics Region if they did not submit it themselves.

All applications are collated and filed ready to pass on to the selection panel after the submission deadline.

Step 3a: The Selection Panel

A selection panel (minimum of three people) is convened for the recruitment of individuals to each role within the GB Team² and where required for each role, advice may be sought from other relevant individuals.

The Head of Delegation and Assistant Head of Delegation should be appointed first followed by other delegation management roles and then the Head Coaches. Athletes/Unified Partners should be appointed next followed lastly by the Coaches.

Choosing a Head of Delegation (HOD) and an Assistant Head of Delegation (AHOD)

The selection panel will consist of one or two Special Olympics GB staff (normally the CEO and/or the Director of Sports & Development) and one or two National Advisory Council or Board members.

¹ In some circumstances a specific role within the GB Team may be automatically filled by a Special Olympics GB member of staff and/or by a suitably trained/qualified individual.

² All current members of the National Advisory Council will also be asked to comment on the appointments.

Choosing a individuals to fill Medical, Family, Safeguarding & Welfare Photographer and Public Relation roles

Individuals who take on these roles are generally handpicked by Special Olympics GB National Office but if there is a selection panel, it will consist of the already selected HOD, AHOD and one or two Special Olympics GB staff.

Choosing a Head Coach (HC)

The selection panel will consist of the already selected HOD, AHOD and one or two Special Olympics GB staff.

Choosing a Coach, Athlete or Unified Partner

The selection panel will consist of the already selected HOD, AHOD, one Special Olympics GB member of staff and the relevant already selected HC.

Step 3b: Selection

Selection of All Volunteer Roles

- Each application form is carefully reviewed by the relevant selection panel
- The selection panel will score each section of the application form that relates to the role the person is applying for (scoring is normally out of 5 or 10 based upon the duties and responsibilities of the role)
- Where applicants are not personally known by the selection panel, they may ask for further supporting information on the applicant from suitable individuals

Selecting a HOD / AHOD / HC

- Based on the selection panels scores of the application form and supporting evidence received about the applicant (noted on the Application Scoring Form), the selection panel determine which applicants are taken through to the interview stage
- All applicants are informed via email (or via post if no email address is provided) if they have/have not been successful in going through to the interview stage
- Interviews should aim to be held within four weeks of the application deadline
- Interviews are held preferably face to face in person or video conferencing, but over the phone if this is not possible
- Interviews will last about 45 minutes with around 7-10 standard questions being asked that are relevant to the duties and responsibilities of the position
- During the interview, for each question, the selection panel will make notes on the answers that the applicant provides on an Interview Scoring Form
- At the end of the interview, the selection panel individually mark each answer (out of 5 or 10 depending on the relevance of the question to the duties and responsibilities of the role)
- When all interviews for the post are complete, the selection panel review the scores they have given for each applicant's answers
- The selection panel collectively review all interview scores, application form scores as well as supporting information provided in order to make a decision on who is appointed to the role
- Two suitable references (from those named on the application form) concerning the successful applicant must be received before the position can be ratified
- Special Olympics GB National Office will aim to inform all applicants who are interviewed if they have/have not been successful in being appointed to the role via email (or via post if no email address is provided) within two weeks of the interview

Selecting a Coach

- Based on the selection panels scores of the application form, supporting evidence received about the applicant (noted on the Application Scoring Form), as well as what region the already selected athletes/unified partners in the squad are from, the selection panel will determine which applicants are appointed to the Coach roles
- Where possible an interview process (as noted above) may also be followed
- Two suitable references (from those named on the application form) concerning the successful applicant must be received before the position can be ratified
- Special Olympics GB National Office will aim to inform all applicants if they have/have not been successful in being appointed to the role via email (or via post if no email address is provided) within four weeks of the application deadline or within two weeks of the interview depending on which is appropriate

A possible scenario that may occur when selecting individuals to fill volunteer roles:

In some circumstances an applicant may not score as high as another applicant but are still chosen for the post. An example of this may be as follows where applicant **two** is chosen for the role:

- **Applicant one**; scores very high during interview, scores very high on the application form and has excellent supporting information but has attended many international events in the HC role before
- **Applicant two**; scores high during the interview, scores high on the application form, has excellent supporting information, shows real potential but has not been appointed as a HC at an international event before

In the above scenario, applicant **two** is chosen to fill the post because although both applicants show all the correct signs of being able to do the HC role well, applicant one has already had the opportunity to do this role before and although Special Olympics GB values the knowledge and expertise of experienced HCs, it knows that it is equally important for the future of the organisation, to encourage other enthusiastic, up and coming coaches to fill such roles. In this scenario, although applicant two is chosen for the position, applicant one may be offered the opportunity to be appointed to the Coach role instead.

Selecting an Athlete or Unified Partner

Prior to submitting an Athlete/Unified Partner Application Form:

By participating in Special Olympics GB competitions, athletes/unified partners earn the right to be considered for advancement to higher levels of competition within Special Olympics. When an athlete/unified partner competes at a qualifying event in the two years prior to the Games (regardless of their result at this competition) they may apply to be selected for a Special Olympics international competition opportunity.

