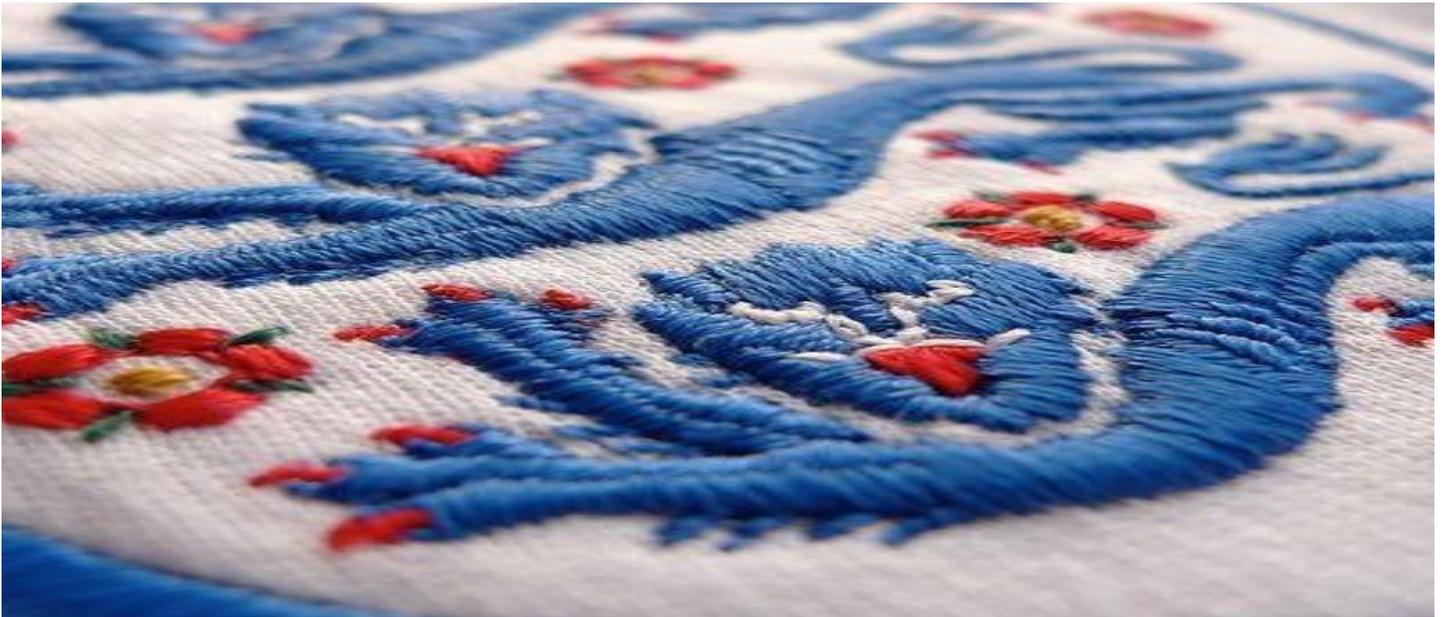




**DISABILITY ENGLAND
TALENT PATHWAY**

**An Introduction to the England
Talent Pathway for Disability
Football**



Introduction

The identification of players with potential is not an exact science. Frequent examples of players achieving success in the game yet sharing stories of early programme or team rejection is evidence of this. The identification and selection of players with a disability is certainly a complex discipline. Considerations relating to eligibility and classification, level of opportunity, perception of ability, lack of awareness of the talent/dual pathway that exists and players 'not wanting to be identified and labelled', are all examples of 'interference' in the identification process.

However, once engaged in the England Talent Pathway and associated programme environments, player progress and transition can be rapid. Importantly, the associated and wider impact on the individual can also be life changing. The Football Association's Disability Performance Unit firmly believes that work undertaken in the identification of eligible players to date has only 'scratched the surface'. This is specifically the case when recruiting players competing in mainstream football environments where the need for more informed and data driven identification processes are required.

It is hoped that this introductory guide to the Talent Pathway will encourage additional partners and individuals from within the wider football family to join the quest in identifying and inspiring future England players.

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FA DISABILITY TALENT STRATEGY 2017-21

The FA's Disability Talent Strategy 2017-21 was written with the aims to reach and develop players with potential from a 'hard to reach group'. The individual development and progression of these players within a fluid and non-linear pathway is the cornerstone of this strategy. The FA has adopted a new way of working, which will build upon successes, and lessons learnt within the 2013-17 Whole Sport Plan cycle whilst focusing on the implementation of innovative identification methods and 'bespoke' support programmes to each and every player. The strategy has secured partner funding, which will 'unlock' the wider FA investment and support cited throughout. Additionally, football family and partner support will be crucial if the targets set and the planned impact on senior England Elite Disability Football Squads are to be realised. The strategy will also ensure that partnerships with Sport England, TASS, Sports Aid and other external bodies are meaningful'.

The Football Association has strategically led the development of disability football in England since 2001. In this time, the growth and development of the Player Pathway has been impressive. Developments, specifically within grassroots environments, have been attributed by the impressive work undertaken locally by County Football Associations, Premier League and English Football League Clubs' Trusts, Football in the Community Programmes and Foundations and by community based football clubs and leagues. Third sector, education and recreational football focused activity has also supported this trend. Numerous



“All deliverers of football can have an impact on the journey of the talented player with a disability”

investment and programme initiatives have been provided to create innovative practice with disability delivery being embedded in 'core' FA football development planning and implementation.

Aligned to this, The FA's Disability Talent Pathway has developed with similar momentum whilst undergoing numerous 'face lifts'; originating from a pan disability county based programme to a regionally targeted and country wide impairment specific player development continuum. The FA has formed the 'Disability Performance Unit' to further excel and professionalise this key area of the game and to ensure consistency of approach and philosophy witnessed in other areas under the Governing Body's leadership. That said, the uniqueness of delivering a Talent Pathway impacting six differing formats of the game internationally, and within the complex landscape of eligibility and classification, stands the Programme apart from other FA and wider football/sporting player development programmes.

