



Athlete Welfare Framework

It gives us great pleasure to introduce the British Judo Athlete Welfare Framework. This document outlines how various processes, policies and roles protect and promote the welfare and overall wellbeing of all athletes within the British Judo system, particularly as they progress onto and through the performance pathway.

Prioritising the welfare and wellbeing of athletes is not a new consideration and reflects the core values which underpin the work of all within the association: Trust, Unity, Excellence, Integrity and Respect. However, athlete welfare has been brought under the spotlight recently, prompting the release of documents such as the Duty of Care in Sport report (Tanni-Grey Thompson, 2017) and the government Mental Health in Sport action plan (2018). British Judo welcomes an increased focus on athlete welfare and in response is striving to ensure that the welfare and wellbeing of all athletes not only meets standards but is world class.

World class athlete welfare will look different based on the age and stage of the athlete, but the simple principle is for all athletes to be safe, healthy and happy. This encompasses physically, mentally, emotionally and socially. Extra resources and attention are being invested to ensure this is the case across the organisation. British Judo is particularly mindful to ensure the level of support is appropriate for the level of challenge associated with the environment within which an athlete is operating. This means considering things such as the pressures of living away from home, full - time training programmes, frequent travelling to train and compete, pressures associated with funding and sponsorship and in many cases balancing all of this alongside part - time work or education. There is also the additional challenge of operating in a sport where success ultimately requires athletes to fight and defeat their opposition. This requires those supporting athletes to balance the creation and preparation of fighters whilst also safeguarding their welfare and wellbeing. British Judo firmly believe that, through robust coaching and appropriate support, this is achievable and that the two things are mutually exclusive. As such, athletes in our care will be rounded people able not only to cope, but rather to thrive both on and off the mat.



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Terminology

AWF	Athlete Welfare Framework
BJA	British Judo
CofE	Centre of Excellence
GB	Great Britain
HN	Home Nations
NGB	National Governing Body
PDMS	Performance Data Management System
PMG	Performance Management Group
PLT	Performance Leadership Team
PREHAB	Injury Prevention Work
PTA	Part – Time Academy
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
SSSM	Sport Science and Sports Medicine
WCPP	World Class Performance Programme
UAB	Un-Acceptable Behaviour

Referenced Policies and Strategies

There are several policies, strategies and frameworks in place which contribute to athlete welfare being safeguarded and protected throughout the performance pathway. The table below lists these and summarises their key information for each, which are available through the British Judo webpage.

#	Document	Applies to...	How does this promote athlete welfare?
1	Safe Landings (BJA Safeguarding Children Policy)	Anyone under the age of 18	Outlines the principles of safeguarding the welfare of those under 18, and what to do in breach of this
2	BJA Safeguarding Adults Policy	Anyone aged 18 and over	Outlines the principles of safeguarding the welfare of those over 18, and what to do in breach of this
3	GB squad/WCPP Code of Conduct	All junior and senior GB squad athletes and WCPP staff	Ensures that all staff and athletes are clear on the values of the GB squad and WCPP, and of the behaviours which are expected of them
4	BJA Whistleblowing Policy	NGB wide	Provides guidance on how to alert the appropriate people to unacceptable behaviours so that appropriate action can follow
5	Conduct and Complaints Policy	NGB wide	Provides a clear route for concerns over conduct to be raised and for complaints to be made
6	Fast Appeals Procedure	Applies to events/squads which are selected for	Provides the opportunity to appeal the selection process, which is outlined in selection criteria, should it be deemed inadequate
7	UAB policy	WCPP	Policy informed by UK Sport to define what acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is. Also outlines how unacceptable behaviour can be reported and will be dealt with.
8	ToR Athlete Representation	WCPP athletes	Provides an overview of how the athlete representatives and feedback sessions
9	Weight Management Policy	WCPP Junior and U23 athletes	Encourages safe weight making behaviours

10	WCPP Transition Strategy	Any athlete exiting the WCPP	Outlines what happens and what support is available for an athlete transitioning off the WCPP
11	Mental Health Strategy	Largely the WCPP but also extends beyond	Aims to increase knowledge, skill and awareness in athletes and staff around mental health and wellbeing
12	Anti – Doping Strategy	Across the performance pathway	Outlines who needs to know what, as well as when education will be delivered
13	Pathway Curriculum	Pre-cadet up until part-time academy	Clearly sets out who needs to know what with regards to anti-doping, nutrition, performance lifestyle skills

Setting the Scene...