When considering the [Competition Advancement Pathway](#) it is important to remember the following:

- **Coaching Requirement:** Athletes/Unified Partners must have been following a supervised training programme in the relevant sport for a minimum of 8 weeks prior to a local competition. They must then have been following a supervised training programme in the relevant sport for a minimum of a further 26 weeks prior to a regional or a super-regional competition. They must then have been following a supervised

training programme in the relevant sport for a minimum of a further 26 weeks prior to a national competition³

- **SAM Registration:** Athletes/Unified Partners must have a current and active SAM registration (Special Olympics GB Athlete/Unified Partner Membership) at least 6 months prior to the start date of a Special Olympics GB National Competition and be part of a fully accredited club
- Priority for representing Special Olympics GB at international events may be given to those individuals following the Special Olympics pathway rather than those athletes qualifying by attending a Special Olympics GB National Partnership event.

After submitting an Athlete/Unified Partner Application Form:

- Each application form is carefully reviewed by the relevant selection panel^{4 5}
- The selection panel will score each section of the application form using an Application Scoring Form. Scoring is normally out of 5 or 10 and is based on the following:
 - Results achieved at relevant Special Olympics GB National Competitions
 - Training History
 - Special Olympics GB Regional and National Competition History
 - Special Olympics International Competition History
 - Travel Experience
 - Ambassadorial Qualities and Personal Goals
 - Supporting Information provided by Special Olympics GB Club
 - Supporting Information provided by Special Olympics GB Region
- Where applicants are not personally known by the selection panel, they may ask for further supporting information on the applicant from suitable individuals
- In some instances where a particular Special Olympics Region has submitted a number of application forms for the same role i.e. multiple female aquatics applications for category 2, they may be asked to also submit the applications in order of their preference for selection along with reasoning for this preference to assist the selection panel
- Based on the selection panels scores of the application form, supporting evidence received about the applicant, the gender, the category/ability level of the quota received from the Games Organising Committee⁶, region that the applicant is from, the selection panel will determine which applicants are appointed to the athlete/unified partners roles within the GB Team
- Special Olympics GB National Office will aim to inform all applicants if they have/have not been successful in being appointed to the GB Team via email (or via post if no email address is provided) within four weeks of the application deadline

A possible scenario that may occur when selecting individuals to fill athlete/unified partner roles:

In some circumstances two athletes may appear to be very similar on paper but a choice has to be made as to which one gets the place in the GB Team. This is a very hard decision to make by the selection panel and so they will do their best to review all relevant

³ Unless there has been no competition at the lower level for the athlete to enter.

⁴ For team sports, a practical selection event may also be held to identify individuals of a similar ability to make up the particular sports squad for the GB Team.

⁵ If a relevant Special Olympics GB National Competition or Games has not yet been held, the applicant's performance and overall demeanour will be observed by the selection panel at this event.

⁶ The group of people from the relevant host country who are actually organising the Games.

information carefully before making a decision. An example of this may be as follows where applicant **two** is chosen for the role:

- **Applicant one**; is 12 years old, is the correct gender and ability level for the available place in the GB Team. They score the same as applicant two on the application form, have minimal care needs, have been training in their sport for three years and has never attended an international event
- **Applicant two**; is 35 years old, is the correct gender and ability level for the available place in the GB Team. They score the same as applicant one on the application form, have minimal care needs, have been training in their sport for 10 years and has never attended an international event

In the above scenario, applicant **two** is chosen for the place because they are older than applicant one and will therefore have less international competition opportunities available to them in the future to participate in, they have been dedicated to training in their sport for a longer period of time compared to applicant one and in this scenario, applicant two is the only athlete from their region who has submitted an application form whereas, three athletes from applicant one's region have already been selected for the GB Team.

Things that are beyond the applicants control during selection

- Overall, the GB Team will need to ensure that there is a good geographical spread of athletes/unified partners
- Normally the gender quota for athlete/unified partner places in the GB Team have already pre-determined by the Games Organising Committee
- Normally the category/ability level quota for athlete/unified partner places in the GB Team have already pre-determined by the Games Organising Committee
- Sometimes quota places in the GB Team are received for athletes who are only over 45 years old (Masters Category)
- The number of volunteer places that a sports squad will be assigned is on a 4:1 athlete:coach ratio
- The overall size of the GB Team will determine how many Additional Staff (AS) places are assigned to the GB Team:
 - AS places can be used for any volunteer roles but the GB Management Team will decide where the AS places are required
 - In the past, AS places have been used to ensure that at least two volunteers are supporting each sports squad (i.e. one HC and one Coach) when there have only been four athletes in the sports squad. They have also been used for Medical, Family, and Safeguarding & Welfare roles etc.
 - If it is deemed that a particular athlete/sports squad require extra support, then AS places can be used for this purpose (so it is important to know this information prior to athletes being selected)
- If there are no athletes/unified partners selected from a particular Special Olympics GB region, it is unlikely that a coach would be able to be selected from that region
- It is preferable to have a good balance of 'experienced' and 'new' volunteers within the GB Team i.e. those who have been to an international Special Olympics event before and those that haven't. In some cases the same applies for athletes/unified partners within a sports squad
- Sometimes, it is deemed that no applicant is suitable for the role/no application forms are received for the role and in these situations, the selection panel will head hunt for

applicants who must then proceed through the relevant process before being officially selected

Ways to help the selection panel when completing your application form

- Give as much honest and accurate detail as possible for each question
- Vital information such as health/medical/behaviour issues must **not** be omitted as the selection panel needs to make informed decisions
- Fill out all the boxes
- Try to show your passion for the role
- Give evidence as to why you would make a good candidate
- Ensure you are correctly registered with Special Olympics GB
- Ensure your Special Olympics GB Club and Region know you well enough to be able to provide suitable supporting information