



## **POLICY – Queensland Sapphires Athlete Selection Policy**

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### **Document Control**

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#### **Approval**

Delegation required for approval: Chief Executive Officer

Approving officer:

Name: Catherine Clark

Position: Chief Executive Officer

Signature:

Date: Wednesday, 21 July 2021

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## 1 Policy Objectives

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Netball Queensland selects, supports and enters teams to compete at the Australian Netball Championships (ANC). Netball Queensland supports and enters one team as Queensland's representative in the ANC.

The Queensland Sapphires Athlete Selection Policy details the procedure for selecting the athletes deemed most likely by the selection panel to be future elite level athletes (SSN or International). While the short-term success of the Queensland Sapphires team is important, the overriding principle is to identify and select players most likely to succeed at the elite level. For the avoidance of doubt, it should be reiterated that once selected, every Queensland team will be preparing to, and doing their best to win each and every match.

Application of the policy, operational processes and procedures outlined in this document will help ensure the following:

- Transparent and consistent selection criteria and processes;
- Appropriate depth chart management across Netball in Queensland;
- Appropriate succession planning for the Queensland Firebirds;
- Improved planning and execution of the selection strategy; and
- Flexibility to respond to selection situations in a fair and consistent manner.

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## 2 Related Policies and Documents

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The Queensland Sapphires Athlete Selection Policy should be viewed in conjunction with the following policies and documents:

- Netball Queensland Code of Conduct
- Netball Queensland Member Protection Policy

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## 3 Definitions

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Throughout the Queensland Sapphires Athlete Selection Policy the following definitions will apply:

**“Australian Netball Championships”** – is the underpinning domestic competition to the Suncorp Super Netball and is referred to through this document as the “ANC”

**“Depth Chart”** is a document managed by the and NQ Performance Pathway Head Coach in consultation with the Talent Management Panel to determine the level of depth in each playing position for the QLD Firebirds.

**“Final Selections”** is the dedicated time during the 10-week preparation phase at which time the selectors name the final Queensland Sapphires team along with four training partners.

**“Nationally Identified Athlete (NTID)”** is an athlete that has been selected in a Netball Australia National program or squad in the previous year.

**“Netball Australia”** is the National body for the sport of netball in Australia and is referred to in this document as NA.

**“Netball Australia Centre of Excellence”** is the national development program run out of the Australian Institute of Sport.

**“Netball Queensland”** is the State body for the sport of netball in Queensland and is referred to as NQ throughout this document.

**“ANC Training Squad”** is a squad of approximately 18 athletes selected during the HART Sapphire Series and Suncorp Super Netball season. These squads will commence training approximately 8 weeks prior to the Australian Netball Championships and be reduced to a team of 12, plus up to 4 training partners during the preparation phase.

**“Sapphire Series”** is the highest level of competition within Queensland.

**“ANC Selection Panel”** is a panel consisting of suitably qualified selectors appointed by the High Performance Director for the purpose of identifying talent through the Elite Development Program and HART Sapphire Series, and finally playing a role in selecting the ANC Squad and Team.

**“Succession Planning”** A process of looking forward to ensure the QLD Firebirds can manage the average age and experience profile of the Queensland Firebirds squad to support ongoing sustainable team success. This process is speculative and looks to anticipate when a player may leave the team, and when younger players might be ready to play at the elite level.

**“Talent Management Panel (TMP)”** is a panel consisting of the Firebirds Head Coach, Elite Development Mentor Coach(es) and High Performance Director.

**“Team”** refers to the 12 athletes named by NQ and listed on the official entry form to Netball Australia for the Queensland Sapphires Team.

**“Australian Netball Championships (ANC)”** is the tournament to which the QLD Sapphires will play, pursuant to the Netball Australia determined competition rules.

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## **4 Eligibility**

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- 4.1 When selecting athletes for the Queensland Sapphires, NQ will apply and abide by all relevant selection and eligibility criteria as set by Netball Australia in the ANC competition rules.
- 4.2 To this extent, for players to be eligible for selection in Queensland Sapphires they must meet each of the following Netball Australia criteria:
  - a) be female;
  - b) be a current registered member of Netball Queensland;
  - c) be eligible for selection into Australian national representative squads (resident / citizen etc).
- 4.3 As well as the above, further eligibility criteria require that in order for players to be eligible for selection to the Queensland Sapphires team they must meet one of the following Netball Australia criteria:
  - a) have been born in Queensland;

- b) have been a current registered member of NQ for a minimum of three months prior to the Netball Australia closing date for athlete nomination and continuing up to the ANC;
- c) have represented Queensland as an athlete in the UnderAge State Team (17u/19u).
- d) have played in the HART Sapphire Series (Sapphire or Ruby divisions)

4.4 Notwithstanding the above, NQ have the discretion to seek the approval of Netball Australia to select an athlete that does not meet the above Netball Australia eligibility requirements if, in the opinion of NQ, that athlete has the potential to be a long-term Queensland athlete.