This document is a roadmap to outline how athlete welfare is protected, promoted and prioritised at all stages of the British Judo performance pathway.

Whilst general safeguarding principles apply to all athletes on the pathway, and are outlined in the British Judo Safeguarding policies^{1 2}, athletes within the high-performance system and talent pathway operate within a unique and often challenging environment. This may result in them experiencing stressors and situations which are not necessarily accounted for in safeguarding principles and policies designed with the general population in mind. To reflect this, additional measures are required to ensure athlete welfare is safeguarded within such environments. This framework outlines these measures which act a bit like an umbrella which protect against possible compromises to athlete welfare.



¹ Safe landings (BJA safeguarding children policy)

² BJA Safeguarding Adults policy

This framework is intended for parents, coaches, support staff, officials, administrative staff, volunteers and all who interact with athletes, including athletes themselves. This is because **Athlete welfare is the responsibility of everyone** who works with, or who is associated with an athlete in any capacity. In order for athletes to thrive, duty of care principles need to be integrated across the system, and a collective responsibility of ensuring duty of care must be adopted by all stakeholders and guardians of athlete welfare.

Breaches of Welfare

To assist in the safeguarding of athlete welfare, it helps to be aware of possible threats. The figure below illustrates many factors which impact on an athlete’s welfare. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list.

Figure 1. Factors that promote or compromise welfare (adapted from British Athletics)



As highlighted above, welfare is a broad concept and will involve different things at various levels of the pathway. However, the importance and prioritisation of welfare applies at all stages and complements the BJA’s values: **Respect, Unity, Excellence, Trust and Integrity**.

These values are part of the codes of conduct which all staff and athletes within the performance system sign up to.³

These values underpin this athlete welfare framework which ultimately aims to ensure all athletes achieve optimal, positive states of well-being, welfare and health (both physical and mental) on and off the mat and for this to be sustainable. There are three key levels of operation which the framework focuses on to achieve this which are:

1) Culture and Environment

2) Athlete Representation

3) Athlete Support

The detail behind each of these will now follow.

³ BJA GB Code of Conduct

Underpinning some of the more structured processes within the athlete representation and support sections, a lot happens at a cultural or environmental level to ensure athlete welfare is optimised.

This includes:

Processes and Policies

It is important that the appropriate policies are not only in place but also that staff and athletes are aware and understand what they mean for them. These include the whistleblowing policy⁴, complaints procedure⁵, selection and appeals process⁶ and an Unacceptable Behaviour (UAB) Policy⁷.

Welfare Presence within Performance

The presence of the performance welfare officer in daily SSM, weekly performance, and other meetings means they can act as a 'check and challenger' and advocate for duty of care and welfare. As mentioned, this is the responsibility of all staff, but it is useful to have the perspective of a staff member who is not focused on the performance of the athletes to allow them to remain impartial, and to raise and spot things that may simply be overlooked by other staff members.

Awareness Days & Events

The performance welfare officer also organises awareness days for causes such as anti-bullying, visual impairment and mental health.

Team/Relationship Building

The performance welfare officer works with the athletes and with the PLT to organise group activities which promote a culture of fun and teamwork. These have been invaluable in promoting a positive culture which in turn promotes optimal levels of athlete welfare.

⁴ BJA Whistleblowing policy

⁵ Complaints procedure

⁶ Selection and Appeals procedure

⁷ Anti-Bullying Policy



Athlete Representation



What?

Athlete representation refers to the empowerment of athletes to have their voice heard and to the processes whereby athletes are involved in the design and the running of the programme, and in decisions made which affect them. This is facilitated by the performance welfare officer (PWO) who provides opportunities for athletes to have their voice heard and promotes athletes feeling able and confident to feedback about their programme and about the centre.

How?

Multiple opportunities to feedback have been implemented:

1-1s with Performance Welfare Officer

- For all WCPP athletes this will be a minimum of 3 times a year and can be arranged for Part-Time academy athletes during camps.
- Setting will ideally be confidential e.g office, a meeting room or possibly “walk and talk” meetings – ultimately wherever the athlete is most comfortable.
- PWO to keep notes (electronic) from 1-1s and to log any actions that arise, all of which are accessible to athletes should they wish to see them. Records maintained whilst athletes continue to hold a place on the WCPP and for 12 months following unless other arrangements are made.