Through this 'multi-pathway' approach, and in comparison to other National Football Federations commonly delivering a maximum of only two international disability squads, prioritisation and focus of investment in up to six elite squads becomes both challenging and critical. This same challenge is embraced and understood within the Talent Pathway to ensure that the country's players with the greatest levels of potential are identified and supported effectively to play at the highest level within their respective pathway. The need for clarity on delivering talent-based interventions that must impact player progression is reflected within this document.

Complexity of delivery is further enhanced and considered via this strategy due to the mixed environments in which players with potential and talent participate. Moving forwards, 'Talent Pathway' and 'Elite Squad' players will more regularly be identified and recruited from the mainstream football environments in which they are competing and excelling. Due to this, and complicated by the negative connotations of the term 'disability', talent identification interventions may impact individuals 'with a hidden disability that do not want to be found' and via the gate keepers of mainstream football (who in turn have limited knowledge of talent identification and selection for an unfamiliar pathway). The need for effective and innovative methods of communication with individuals that can impact such players and in turn promote a 'dual pathway involvement', sits as a key focus of the strategy delivery plan. A refreshed Talent Pathway offering high quality, flexible and bespoke programmes of support for players that reflect and maximise the benefits of mainstream involvement will be made available.

It is also stressed that this Strategy is importantly aligned to and will contribute to the delivery of grassroots priorities for disability football. Despite the highlighted focus of engaging players within mainstream environments, impairment specific and classification considerations means that the continued link of the Talent Pathway to pan disability and impairment specific environments remains important. Late development, the football journey of more severely impaired players and the involvement of impairment specific groups that cannot be integrated with mainstream football (i.e. blind and power chair footballers) become just some of the factors driving the continued relationship between talent and grassroots pathways. That said, and due to the potential of identifying individual players with high levels of potential in mainstream settings, it is stressed that organisational involvement in a talent pathway is not driven by the necessity to have a traditionally recognised sports development continuum with a significant participation base. This view should challenge organisations citing poor youth based disability specific participation figures as a reason for not supporting talent identification initiatives. All deliverers of football can have an impact on the journey of the talented player with a disability.

DISABILITY PERFORMANCE UNIT (DPU) VISION - DEVELOPING WINNING ENGLAND TEAMS

DPU MISSION - TO DELIVER THE WORLD'S LEADING TALENT AND ELITE PERFORMANCE PROGRAMMES FOR DISABILITY SPORT; MAXIMISING PLAYER AND COACH POTENTIAL

TEN STRATEGIC TALENT PRIORITIES

- 1. Work in partnership with Sport England and wider partners to deliver the England Talent Pathway:**
 - Produce The FA Disability Talent strategy 17-21 and collaborate effectively with Sport England
 - Lead and develop NGB Talent Group and shape cross sport practice

- 2. Deliver an effective identification and monitoring strategy of England's best talent and future potential across impairment groups:**
 - Implement a National Programme of England Talent Days and Recruitment Networks feeding the Talent and Grassroots Pathways
 - Drive innovative and information led identification and referral processes in mainstream football

- 3. Deliver a Regional Emerging Talent Programme that feeds national development programmes:**
 - Establish a network of Disability Talent Hubs and supporting player and coach transition
 - Deliver a Regional Emerging Talent Programme that engages impairment specific and mainstream players and drives transition

- 4. Deliver a National Emerging Talent Programme to develop young players with potential and to identify meaningful competition:**
 - Provide age specific case conferencing of players and implement bespoke player development plans
 - Embed the 'Talent Apprentice' Programme with partner organisations and excel the playing and vocational development of each individual

- 5. Deliver an Under 21 Squad Programme that complements the England Talent Pathway:**
 - Deliver impairment specific camps and support player transition to seniors via World and Home Nation competition
 - Implementing 'early' performance management processes for staff and players to support progress

- 6. Deliver a Workforce Talent Development Programme (4 corner approach to include parents and guardians in social corner):**
 - Implement role specific personal development plans linked to player development plans
 - Deliver an NGB leading development programme for Talent Pathway coaches

- 7. Deliver effective performance services, classification and player lifestyle programmes that supports player progression:**
 - Produce and implement an England Talent Pathway Performance Services matrix
 - Underpin all Talent Pathway based selection and player investment decisions with consistent eligibility and classification processes

- 8. Deliver a ‘fit for purpose’ full and part time workforce:**
 - Realign Talent Selection Team structure evolving from regionally focused programme management to pathway area national leadership
 - Implement key roles across four corners to ensure holistic player development support

- 9. Deliver monitoring and evaluation processes that further excel learning of programme impact:**
 - Measure individual development and psychological well-being of players (using a self-determination theory / challenge response framework)
 - Measure the physical development of players focusing on aerobic capacity, speed, power and strength and training lifestyle (regularity)