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## **5 Selection Panel**

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5.1 Selection of the Queensland Sapphires Team shall be undertaken by the following Selection Panel for each age group:

- a) the Queensland Sapphires Head Coach; and
- b) one member of the Talent Management Panel and/or Campaign Manager, and
- c) one or more suitably qualified selectors from the State Selection Panel as appointed by the NQ High Performance Director.

5.2 Should a selector as detailed above not be able to complete their duties, a suitable replacement may be nominated by the NQ High Performance Director.

5.3 The Selection Panel may, from time to time, seek the views and input of third parties on the merits of certain players but any final selection decisions rest solely with the Selection Panel.

5.4 From time to time NQ may also invite a qualified and experienced selector to join the Selection Panel and assist in the selection of Squads and/or the Team.

5.5 The selectors will select the squad and teams by consensus and wherever possible, majority voting. Should the selectors be split on the selection of any squad or team members, the Head Coach will have the determining vote, providing due process has been followed.

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## **6 Selection Criteria**

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6.1 The selection process requires selectors to assess what they believe the standard of player is required against defined criteria (refer 6.2), squad requirements and competition level. It is acknowledged that this will, in the main be a subjective decision inclusive of the experience and expertise of the selector. Consequently, subjectivity will always remain an unavoidable element of selection.

6.2 When considering athletes for the Queensland Sapphires Team, the selectors shall consider the following core criteria in relation to the respective age group and alongside specifics required to fulfil the objectives of the program:

- a) Core playing competencies
  - Advanced technical skills;

- Developing tactical understanding and ability to read play;
- Developing consistency and accuracy of decision making under pressure;
- Sub-elite physical conditioning and competency;
- Advanced consistency of overall performance; and
- Demonstrates the potential to represent Queensland and/or Australia at the highest level.

b) Core personal competencies

- Responsibility – Driven to be the best, and committed to own personal development;
- Resilience – Bounces back from adversity, perseveres and adapts;
- Self - awareness – Recognises, manages and adapts own behaviour;
- Leadership – Leads by example and personifies NQ values;
- Coachability – Receives and acts on feedback in a calm and mature manner;
- Communication – Demonstrates open and honest communication.
- Ability to add positively to the team culture;

c) Additional considerations

- Balance of experience and emerging talent;
- Whether a player's performance through the selection period has been affected by extenuating circumstances such as, but not limited to illness, injury, bereavement, parental leave, work/study commitments or similar.
- Positional versatility and balance within the team;
- Past performances at previous events and/or within the HART Sapphire Series / Suncorp Super Netball or equivalent competition.

6.3 Consideration may also be given to any other factors that the selectors believe to be relevant to the overall assessment of a player and their fit within the specifics of the requirements of the Queensland Sapphires Team.

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## **7 Selection Principles**

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7.1 Deadlines for the confirmation of all Queensland Sapphires are set by Netball Australia each year. NQ will develop a selection timeline each year to meet the Netball Australia deadlines and requirements, and to comply with the selection process below.

7.2 NQ via a network of Talent Scouts, selectors and respected coaches will also scout various events identified on the NQ Pathways and Competitions document during the netball season across Queensland, identifying players for consideration for selection in Queensland Sapphires squad.

7.3 A player who has not competed in the HART Sapphire Series may still be considered for selection in the Queensland Sapphires Training Squad if they have been granted an exemption by NQ due to extenuating circumstances. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Representing Queensland or Australia in netball, or another sport;
- Injury or illness (impacting or limiting performance)

- Being committed to programs that pre-date the selection dates, such as major school/Uni commitments.
- relocating to Queensland after the HART Sapphire Series finals
- COVID-19 Queensland Government restrictions eg: border closure not allowing travel
- Any other reason agreed to by the Selection Panel

7.4 For the avoidance of doubt, only players 18 years or older in the year of the ANC may be selected in Queensland Sapphires prior to the ANC.

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## **8 Inability to Attend Final Selection Process**

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8.1 If an athlete is unable to attend any component of the Training Squad Program due to extenuating circumstances, they must provide NQ with written confirmation of the reason they are unable to attend and any requested supporting documentation (i.e. medical certificate, travel itinerary etc).