Group Feedback Sessions

- These will take place 4 times each year and will be facilitated by the athlete reps and the PWO. This was decided by the athletes in an athlete session held October 2017.
- Minutes will be taken by the PWO and taken to the PLT by the athlete reps and/or the PWO to discuss, gain clarity, identify any actions and identify who will be responsible for actioning these.
- A Terms of Reference⁸ (ToR) document was created to outline the aims and process for these meeting.

⁸ ToR Athlete Representation

- **Focus Groups**

- From time to time there may be particular issues or topics which require further athlete insight. This may come from the athletes or the staff, and the PWO will facilitate these meetings and make records accordingly.

Athlete Reps

- Following a group feedback session in October 2017, it was decided that there would be a group of athlete representatives to take feedback from the wider group to the PLT and board.
- Athlete reps were self-nominated in a group feedback session, currently they are Kelly Staddon, Stuart McWatt and Jack Hodson.
- The athlete reps are responsible for checking the suggestion box and for passing on any other feedback received from athletes.
- They also have a dedicated email address: bjareps@gmail.com which can be used to contact them with any concerns, queries or feedback.

Concern Form on Website

- A section on the website is being developed for the PWO and the Performance Lifestyle Advisor to add content to associated with wellbeing.
- There will be a place on the website which will allow anyone to fill in a form to express a concern, complaint or ask for support.
- This will be maintained and checked by the PWO.

Recording and Tracking

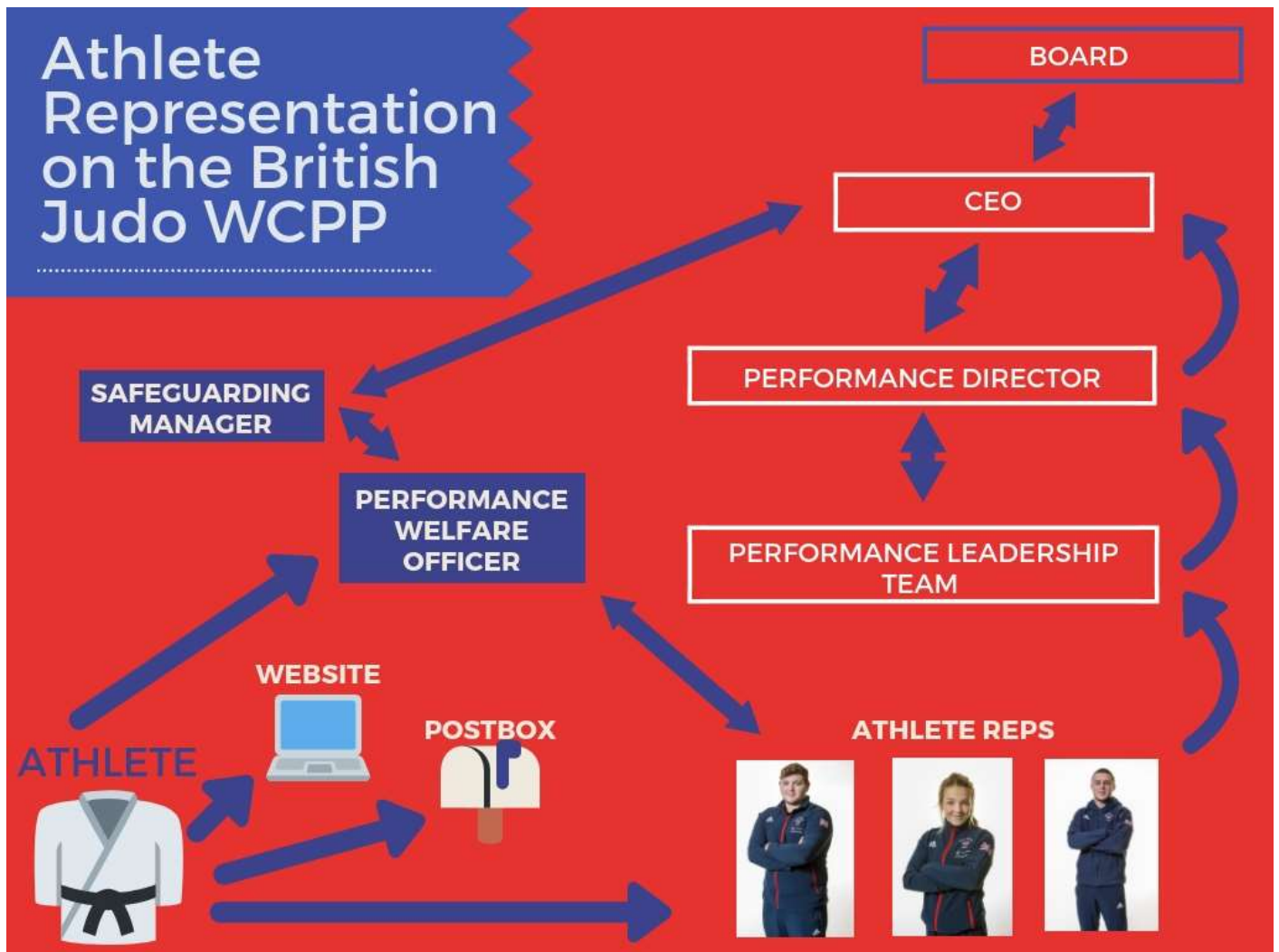
A centralised 'register' of all feedback, concerns, issues or complaints brought to the welfare officer through any means will be kept and reviewed monthly with the safeguarding manager to ensure all matters are dealt with satisfactorily and are raised again where appropriate.