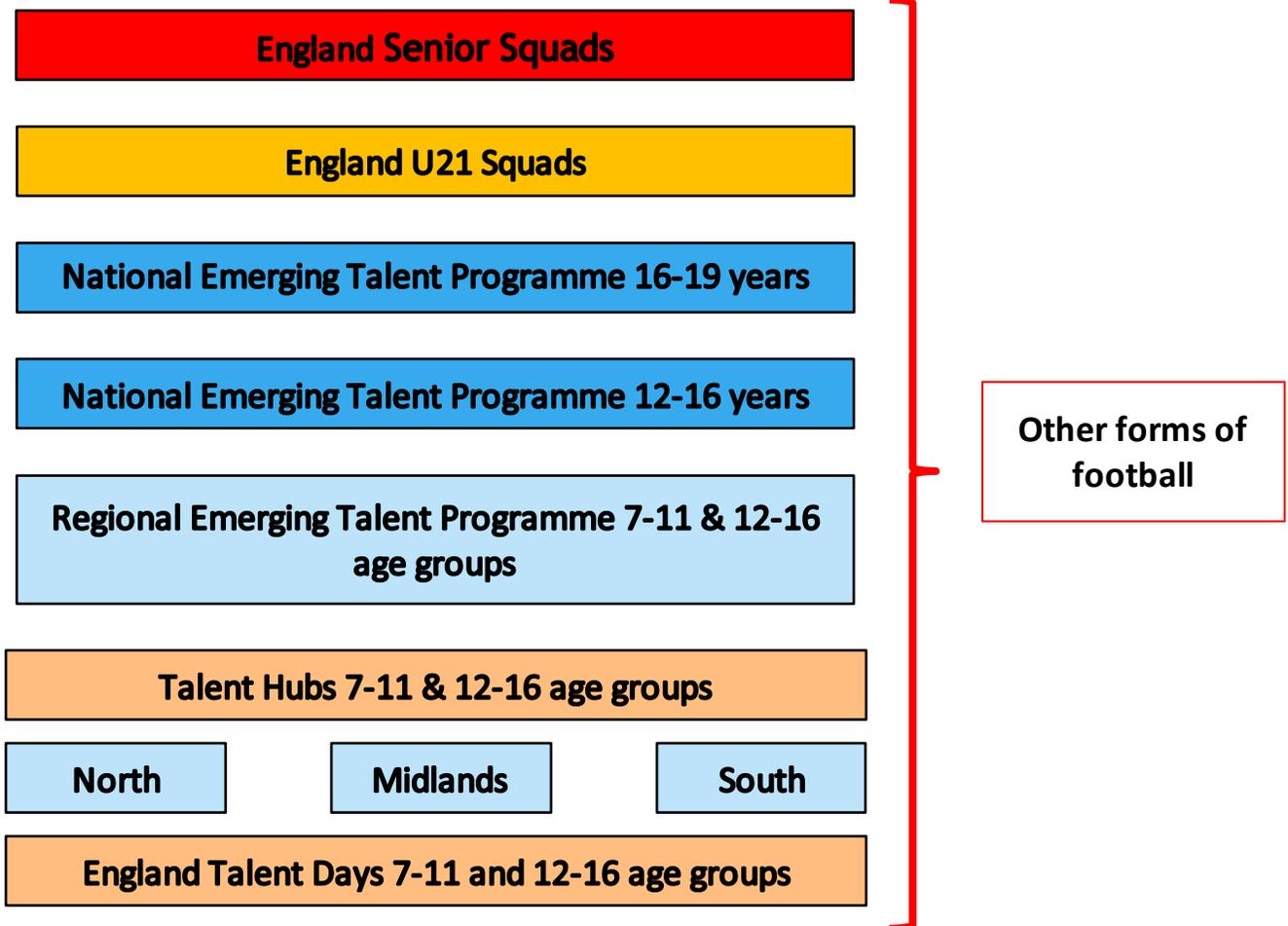
- 10. Deliver marketing and communications strategies impacting the ‘wider game’ and impairment specific networks:**
 - Establish and deliver clear marketing goals via one comprehensive plan for disability football
 - Establish and deliver a Communications Plan that enables strategy success through effective stakeholder engagement and communicating key successes and opportunities within the Pathway

On the following pages you will find details of members of the DPU who are driving this forward.

Disability Performance Unit and Talent Team Structure



Talent Pathway 2017-2021



Eligible Impairments

- Amputee (currently referred to the English Amputee FA)
- Blind
- Cerebral Palsy
- Deaf (female and male)
- Partially Sighted
- Powerchair

It should be stressed that the above is very much a 'dual pathway' in which players are encouraged to play football in the most challenging environment that meets their needs in terms of their continued development.

THE TARGET MARKET

As stated, the strategy will impact the 'hard to reach group' of players with a disability. Highlighted earlier, a number of the impairment specific groups targeted are frequently embedded in mainstream education or community mainstream football settings and unwilling to disclose their disability. Non-disclosure relates to the perceived disadvantage of being 'labelled' as disabled and restricts an acknowledgement or understanding of what it means to be viewed as 'talented' or having 'potential'. Additionally, the sometimes complex discipline of eligibility and classification in disability sport also leads to misinterpretation of 'what talent looks like' and the non-referral of players to the 'parallel pathway' that exists. The FA's Talent Strategy will impact the following key impairment groups (an insight into the target group is also provided). Talent Pathway opportunities across gender and impairment relate to opportunities available within international based and influenced competition.

The FA is investing in people through the following groups:

Deaf male and female players

These players attend both mainstream and impairment specific education. Participating in impairment specific, grassroots disability and mainstream football environments (female players also engaged in the female talent programme). Level of play within first selective environments can be high with identification focused on selection for an England Futsal Pathway (with 11 v 11 support in the pipeline). Cultural identity is strong amongst deaf players.

Blind male players

These players more regularly attend mainstream education with limited access to meaningful physical education or signposting. Creation of a 'talent environment' for these players can be challenging due to minimal 'player clusters'. The correct timing of transition from physical and technical based development to full game involvement is significant in protecting the well-being and future involvement of the player. That said, player progression between Pathway entry and talent environments can be rapid.

Partially sighted male players

These players are based in mainstream education and aim to 'cope' within core physical education activity. Community participation is more regularly represented by mainstream 11-a-side activity in junior years before transitioning to mainstream or impairment specific futsal opportunities where players' needs are met via consistencies in environment lighting and smaller areas of play. Again, the cohort is small and pathway engagement is difficult without innovative practice across other futsal-based activity.

