

## ***Playing for England – the Performance Pathway***

***If you want to play netball for England it will take a great deal of hard physical work. Being talented is not enough, and only players with the right attitude to training and playing will make it to the top.***

The Netball Excel Pathway is the England Netball process for developing athletes with the attributes to attain excellence. The programmes within the pathway are focused on developing athletes to reach their potential and form the foundations to enable England Netball to be the Number 1 Ranked Team in the World.

These programmes provide performance-enhancing training for individuals, not squads. Competition is outside the Excel Pathway Programmes, in clubs (local leagues, county leagues and regional leagues) and (but not only) school competition.

### **The National Excel Pathway**

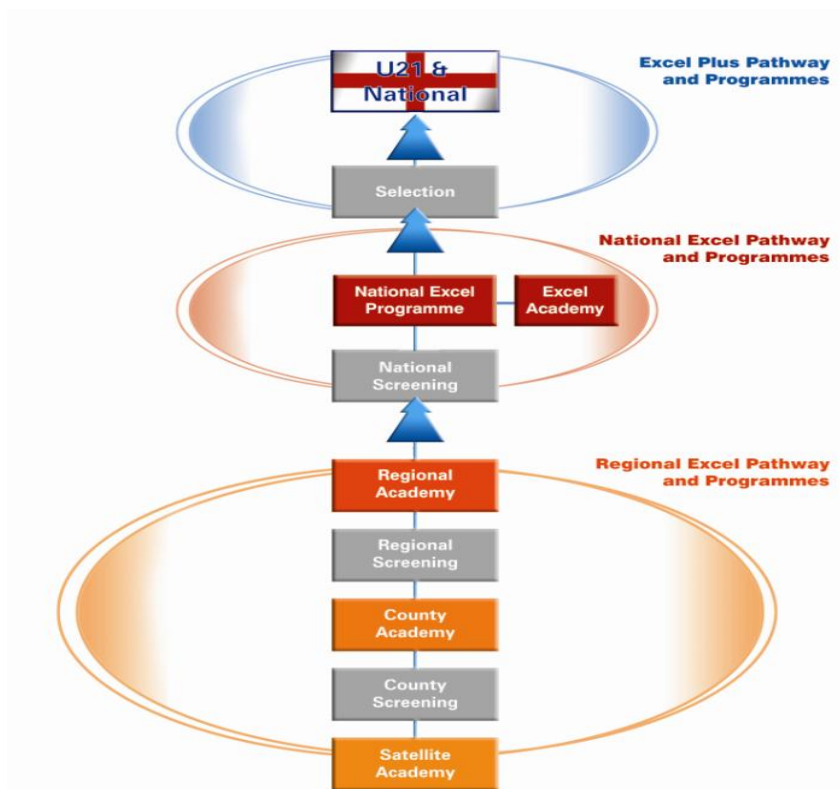
This area of the pathway consists of the National Excel Programme (U17 & U19) which progresses into the Excel Plus Programme (U21 & National Squad).

### **The Regional Excel Pathway**

This area of the pathway consists of 3 progressive programmes:

- Satellite Academy – owned by the county
- County Academy – owned by the county
- Regional Academy – owned by the region

All programmes are in place across the country and sessions are delivered against the Excel Guidelines.



## County-owned Academies

The first steps on the Excel Pathway are the Satellite and County Academies which are targeted at U14 (Satellite) and 14 - 16+ (County) netball players who have been identified as having the potential to play netball at a higher level in the future. Some counties also have a Development Academy which sits just below the Satellite and County Academies. From a Development Academy you could be nominated to trial for either a Satellite or County Academy.

The aim of the Satellite and County Academies is to give players the quality individual coaching support they need to help them achieve their full potential. Sessions take place within your county. The sessions educate players on how to train with regards to fitness, skills work and goal setting, as well as many other aspects necessary to become an elite athlete. Players are required to keep a training log of how often they train, types of training and how often they participate in sport.

### ***Trials***

Entry into Satellite and County Academies is through a trial or other screening process. Only those athletes who are willing to commit to the Academy programme, work hard at the sessions, train hard between the sessions, and implement their new knowledge should trial for a place in a Satellite or County Academy. Additionally, all those entering the trials must first be nominated and it is strongly recommended that the nomination comes from a Club Coach or PE Teacher who has completed the Excel Talent Id Workshop. Further, it is important that Academy athletes are members of a Netball Club or are prepared to join one.