Two Way Communication

The key which ties together everything within this section is that feedback and communication is two - way, and ongoing. If this is done well then it should be possible to see what actions have been taken off the back of feedback or information given. To illustrate how feedback is being listened to, and acted on where appropriately, there is a 'you said, we did board' displayed in the dojo with examples of how feedback has resulted in positive actions.

The figure below illustrates the channels of communication which promote athlete representation on the British Judo WCPP.

Figure 3. Athlete Representation on the British Judo WCPP





Athlete Support



What?

Varying levels of support are in place across the performance pathway to support the development of athletes and also to safeguard their health and wellbeing. The PWO works very closely with the Sport Science and Medicine (SSM) team as well as the pathway manager to identify where additional support may be needed and to assist in providing the support.

Tracking and Monitoring

Each morning there is a meeting with all SSM staff where the self-reported data input to the PDMS (Performance Data Management System) app by the athletes is reviewed. The data collected consists of training load data as well as wellbeing measures including:

- sleep duration
 - sleep quality
 - life stress and coping levels
 - muscle soreness
 - readiness to train
 - menstrual cycle
- Any relevant information including any red flags are passed onto the coaching team in case training that day requires adaptation. This is done on the “WCPP Athlete Management” WhatsApp group.
 - A member of the SSM team will also follow up on anything which requires attention, such as wellbeing or mental health indicators to check why each athlete may have flagged something up and explore how they can be supported.
 - A monthly report is also created to track training load and wellness data, which allows longer term patterns and trends to be identified and contributes to injury prevention.
 - Where patterns emerge the SSM team will identify the appropriate member of the team to follow up with the athlete.

Unavailable Athlete Management

Athletes may be unavailable for training or competitions for several reasons including physical or mental health, injury, behaviour and conduct, or due to the weight management policy⁹. It is important that these athletes are not left feeling forgotten or falling behind and that they are fully supported.

Upon an athlete initially becoming unavailable, a return to play plan (see appendix 2 for example) will then be put in place and athletes are encouraged to work with all members of the SSM team during their period of unavailability to allow them to return to play as soon as mentally or physically possible, and to ensure that they receive the necessary support during this period.

Transitions

Transitions refer to being in a state of change or flux, and athletes will experience several throughout their time within the performance pathway. Common transitions may include: entering the programme, moving to a new house, starting university or employment, change of coach, moving from one programme to another, success at major competitions, relationship changes, change in funding or sponsorship, injury, retiring from sport and many others.

All staff will offer support during these periods but the pathway manager, performance lifestyle advisor (PLA) and performance welfare officer (PWO) will work especially closely to ensure appropriate support is provided. A transition strategy¹⁰ exists which outlines the process and provision specifically related to when an athlete transitions off the WCPP. This includes transitional support from the PLA and the opportunity for an exit interview with the PWO which would normally take place 6 months post the start of the transition.