Male players with cerebral palsy

These players are based in mainstream education and involvement in football (both education and community) is frequently dictated by the severity of impairment/classification and resulting mobility. Some players play competitively in a good standard of mainstream football and are unwilling to disclose their disability due to the acceptance gained in this environment. Variation in players' journeys in the game also exist with some players assuming a traditional involvement in mainstream grassroots mini soccer and others migrating to pan disability football at a later age.

Amputee male players

These players are based in mainstream education and are sometimes required to make the transition from participating in football with a prosthetic limb to involvement in impairment specific provision. This challenge is similar to that witnessed within the blind pathway with competition represented by a unique version of the game where scale and size of the player base is limited. Again, the need to support players with bespoke programmes is high and, although players do participate in pan disability activity, the impairment specific environment represents the key training and competitive outlet for talented players.

Players using a power chair

These players train and compete in a comprehensive and impairment specific club and league structure domestically. This environment is difficult to replicate/extend within isolated talent based programmes with interventions best directed to the significant club structure. Transition can be achieved direct from club and league domestic structures to the elite squad with less support directed to players in the physical and technical corner. Elite based provision is reliant on additional support staff with technology in chair development also impacting current and predicted future performance levels.

Sighted mainstream goalkeepers

These players are crucial to the programme and feature within blind and partially sighted pathways. Frequently based or transitioning from professional football or futsal-based environments, the disability pathway is viewed as a primary or dual performance activity. Similar challenges relating to awareness of the opportunity and pathway exist for this cohort and the mainstream football 'gate-keepers' engaging them.

Talent Pathway Programme Descriptors:

England Talent Days

FA England Talent Days will be recognised as the first selective environment in the Player Pathway. The Programme will identify and signpost players to the 'right' environment at that point in time (they will run on a yearly basis to ensure that players can be re-assessed and kept in the Talent System). ETDs will not be viewed as player development environments. The England Talent Day will be underpinned with the formation of local Disability Football Recruitment Networks responsible for driving player identification and recruitment.

Talent Hubs

Talent Hubs will deliver engagement sessions for players with cerebral palsy, deaf players and partially sighted players. Sessions will enable continued talent identification/confirmation opportunities and will impact younger players than previously engaged in Regional Talent Centres (7-11 and 12-16 cohorts). Hubs will be used as a 'check point' for these players and will have robust processes to link players to appropriate mainstream clubs or impairment specific clubs. It is envisaged that the number of Hubs will increase annually and will be hosted by a range of organisations including CFAs, English Football League Trusts and Premier League Foundations and Trusts. These organisations will be supported by The FA to develop comprehensive action plans focusing on recruitment strategies for disabled players and sighted goalkeepers, training and development opportunities for staff, futsal placements for players, educational and apprenticeship opportunities and effective marketing and communications activity.

Regional Emerging Talent Programme (7 to 11 and 12 to 16)

Regional Emerging Talent Programmes will again be viewed as the 'check point' environment for those players engaged in either impairment specific or mainstream football activity. This environment will support player tracking and monitoring of developmental progress and performance standards; thus informing selection for the National Emerging Talent Programme. Activity at Regional Programmes will 'kick start' case conferencing and will prepare players for future involvement in the Pathway via age specific technical coaching and wider four-corner support. There will be a focus on preparing players psychologically for progression and Regional Programmes will allow mainstream players to engage for the first time without interruption to the meaningful competition accessed in their chosen environment. Strong links will exist with Regional Impairment Specific Clubs.

National Emerging Talent Programme (12 to 16)

National FA Emerging Talent Programmes (12 to 16) and (16-19) will be implemented to support the effective transition of players from Regional Emerging Talent Programmes to England Development Squads. Age specific programmes will be provided for each cohort with

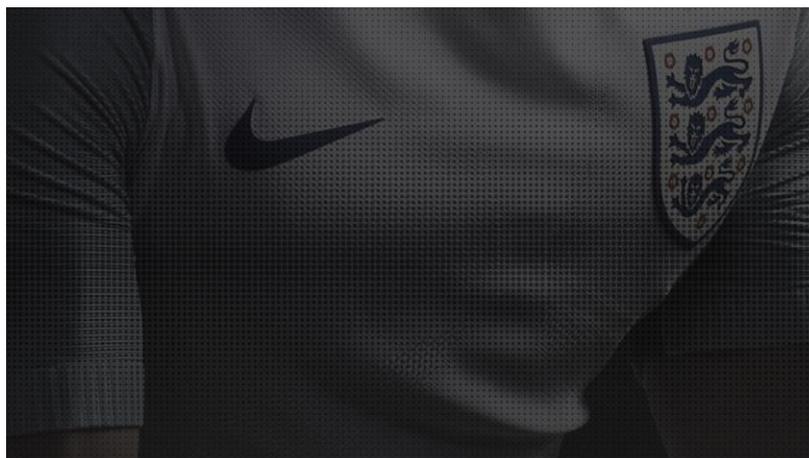
the deployment of key staff and technical coaches aligned to this. This Programme will provide bespoke support to each individual engaged to ensure that potential is maximised and the opportunity to develop is extended beyond the capacity of the environment they currently participate/compete within. The Programme will include a minimum of 3 Emerging Talent Camps (3 day camps) for each age specific cohort to ensure that players are fully engaged in the Programme. This will also enable individualised strength and conditioning programmes and health and wellbeing diaries to be implemented. Case conferencing of all players introduced to the Emerging Talent Programme will be a priority to ensure that appropriate competition, funding and support locally is sourced for the individual.