The format of Satellite and County Academy trials may well include a significant amount of match-play but selection is NOT based on positional play so no-one should be disappointed because they have taken to the court in a second or even third choice position. Every moment in a trial situation should be viewed as an opportunity to demonstrate individual skills and attributes.

For Satellite Academy selectors will be looking for the following skills and attributes:

<b>C</b>	<b>CONTROL and BALANCE:</b> Can walk, run, sprint, jump and land in a controlled and balanced manner.
<b>A</b>	<b>ATHLETICISM:</b> Shows appropriate strength, speed, agility & endurance.
<b>P</b>	<b>PASSING and CATCHING:</b> Can pass to a stationary & moving player. Catches 1- or 2-handed, stationary / moving.
<b>T</b>	<b>TIMES MOVEMENT:</b> Can move to get free. Can move to win the ball.
<b>I</b>	<b>INFLUENCING THE GAME:</b> Listens to instructions. Contributes to the group with enthusiasm and determination.
<b>V</b>	<b>VARIETY:</b> Shows some variety in movement & passing skills.
<b>E</b>	<b>EXPLOITS SPACE:</b> Awareness of other players and the space through the court.

For County Academy selectors will be looking for the following skills and attributes:

<b>C</b>	<b>CONTROL and BALANCE:</b> Can walk, run, sprint, jump and land in a controlled and balanced manner whilst catching and releasing the ball.
<b>A</b>	<b>ATHLETICISM:</b> Can vary speed with ease. Demonstrates strength and agility under pressure from another player.
<b>P</b>	<b>PASSING and CATCHING:</b> Can pass with accuracy. Can pass from both sides of body. Can pass around a 3ft mark.
<b>T</b>	<b>TIMES MOVEMENT:</b> Can time their movement to get free. Can time their movement to win the ball.
<b>I</b>	<b>INFLUENCING THE GAME:</b> Can apply instructions. Perseveres in challenging situations.
<b>V</b>	<b>VARIETY:</b> Can apply a variety of movement skills – forwards/ backwards/angles.
<b>E</b>	<b>EXPLOITS SPACE:</b> Can select appropriate space to receive a pass. Starting to create or close down space.

### ***Academies Festival***

Players in Satellite and County Academies are not representing their county; they are there as individuals because they have potential, demonstrate a passion for netball, and show a desire to at the highest levels: to be the best they can be. There are no formal fixtures for Satellite and County Academy athletes aside from the Academies Festival which takes place towards the end of the season. Only selected athletes are invited to perform at the Academies Festival so all Satellite and County Academy athletes should be working hard through the season to be one of the selected athletes.

Even at the Academies Festival each athlete is there as an individual and not as a representative of their county or academy; teams will be made up of athletes from across the South region. The aim is to simulate trial situations where athletes have to demonstrate their skills and attributes alongside players they may not know and to take on-board coaching tips from coaches they may not know; this may include playing in different positions as the coach deems appropriate.

### ***PDP***

From the Academies Festival selected athletes are invited to attend the Player Development Program (PDP) where they are offered a series of coaching days intended to introduce each athlete to the higher-intensity training required at the next level. Not all PDP participants will have been in a Satellite or County Academy; some will have been scouted through the rounds and finals of the National Schools Competition.

From PDP selected athletes will be invited to trial for a place in the Regional Academy. These athletes will trial alongside those that have just completed a year in the Regional Academy.

### **Satellite Academy**

This is the first entrance into the Excel Pathway and the focus is on the individual development. This stage coincides with peak motor learning, therefore athletes are learning how to train and develop the skills of Netball. They are also learning the basic technical/tactical skills, and ancillary capacities including:

- Warm-up & cool-down
- Stretching
- Hydration and nutrition
- Recovery
- Relaxation and focusing

Although the focus is on the training and skill development, competition should be used to test and refine skills. The training to competition ratio is 75% to 25%. Athletes should be competing in appropriate club (local leagues, county leagues and regional leagues) and (but not only) school competition.

One of the main reasons athletes plateau during the later stages of their career is because of the over-emphasis on competition and not developing a range of skills during this very important stage.