Education

Positive states of athlete welfare are facilitated by athletes being correctly informed and educated on areas such as anti-doping, mental health and wellbeing, nutrition, weight management, housekeeping. Again, the provision of support varies depending on the stage of the pathway. There are strategies and actions plans either in place or being developed to ensure the appropriate level of knowledge is developed for every athlete, including the mental health strategy¹¹ and anti-doping

⁹ Weight Management Policy

¹⁰ WCPP Transition Strategy

¹¹ Mental Health Strategy

strategy¹². There is also a curriculum¹³ for the pathway and home nations so that younger athletes, parents and coaches can see what knowledge is required at each stage.

¹² Anti-doping Strategy

¹³ Pathway curriculum



Welfare Across the Pathway



Whilst this framework, to begin with, is largely focused on and around the WCPP, the principles and values associated with the promotion and maintenance of athlete welfare apply across the performance pathway. The environmental challenges will generally be more prominent at the elite level, hence this framework has been established with the WCPP athletes in mind. However, the framework can be applied to the wider performance pathway where appropriate and the level of support can be tailored to the unique challenges of that particular stage.

It is important to set the tone early and to develop behaviours in athletes, coaches and parents which will continue to preserve the athlete's welfare as they progress through each stage of the pathway. To help progress this work, the PWO will work closely with HN staff as well as the Pathway Manager to co-ordinate on parent and coach education.

The PWO can also promote the principles of athlete welfare by attending key events for the HN/talent programmes. Just ensuring that athletes, parents and coaches are aware the role exists and having the means to contact someone will be an important step.

For clarity of the different stages of the pathway, an image is provided below.



Appendix 2 Example RTP (Return To Play) Document

Rehabilitation programme outline																							
Calendar Week	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51
Post Injury	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Date	16/07/2018	23/07/2018	30/07/2018	06/08/2018	13/08/2018	20/08/2018	27/08/2018	03/09/2018	10/09/2018	17/09/2018	24/09/2018	01/10/2018	08/10/2018	15/10/2018	22/10/2018	29/10/2018	05/11/2018	12/11/2018	19/11/2018	26/11/2018	03/12/2018	10/12/2018	17/12/2018
Phase	Protective						Stability and hypertrophy						Frontal/ transverse stability/ strength/ plyos				Judo specific, power				Monitored randori		
Sling	In sling for daily living, out for exercises						? Strapping						None				None				None		
WB level	No use of elbow at all						Progress to full						FWB				FWB				FWB		
Overview	Protect, keep mobile, prevent increased tone in biceps/ brachialis						Control under load through full ROM Sagittal hypertrophy work						Begin technical progressions Add speed component to stability work Strength phase				Transition towards full unrestricted Judo				Integration to full randori		
Mobility	As pain allows						Full ROM						Maintain ROM Full supination/ pronation at elbow				Full program				Maintenance		
Stability & Capacity	NWB CKC exercises Active ROM (flex/ext - pro/sup at 90deg flexion) Light proprioception work Short lever kinteic chain work						Elbow flexion and extension capacity (build to long lever) Wrist and shoulder capacity (elbow safe) Press up progressions AVOID PRONATION IN EXTENSION						Non- sagittal progressions Throw and catch drills Plyometric work Pull up work				Maintain				Maintain/ use as activation		
Conditioning	Avoid use of arm						Bike and running						With caution to become unrestricted all UL conditioning				Unrestricted				Unrestricted		
Strength	None						Lowers and opposite arm						Utilise elbow fully during S&C				Full S+C Content				Full S+C Content		
Performance Lifestyle	Use this time to do some explorative career development work - understand yourself more, strengths, weaknesses, likes, dislikes, interests etc						Continue to work on career development - Careers HQ etc						Identify any suitable courses/personal development opportunities linked to interests				Enroll on and complete suitable course/experience - gain knowledge, skills, experience during this time.						
Judo	Shadow work. Use of right arm only, avoid L arm contact						Shadow work. Use of right arm only ** avoid L arm contact						Rope work Standing gripping Uchi-komi (controlled)				Hand-stand work Throwing work Nage komi Progress to randori				Randori		
Outcome Measures	Uninterrupted healing						By end of phase - full ROM No swelling/ pain HHD 75% for elbow flexion/ extension Work capacity 80%						Maintain ROM No swelling HHD 90%				Maintain ROM No swelling HHD 100%				All OM maintained Pain free randori		
							Grip strength 85%						Grip strength 95%				Grip strength 100%						
							Comfortable performing press up/ walks						Unrestricted patterns push/pull										