National Emerging Talent Programme (16 to 19)

The National Emerging Talent 16+ cohort will also be offered the opportunity to access education and employment within a partner club. These players will not only participate in the National Camps described previously but will be engaged via a role profile impacting completion of an agreed personal development plan impacting the four corners and focused on physical and training/competitive outcomes. This is likely to be underpinned by an initial 'traineeship' which will test suitability for the apprenticeship. This will in turn support individuals to secure future employment whilst preparing them fully for transition to England Under 21 Squads. Support to individuals via TASS, Sports Aid and Backing the Best will be targeted at Emerging Talent Programme cohorts (age dependent against criteria of each programme).

England Under 21 Squads

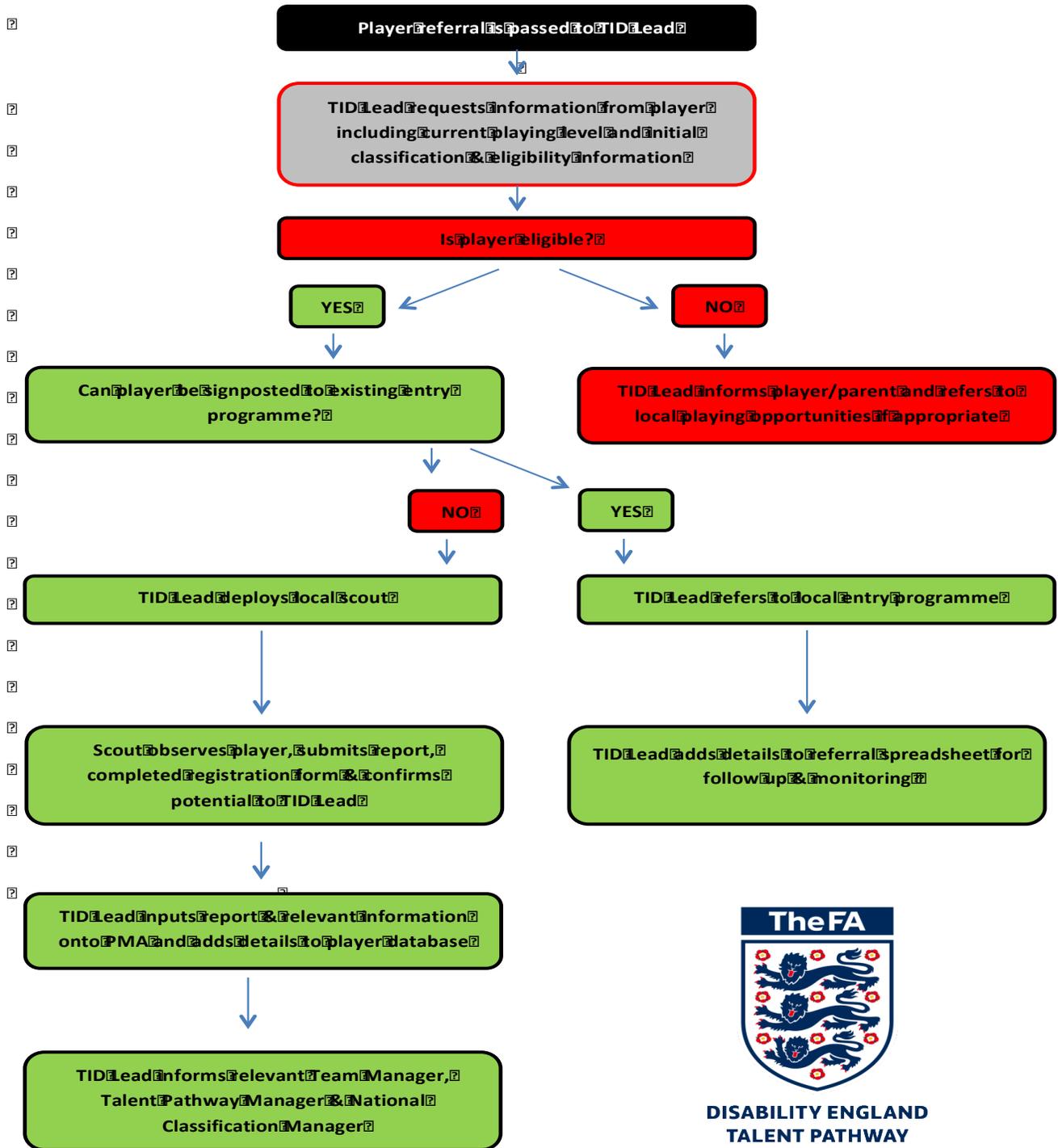
England Under 21 Squad camps will be provided for deaf players and players with cerebral palsy. Three camps per season will be complemented by a competitive opportunity (European and World Para Youth Games or Home Nations). Blind, partially sighted and amputee players will transition direct from National Emerging Talent Programme cohorts to England/Great Britain Senior Squads. As suggested earlier, power chair footballers will be supported to transition from national club and league structures to the Elite Senior Squad for European and World Championship cycles.



Full Time FA Staff Contact Details

NAME	ROLE	E-MAIL	MOBILE
Jeff Davis	National Elite Development Manager	jeff.davis@thefa.com	07971 536729
James Watkins	National Talent Pathway Manager	james.watkins@thefa.com	07507 427965
Ayser Hussain	Physical Performance & Classification Manager	ayser.hussain@thefa.com	07870 534480
Jonathan Pugh	Head Coach B1 Squad	jonathan.pugh@thefa.com	07812 734518
Will Perkins	National Talent Confirmation Lead	will.perkins@thefa.com	07817 954984
Paul Harrison	National Player Lifestyle Lead	paul.harrison2@thefa.com	07817 954664

Player Referral Flowchart



Considerations

When assessing players please remember the following points, especially age, stage and classification as well as the Talent v Potential debate!

Classification:

This is a major consideration when assessing players and we have provided an overview in this document. Eligibility can be complex and we would not expect anyone to be an expert but an appreciation of the process is considered useful.

