# **INTERNATIONAL TEAM SELECTION POLICY**

## Introduction / Background

### Eligibility to Represent England

To be eligible to play in an ECA Championship or to represent England in a WCF Championship, a curler must have been either:

i) born in England

OR

ii) must have a parent born in England

OR

iii) must have been ordinarily resident in England for a continuous period of at least two years immediately prior to the date of the ECA Championship or the WCF Championship

AND as well as one of the above

iv) must be a Full Member of the ECA.

“Ordinarily resident in England” is defined as a person who has their main home in England, who is registered with a medical practitioner in England and who has been resident in England for a minimum of 6 months out of the last 12.

The Council may call for such evidence of qualification as it may think fit.

No person who has represented another country, which is a member of the WCF, in a WCF Championship shall be eligible to play for England until at least two calendar years after their last representative appearance for that other country.

The above eligibility rules do not apply to those seeking to represent Great Britain in the Olympic or Paralympic Games, which is governed by the regulations of the International Olympic and Paralympic Committees.

### World Context

The English Curling Association (ECA) enters a number of teams into Championships organised by the World Curling Federation (WCF) – this is in line with its objective stated in the Constitution “....to ensure that English curling is represented in International competitions...”. The ultimate aim in each case is to have a team playing in the World Championship for each group.

The routes to the individual World Championships are different but basically there are three variations as shown on Figure 1:

* via a Regional Championship and then either direct from there or via a World Qualifier (Men and Women)
* direct, or via a World Qualifier (Junior Men and Women, Wheelchair, Mixed Doubles)
* direct (Senior Men and Women, Mixed)

The WCF send out entry forms to Member Associations (MA) a number of months before the WCF Championships, and this may also be before the respective ECA Championship has been played. At this stage a confirmation of an entry from an MA is all that is required, with details regarding team members being an optional inclusion. Once the WCF entry date has passed an MA which withdraws from the WCF Championship will be penalised financially and, if it is a persistent offender, will be barred from entering any WCF Championship for a period of time. The penalties in 2020 are as follows:

* 1st withdrawal from any event = USD 1,000
* 2nd withdrawal (over a fixed period of 3 years, any events) = USD 2,000
* 3rd withdrawal (over a fixed period of 3 years, any events) = USD 3,000 plus a potential ban for all events of the following season.
* After a 3rd withdrawal the MA will be informed that a potential ban is to be discussed and the MA shall have the opportunity to inform the WCF Board of any mitigating circumstance. The Board will then make a decision on whether a ban is appropriate. The MA would have the right of an appeal to the Annual General Assembly (of the WCF).

It is important therefore that the ECA has in place an effective team selection policy which will be able to react to varying circumstances that may arise during a season.

About 6 weeks before the WCF Championship various forms are sent out by the WCF to MA secretaries to confirm details of who is actually representing them in the WCF Championship. The main team registration / release agreement form, which has to be returned with details of the team members, has to be counter-signed by the ECA Secretary or President before being submitted to the WCF by the Secretary. In certain instances, the time between the issue of these forms and the Championship may be less than 6 weeks when consecutive championships follow each other closely in the calendar, e.g. European Championship and World Qualifying Event.

### ECA Championships

To select teams to participate in the WCF Championships the ECA holds a Championship each season for each group.

The one exception to this is for wheelchair curling where the selection of a team to compete in the WCF Championships is the responsibility of the English Wheelchair Curling Association (EWCA).

Entry to an ECA Championship is made via an entry form accompanied by the designated Entry Fee. The entry form for team events must contain the names of at least three ECA Regular Members; for the Mixed Doubles there must be two names listed (one male and one female).

Changes or additions to the names submitted on the entry form, and confirmation of the full team line-up must be notified in writing / by email to the Competitions Convenor and Chief Umpire at least 24 hours before the start of an ECA Championship (the start of a Championship is defined as the time listed for the beginning of official pre-Championship practice or for the beginning of the pre-game practice for the first session of play, if there is no official pre-Championship practice) at which point at least 4 (2 in Mixed Doubles) players must be registered. No changes will be allowed after this time except in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Competitions Convenor or Chief Umpire. If a team requires to use a coach during the championship their identity must be declared to the Chief Umpire no later than the end of the pre-championship team meeting.

Team selection – teams of 4/5

The default position is that the team winning the ECA Championship as defined at the start of the competition will be selected to represent England in all of the respective WCF Championship(s) in the forthcoming season for that group. Note that some or all of these WCF Championships may take place the season after the ECA Championship has been played.

The team which is entered for a WCF World Qualifier, as identified in Figure 1, will be expected to represent England in the subsequent WCF World Championship if it qualifies. If this team which played in the World Qualifier is unable to do so then the Team Selection Process described above will be initiated.

If only one team enters a particular ECA Championship then that team will be selected to represent England in the respective WCF Championship.

An announcement of the selected team for each WCF Championship will be made publicly as soon as it has been confirmed and registered with the WCF.

### Selection of alternative team if required

There are a number of scenarios where the ECA Council may need to be involved in the selection of an alternative team to participate in the WCF Championship.

Any proposed change or additions to the team which won the ECA Championships must be approved by the ECA Council before the team registration / release agreement form for the WCF Championship is signed-off and submitted. The only exception will be in cases of *force majeure* after this date.