8.2 Players must also notify NQ High Performance Director or Queensland Sapphires Head Coach immediately if, due to injury, she is unable to train, prepare or participate in key selection dates. A player may be replaced in the Squad if not medically cleared to fully participate in any or all key selection dates.

8.3 If an athlete is unable to attend the final selection training program due to extenuating circumstances, they must provide NQ with written confirmation of the reason they are unable to attend and any requested supporting documentation (i.e. medical certificate, travel itinerary etc).

8.4 The NQ High Performance Director or Queensland Sapphires Head Coach will consider the legitimacy and relevance of extenuating circumstances and will determine if the player may be considered for selection.

8.5 It should be clear that if granted an exemption to attend any aspect of the selection process, it does not preclude any player from selection. It does however, deny them the opportunity to demonstrate their capabilities against their peers, in which case selectors will be required to rely on prior knowledge of the player which may or may not be current knowledge, and which may impact on their selection.

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## **9 Terms of Selection**

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9.1 Athletes selected in the Queensland Sapphires Team will be required to adhere to the following terms as part of their selection:

- fully comply with all relevant Netball Australia and NQ policies, procedures, regulations and guidelines;
- sign and return all relevant agreements and forms by the dates required;
- endeavour to develop and/or maintain a level of fitness and performance consistent with the requirements for this level of competition;
- attend and participate in all relevant training, matches, education and induction programs as directed by NQ;
- undertake any medical or fitness assessment as required by NQ;

f) complete all reviews and surveys as required by NQ.

9.2 Athletes that fail or are unable to comply with the general terms as set out above may be removed from the program.

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## **10 Replacement of Athletes**

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10.1 Athlete replacement may occur due to injury, illness, personal reasons, or failure to comply with the terms of selection, disciplinary action or any other reason deemed relevant by the selectors or NQ however the replacement must be genuine in nature.

10.2 A replacement athlete must fulfil the eligibility requirements as set out in clause 4.2 and 4.3. A replacement athlete must have been nominated by the Selection Panel and/or the Head Coach, and approved by the NQ High Performance Director.

10.3 If an athlete is withdrawn or withdraws from the Queensland Sapphires Training Squad prior to the Team being selected, the Selection Panel may nominate any athlete that participated in the HART Sapphire Series to replace the withdrawn player. Players granted an exemption to attend any of the above may also be considered. This athlete shall be eligible for selection in the final Team.

10.4 If an athlete is withdrawn or withdraws after the Final Team is selected, the Head Coach is primarily responsible for selecting the replacement player. This may be in consultation with the selection panel depending on the timing. The Head Coach/selectors will look initially to the training partners to replace the withdrawn player. If the Head Coach wishes to select a player outside of the training partner group, this must first be agreed with the NQ High Performance Director.

10.5 In addition to replacement players, a player or players may also be added to the Squad prior to the final selection of the Team if deemed necessary in the view of the majority of the selection panel for any reason including, but not limited to a perceived lack of depth across any playing position. Additional player/s may only be added to the squad with the prior approval of the NQ High Performance Director.

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## **11 Approval and Announcement of Squads**

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11.1 The Queensland Sapphire squad and team is subject to approval by the NQ High Performance Director.

11.2 Selection and appointment of Captains and Vice Captains are subject to approval by the NQ High Performance Director.

11.3 NQ will provide all athletes with written confirmation of their success in gaining selection to the Queensland Sapphires Training Squads. This written correspondence will be provided electronically the day before the formal announcement of the confirmed NQ Training Squads.



Athletes are required to maintain confidentiality of correspondence until after the formal announcement from NQ.

11.4 NQ will provide all athletes from the Queensland Sapphires Training Squad Program with written and verbal confirmation of their success or otherwise in gaining selection to a Queensland Sapphires Team. This written correspondence will be provided electronically the day prior to the formal announcement of the confirmed Teams. Athletes are required to maintain confidentiality of correspondence until after the formal announcement from NQ.

11.5 Formal announcement will be made via the NQ website and media release.

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## **12 Appeals**

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12.1 Athletes have the right to appeal their non-selection via the NQ Member Protection Policy.

12.2 All appeals will be dealt with through the NQ Member Protection Policy, specifically Attachment C5 – Hearings and Appeals Tribunal Process.

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## **13 Amendments to this Policy**

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13.1 From time to time, situations may arise in the selection process that are not accounted for in this Policy. Any decision outside of the boundaries of this policy may be approved by the NQ High Performance Director if deemed to be in the best interests of Netball Queensland.

13.2 Any requests for exemptions outside this policy can only be approved by the NQ High Performance Director.