Impairment pathway:

The pathway caters for the different formats of the game, which meet the needs of the players, both nationally and internationally in their respective impairments.

Deterioration:

This links closely with the classification of players as they may have a condition, which could deteriorate over time, which in turn may move the player from ineligible to eligible.

Age and maturation:

Naturally players develop physically at different rates and ages, this is especially relevant with players who have a disability. It is important to understand how and when players grow and the impact it has on performance. A player may dominate a session due to physical maturity rather than technical and tactical ability and this should be assessed when judging potential.

'Coachability' – attitude:

The importance of players having a positive attitude and approach to training, competition and their overall development. This also relates to players ability to work and interact with coaches and other players.

Training age (exposure):

This is how long a player has been exposed to coaching and may be limited. Players may have played football for a period of time in non-formal settings and this will have an impact on their performance within coached environments. It is important that training age is understood to reduce the chance of missing players with potential.

Football journey:

This describes a player's history within the game and what setting they have played in, this may vary greatly compared to a player from a traditional mainstream environment. Getting information about a player's journey will allow a greater understanding of their talent/potential.

Level of opposition:

(good/poor) – mainstream, pan or impairment specific;

This is a good indicator of level of play/potential. If opposition is strong and player is 'coping' then this may demonstrate talent more effectively than a stand out player in a weaker level.

Interference – significant others:

It is important to be aware of differing or pre conceived thoughts held by others. The reason for this could be a misunderstanding of classification, a particular impairment group or the pathway; and this can cause talent to be ignored. Players should always be referred to a talent scout for a more informed assessment of potential.

Parent relationships:

Parent relationships play a big part in player development. Assessing parent relationships/support will enable staff to understand a player's access to training and pathway progression. Minimal parent engagement should not be a limitation in the development of young talented players and additional support systems may be required in these instances.

Associated medical treatment / injury roadmap:

This is the understanding of player's history in relation to injury/illness/operations. It is common for players within the Disability talent pathway to undergo surgery and operations related to their impairment. It is important that this information is available as it can have a negative impact on performance.

Education stage:

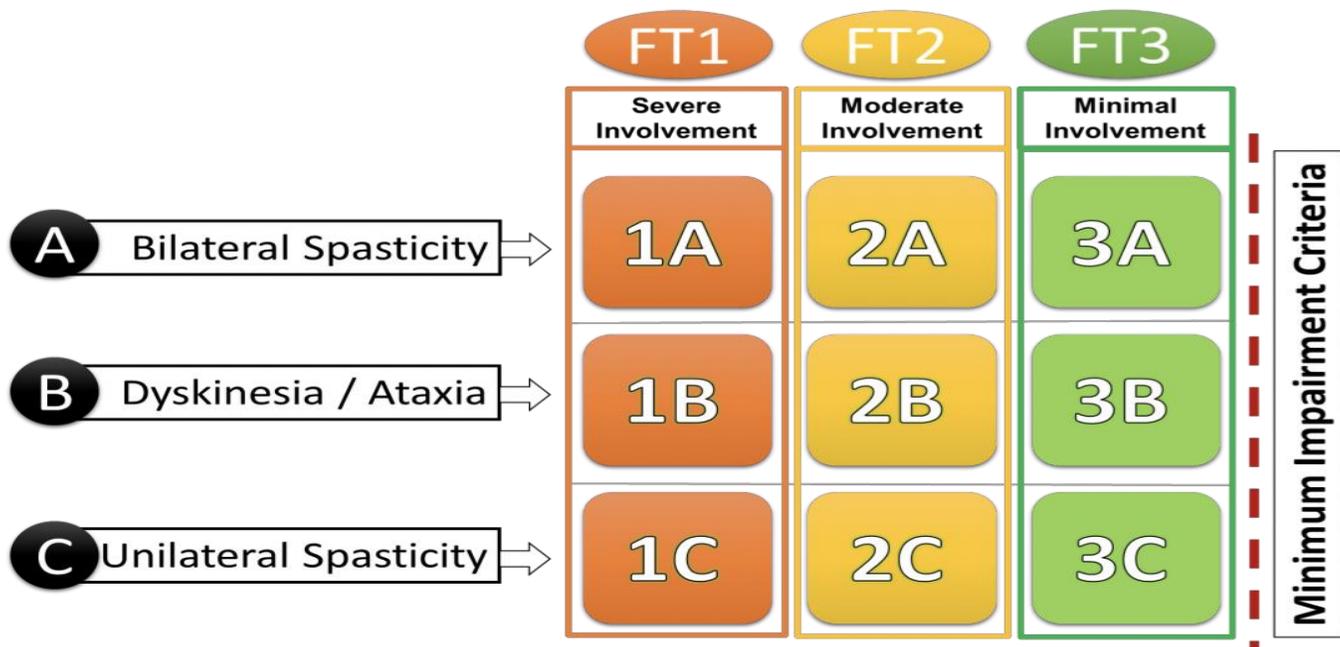
Is the player in a crucial educational stage, for example GCSE exams? These periods can cause players to be distracted or feel under pressure and may hide potential. It is important that there is an awareness of this and player's education is supported and considered.

Dual pathway opportunities and distractions (motivation level):

Players within the disability talent pathway often access mainstream football in addition to impairment specific football. Players are encouraged to access the level of football that is most challenging. There are often difficulties accessing appropriate level of play due to level of impairment and wider distractions. For example, it is common for players to not want to access mainstream or disability formats due to friendship groups or perception.