##### **Changes to the Winning Team**

There are occasions where changes are required or requested to the team which wins the ECA Championship:

* when proposed changes to the winning team after an ECA Championship are requested.

### Changes to the winning team after an ECA Championship

If one member of the winning team is unable to participate in the WCF Championship and a replacement is required, or if a 5th player has to be added to a previously registered 4 person team, then the skip or coach of the team should inform the ECA Secretary of the identity of that person. The Secretary will inform the Council of the change / addition and if no objection is received from a Council member with 72 hours then the change will be agreed.

If two or more members of the winning team are unable to participate then the skip or coach of the team must apply to the ECA Secretary by email or post no later than 2 months before the start of the WCF Championship. If the time between Championships is less than 2 months then a suitable date will be agreed between the team and the ECA Secretary. The submission from the team must specify the new line-up and must include a full explanation of why the change is being requested and how any issues with respect to uniform will be resolved.

The Secretary will, within 2 days of the receipt of the request, circulate the request and any additional background information to all of the ECA Council and will form a Panel of 5 ECA Council members, chaired by the Secretary and including 4 others drawn at random. The Panel shall exclude any Council member who has a conflict of interest – for example if they are in any of the teams affected by this matter: the winning team or any team which might otherwise be selected in its place. If the secretary declares a conflict of interest then the President will chair the panel, and if he is unable to do so then the Vice President or any other non-conflicted Member of the Council. The Panel will reach their decision and report back to the ECA Council within 72 hours unless they require additional information from the team. The decision on the proposed change will be by majority and any non-reply from a Panel member will be taken as approval.

The team will be notified within 24 hours of the Council’s decision and may appeal the decision within 48 hours of its receipt. If no appeal is forthcoming within that time period then it will be assumed that the Council’s decision has been accepted.

If the decision by the Council is against the changes and no appeal is made then the Council will select an alternative team within 72 hours of the end of the appeal period in line with the principles outlined below.

##### **Unavailability of a team**

There are occasions where no winning team from an ECA Championship is available to send to the WCF Championship:

* withdrawal of the winning team after an ECA Championships, and
* when no ECA Championship is held.

### Withdrawal of the winning team after an ECA Championship

If the full winning team wishes to withdraw from its commitment to represent England in the WCF Championship after it has been selected then it must inform the ECA Secretary as soon as possible so that an alternative team can be selected. The reasons for this action must be submitted to the ECA Secretary and sanctions may be taken against the team if the reasons are assessed by the ECA Council to be trivial.

An alternative team will be selected by the ECA Council in line with the principles outlined below.

### ECA Championship not held

If for any reason it is not possible to organise an ECA Championship for a particular group before a team has to be selected for the WCF Championship then the team which was selected for the respective WCF Championship in the previous season will be selected, as long as 3 members in the team or both players in an MD pair are able to participate and are still eligible. If the previously selected team is unable to meet these requirements then the ECA Council will select a team in line with the principles outlined below.

### Principles of Selection of Alternative Team

When considering the selection of an alternative team to represent England in a WCF Championship a number of points will be considered by the ECA Council in this process, including:

* the finishing positions in the respective ECA Championship;
* evidence of results in International competitions;
* accumulation of points in International ranking lists:
	+ WCF World Team Ranking;
	+ European Junior Curling Tour Ranking (for junior teams);
	+ World Curling Tour Ranking, and
	+ Scottish Curling Tour ranking
* the availability of eligible teams from other groups, and
* the time available to equip the team with the required ECA team uniform and meet other WCF requirements.

A guiding principle will be that any replacement team should have played together in an ECA Championship or other competitions on a regular basis. Selection of a team of individuals from different teams by the ECA Council will be a matter of last resort if all other avenues to select an existing team have failed.

## Team selection process – Mixed Doubles

The general principles which are described above in the selection of a 4/5 man team for a WCF Championship will apply to Mixed Doubles with the following variations:

### Changes to the winning team after an ECA Championship

In the event of any one member of the winning pair from an ECA Mixed Doubles Championship being unable to participate in the WCF Championship, the pair will be replaced in that WCF Championship by another pair.

The only exception will be an allowance for the re-insertion of a player who was originally on the entry form for the ECA Championship but was substituted before the beginning of the ECA Championship by reason of illness or injury. Only one of the players may be replaced in this way.

## Changes to a Team in a *Force Majeure* situation

After the team registration form for a WCF Championship has been submitted then further changes can only be made to the team if a *force majeure* situation arises. The time to resolve the issue may be extremely limited and so it may be necessary to short-cut the procedures described above and there may be elements of the process which have a different priority. These include:

* the availability of replacement player(s) at short notice;
* the availability of compliant England clothing for a replacement player(s);
* the costs involved and their affordability;

Unless otherwise conflicted the decision on the validity of the *force majeure* and the need for and the identity of replacement player(s) will be a matter for the ECA President, Vice President, Secretary and Competitions Convenor to resolve through discussions with the team Skip and Coach. If any of the above Council Members declare an interest then they shall be replaced by another Member of the Council. A decision on the identity of replacement player(s) will be communicated to the whole ECA Council as soon as it has been made and publicly announced as soon as possible.

## Cancellation of WCF Event(s)

When a WCF Championship is cancelled for reasons outside the control of the ECA after the team to represent England has been chosen then that team loses its automatic right to represent England if a further ECA Championships takes place before the next staging of the WCF Championship.

**Figure 1**