*How do you get into the Satellite Academy; how long can you stay and where do you go afterwards?*

- Entry to the Satellite Academy is through a screening process: you must be nominated to trial. This applies even if you have already had a year in a Satellite Academy as there is no automatic entry.
- An athlete may spend between 6 months to 2 years at this stage. Progression is selection into the County Academy OR into the Regional Academy.
- The aim of a Satellite Academy athlete is to be selected by your Satellite Academy Coach to attend the Academies Festival. At the Festival you will be observed by a team of scouts, selectors, and coaches. From the Festival, selected athletes will be invited to attend Netball South's PDP (Player Development Programme) which takes place during the summer following the Festival. At the PDP sessions, coaches & selectors will have a further opportunity to observe skills development & basic understanding; from here selected athletes will be invited to attend the Regional Academy trials.
- Those who are not selected to go to the Academies Festival, or to the PDP, or to the Regional Academy trials may be advised to re-trial for their Satellite or County Academy.
- However, if the athlete has reached their potential at Satellite Academy it is recommended that they continue to train and play at club level.

### **County Academy**

This is the next step on the Excel Pathway and whilst the emphasis remains on training and skill development with competition being used to test and refine skills, the focus is on working with another player.

*How do you get into the County Academy; how long can you stay and where do you go afterwards?*

- Entry to the Hampshire County Academy is through a screening process: you must be nominated to trial. This applies even if you have already had a year in a County Academy as there is no automatic entry.
- Athletes do not have to have been in a Satellite Academy to trial for a place in the County Academy.
- An athlete may spend between 6 months to 2 years at this stage. Progression is selection into the Regional Academy.
- The aim of a County Academy athlete is to be selected by your County Academy Coach to attend the Academies Festival. At the Festival you will be observed by a team of scouts, selectors, and coaches. From the Festival, selected athletes will be invited to attend Netball South's PDP (Player Development Programme) which takes place during the summer following the Festival. At the PDP sessions, coaches & selectors will have a further opportunity to observe skills development & basic understanding; from here selected athletes will be invited to attend the Regional Academy trials.
- Those who are not selected to go to the Academies Festival, or to the PDP, or to the Regional Academy trials may be advised to re-trial for their Satellite or County Academy.
- However, if the athlete has reached their potential at County Academy it is recommended that they continue to train and play at club level.

***The 2011/2012 Hampshire Academy sessions take place on a Wednesday evening from 7 – 9 in the sports hall at the University of Winchester (Satellite & County alternate).***

***To find out more about the process for being selected for your local Satellite/County Academy please contact the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Netball Development Officer: Emily Loftus [emily.loftus@englandnetball.co.uk](mailto:emily.loftus@englandnetball.co.uk)***

### **Regional Academy**

This next step on the Excel Pathway is owned by the Region. Training takes place at one or more venues in the Region: these may be outside your county and will mean additional travel and time to attend sessions.

At this stage the focus is on athlete conditioning, individual skills development, and technical training & understanding. The emphasis remains on training with competition used to test and refine skills.

The aim of the Regional Academy is to progress athletes to the upper levels of the Excel Pathway via the national screening process to the elite programmes for England Teams. Also, it is expected that the RA athletes will develop to form the foundations of the Netball Talent League squads.

*How do you get into the Regional Academy; how long can you stay and where do you go afterwards?*

- Entry to the Netball South Regional Academy is through a screening process: you must be nominated to trial. This applies even if you have already had a year in a Regional Academy as there is no automatic entry.
- It is not always necessary for athletes to have been in a Satellite nor County Academy but must have been invited to attend Netball South's PDP (Player Development Program) (e.g. through being scouted/identified during the rounds & finals of the National Schools Competition).
- Under normal circumstances an athlete may spend up to two years at the Regional Academy. However, this does not necessarily mean progression to the next stage so if, *after this time*, an athlete fails to achieve a nomination to national screening she will be advised to seek further development at club level, competing in regional league and/or national premier league.

***The 2011/2012 Regional Academy sessions take place at three different venues across the South region:***

- ***Winchester – on a Monday evening 6 – 8pm***
- ***Watlington – on a Monday evening 7 – 9pm (moving to Rye St Antony in 2012)***
- ***Chichester – on a Wednesday evening 7 – 9pm***

***If you have any questions about the Regional Academy or generally on the performance pathway please contact the South Region Excel Coach: Elly Moore [elly.moore@englandnetball.co.uk](mailto:elly.moore@englandnetball.co.uk)***