All interventions identified within the strategy will be underpinned by an FA Disability Eligibility and Classification Strategy and associated processes. This will ensure consistency within all identification and selection processes; thus protecting all players involved in programme activity. Specialist support across ophthalmology, audiology and physical elements of classification will tackle issues such as misinterpretation of eligibility information, deterioration of conditions and the impact of acquired disability. The scope for recruiting eligible players with potential for current and future cohorts within programmes will be extended. Most importantly, and in example scenarios such as deteriorating sight or hearing conditions or changing classification systems internationally, this work will inform key investment decision relating to both cohorts of players and individuals. Notably, decisions may be made to invest in and prepare players for elite performance who may not currently be eligible but will be at a later stage in their development. Scope to achieve this will be mapped and actioned against future tournament timelines.

Cerebral Palsy Classification



Classification for players with neurological impairment is based upon what type of movement impairment the individual has and where the impairment is located (as indicated by the A, B and C profiles in the above image). Eligible classification outcomes range from FT1-FT3. FT1 players are considered to have more significant impairment and FT3 players have minimal impairment. Criteria for each classification relative to the impairment specific profile are as follows in the tables below:

Impairment specific profile		A: Bilateral Spasticity
FT1	FT2	FT3
<p>Clear diplegic gait pattern, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal rotation of the lower limbs, including equinus foot - Poor dorsiflexion of ankles - Involvement of both legs which may require orthotics/splints for walking <p>Spasticity impacts on hips, knees and ankles movement.</p> <p>Difficulty in propulsion up and landing.</p> <p>Upper limbs are used to compensate for impaired ROM due to spasticity in lower limbs.</p> <p>It might be possible to observe clonus on landing or during repetitive/fast movements.</p> <p>During game, exertion will increase tone and decrease function.</p>	<p>Internal rotation of the lower limbs is not necessarily seen:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The hips look free - Flexed knees are not necessarily seen - Limitations in plantar- and dorsiflexion is observed - Equinus can be observed in feet <p>Hips-trunk dissociation is possible, allowing better mechanics for jumping and change of direction.</p> <p>Fluency to coordinate repetitive movements (e.g. sprint jumps) is constrained.</p> <p>Reduced plantar- and dorsiflexion, and knee extension, is usually compensated with wider pelvis rotation.</p>	<p>No clear abnormal posture in lower limbs. Hips and ankles with minimal limitation: plantigrade is possible. Active ROM limitations are observed in an action that requires rapid plantar- and dorsiflexion.</p> <p>Slight problems with control of fast movements (e.g. rapid heel-toe or tasks requiring specific selective motor control). Athletes frequently have increased difficulty generating force against gravity than their non-disabled counterparts creating difficulty in mastering elite football skills.</p>

Impairment specific profile		B: Dyskinesia/Ataxia
FT1	FT2	FT3
<p>Difficulty with coordination between upper/lower limbs, and dynamic general coordination.</p>	<p>Global compromise (coordination difficulty) is easily seen.</p> <p>Some asymmetry is seen but it is not as strong as</p>	<p>This Athlete may appear to have near normal function when running but the Athlete must demonstrate a limitation</p>

<p>Awkwardness in movement quality. Strong involuntary movements. It is possible to observe dystonia in arm/s and posture. Problems with spatial awareness. Motor planning/tracking limitations. Problems selecting hip muscles/dissociation. Can show asymmetry in the lower limbs, especially in mixed pictures with spasticity. In athetoid athletes, difficulties with the production of the speech and strong uncontrolled facial movements. Balance problems.</p>	<p>coordination problems. Fluency problems and/or rhythm loss. Balance is constrained.</p>	<p>in function to Classifiers based on evidence of ataxia, athetosis or dystonic movements while performing on the field of play or in training. The Athlete must have an evident impairment of function observed during classification and on the field of play. Present mild coordination problems: Synchronizing arms with legs, although it does not have big impact on performance. Pivoting toward both sides. Increases when using the ball. Minor movement fluency problems or rhythm loss. Minor balance problems (i.e. when landing or with body challenges with opponents).</p>
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Impairment specific profile		C: Unilateral spasticity
FT1	FT2	FT3
<p>Marked hemi-gait pattern with hyperextension of the knee or flexed knee in mid stance phase. Internal rotation of the affected lower limb, including equinus foot</p>	<p>(Hyper) extension of the knee in mid stance phase. A key consideration between FT1 v FT2 is the level of spasticity in hip adductors. More distal spasticity:</p>	<p>No evident hemi gait pattern, dorsiflexion of the ankle is seen in the initial contact or the stance phase. No limitations for trunk-pelvis dissociation. The Athlete may walk</p>

<p>without capability for heel contact. It is common to observe an ankle contracture, with poor or no ankle dorsiflexion. May require an orthotics/splint for walking (e.g. anti-equinus device). Spasticity impacts hip, knee and ankle of the affected side, showing clear asymmetries (e.g. difficulties or inability to raise up or landing with the affected leg). The arm of the affected side is usually affected with an overall spasticity grade 3 or above (i.e. strong flexed posturing). It might be possible to observe clonus after landing or during repetitive/fast movements on the affected leg. During a game, exertion will increase tone and decrease functional control.</p>	<p>Hip looks free. Flexed knees are not necessarily seen. Limitation in plantar- and dorsi- flexion is observed. Equinus can be observed in feet. Fluency to coordinate repetitive movements (e.g. splits jumps) is restricted due to asymmetry impact. The arm on the impaired side is usually affected with an overall spasticity grade 2 or above (i.e. paretic posture), and may impact overall coordination. Reduced accuracy in tasks involving affected leg (e.g. rapid heel-toe) or evaluating selective motor control (i.e. require corrections).</p>	<p>with a slight limp but runs more fluidly. No clear abnormal posture in impaired lower limb: slight distal spasticity, hip/knee look free, and full foot contact on the ground is possible. Active ROM limitations are observed in an action that requires rapid plantar- and dorsi-flexion. Slight problems with control of fast movements (e.g. rapid heel-toe or requiring selective motor control), with minimal impact in the performance of football skills. Athletes frequently have increased difficulty generating force against gravity than their non-impaired counterparts creating difficulty in mastering regular football skills. Asymmetry can be observed noting ankle posture while landing or fast COD, minimal knee raise, arms posture, or arms contribution to propulsion.</p>
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Deaf Classification

This guide will help you to understand how hearing test results are obtained from audiometry.

Each ear is tested separately with the initial aim to determine the softest decibel level of a frequency the person is able to hear.

The frequencies tested are between 250Hz (low) to 8000Hz (high) – the main reason is that this range covers the frequencies of human speech production.

The audiogram may look like the example below, there may be two side by side, one representing each ear, symbols will be used to define the ear; circles for the right ear and crosses for the left ear. If the results are shown in colour then the right ear is shown in **red** and **blue** is used for the left ear.

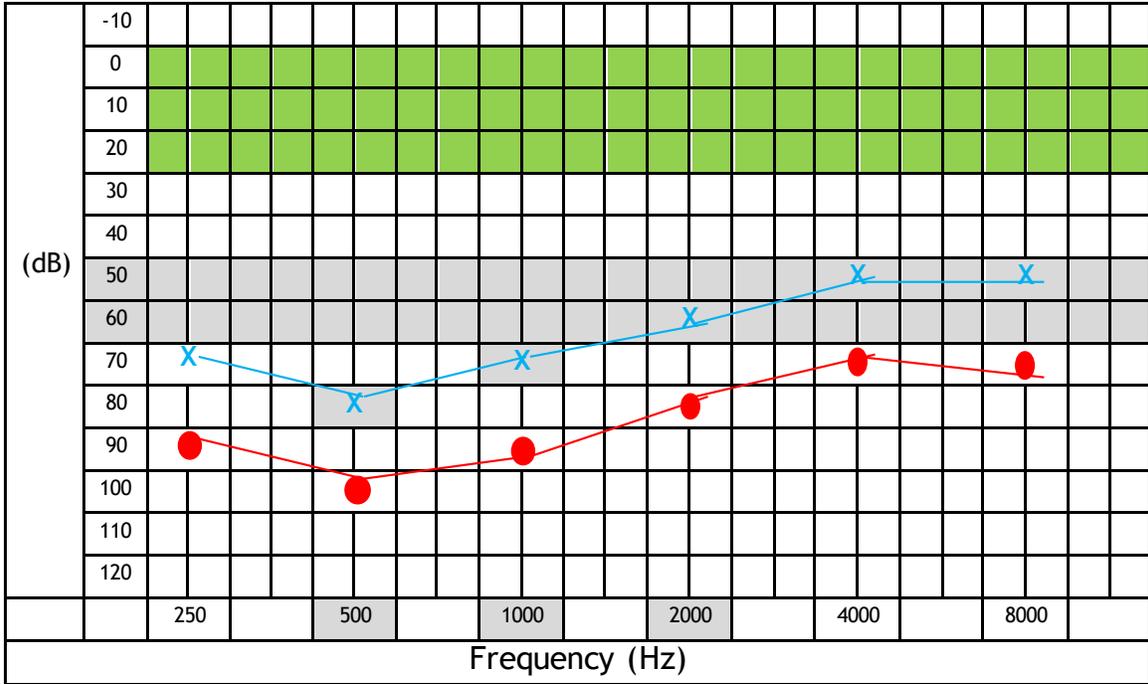
The frequency is shown on the horizontal axis from low frequencies on the left (250Hz) to high frequencies on the right (8000Hz). The amount of hearing loss is shown on the vertical axis (dB) with the higher numbers indicating a greater degree of hearing loss.

Thresholds from 0 to 20 dBHL (shaded green in diagram) are considered to be within the normal hearing range.

The circles and crosses are referred to as air-conduction thresholds; they measure how an individual hears sounds usually through headphones. The sound has travelled through the whole of the auditory system including the outer, middle and inner ear. To rule out any potential problems in the outer or middle ear then bone conduction testing may also be carried out; these results are indicated by either arrows or brackets on the audiogram.

International Regulations define hearing loss of at least 55dB per tone average in the better ear – 3 tone frequency average 500, 1000, 2000 Hertz, ISO 1969 standard – highlighted grey in diagram.

From the example audiogram (below) this would indicate that the person has an average hearing loss in their better left ear of 70dB, this would mean they would be eligible for the programme.



Eyesight Classification

“B” CLASSIFICATIONS IN SPORT

B1 from no perception of light in either eye up to perception of light but inability to recognize the shape of a hand at any distance in any direction

B2 from the ability to recognize the shape of a hand up to a visual acuity of 2/60 and/or field of 5 degrees or less.

B3 from a visual acuity above 2/60 up to 6/60 and/or a visual field of more than 5 degrees and less than 20 degrees.

These are the International Blind Sports Association classes but for various national purposes we have a B4 class, which is defined as:

B4 from 6/60 to 6/24 with no field consideration.

Within the UK it has been decided by some sports that for social and historical reasons, a fourth class of B4 should be established and be determined purely by acuity. This class ranges from the top of B3 to an acuity of 6/24 Snellen. An individual with an acuity of 6/24 would be able to read the three top lines on a Snellen chart at six metres.

Anyone above 6/24 unless classifiable by virtue of field are B4+. This is just a catch all to cover anyone who is unclassifiable.

Please note all sight classifications should be done with best correction and a guideline only based on the information given by the athlete's ophthalmologist or consultant.

Useful Links

<https://wetransfer.com/>

FREE service to email a link to be able to send large files, useful if you have any player footage you may need to share (subject to the usual recognised safeguarding procedures).

For further information and any player referrals please contact the Talent Team at disabilitypathway@thefa.com