

GIANTS Netball Academy and QBE Swifts Academy

Selection Policy for 2026 Programs

As at 14 August 2025

Vision

GIANTS Netball Academy and QBE Swifts Academy leading the way in Australian netball in creating cultures of excellence that will result in GIANTS Netball and NSW Swifts with full rosters of home grown athletes playing each other in the grand final of the Suncorp Super Netball and inspiring young athletes throughout NSW to strive to achieve their netball dream.

Purpose

- For Academies to work in partnership with Netball NSW and Netball Australia to maximise results.
- For Academies to have independence and autonomy in creating programs and culture.
- For Academies to establish a performance support framework that is progressive and holistic and provides the right support to athletes at the right time.
- For Academies to provide a program that includes strength and conditioning, physiotherapy, physical competency testing, performance analysis and athlete wellbeing.
- For Academies to implement technical and tactical programs to impact athlete performance.

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

- That NSW athletes who demonstrate high performance potential and desire have the support to progress on the NSW performance pathway and ultimately be contracted into the SSN competition
- That GIANTS Netball and NSW Swifts have a succession plan for NSW talent to be contracted into their teams
- An alignment of long-term athlete development across all Netball NSW performance programs
- Transparency in process

Selection

1 Athlete eligibility

1.1 To be eligible for selection athletes must:

- a) Be a current financial member of Netball NSW
- b) Aged between 18yrs (born 2008) and 25 (born 2001)
- c) Reside in NSW
- d) Be strong performers in the Netball NSW Premier League competition, State Teams, Emerging programs or similar standard programs

1.2 Netball NSW may grant an exemption to an ineligible player if that player has the clear potential to be considered a future SSN player.

2 Selection Panels

2.1 The selection panel for the GIANTS Netball Academy shall comprise:

- a) Convenor – Executive General Manager of GIANTS Netball
- b) GIANTS Netball Academy Head Coach
- c) GIANTS Netball Head Coach
- d) GIANTS Netball Assistant Coach /GIANTS Netball Academy Performance Manager

2.2 The selection panel for the QBE Swifts Academy shall comprise:

- a) Convenor – Executive General Manager of NSW Swifts
- b) QBE Swifts Academy Head Coach
- c) NSW Swifts Head Coach
- d) NSW Swifts Assistant Coach /QBE Swifts Academy Performance Manager

2.3 Additional delegates may be appointed to the selection panels as required at the discretion of the relevant Convenor.

2.4 The role of each Academy Convenor is to oversee the selection process, facilitate discussions and ensure that the selection policy and processes are carried out with confidentiality, objectivity, integrity and respect.

3 GIANTS Netball Academy and QBE Swifts Academy Selection Process

The selection process requires panels to assess the perceived standard of an individual player against the criteria set by the GIANTS Academy and QBE Swifts Academy. It is acknowledged that despite the experience and expertise of the selection panels there is an element of subjectivity. There will be extremely difficult choices to be made which will require the Selection Panel to exercise their discretion and judgement. Providing the Panel has properly followed the Policy below and exercised their discretion and judgement in good faith, the Panel will have fulfilled its obligations under this Policy.

- 3.1 The GIANTS Netball Academy and QBE Swifts Academy will offer up to 10 athlete scholarships by Date October 3, 2026. This number of athletes will exclude Training Partners, however dates for Training Partners is at the discretion of each club.
- 3.2 Up to a maximum of 5 GIANTS Netball training partners and up to a maximum of 5 NSW Swifts training partners will be additional athletes within each Academy.
- 3.3 Subject to clause 3.11, Academies will not invite additional athletes to train or join their programs on a regular basis.
- 3.4 Non-scholarship athletes and Waratah Academy (EAP) athletes may be invited to participate in an Academy training sessions from time to time at the request of the Academy Head Coaches or Academy Performance Managers with GM Performance & Pathways. Where possible, consideration should be given to EAP athletes or athletes who submitted an expression of interest for their Academy and were not selected.
- 3.5 If Academies did not select the maximum number of athletes, they may offer a scholarship to an athlete who submitted an expression of interest for their Academy to join their Academy program at a later time.
- 3.6 The Executive General Manager of the relevant Academy must notify the General Manager Performance & Pathways of any proposed changes to the approved Squad prior to an offer of scholarship.
- 3.7 If Academies did not select the maximum number of athletes and identify a player with SSN potential outside of the recruitment period who did not submit an expression of interest for their Academy the Executive General Manager of the relevant Academy must seek approval from the General Manager Performance & Pathways prior to an offer of scholarship.

- 3.8 Each Academy is allowed to request the inclusion of up to two (2) overage athletes. These athletes will be counted in the Academy's final roster only if their inclusion is deemed necessary for development of their academy with future SSN potential. This request with need to be sent to NNSW CEO & GM Performance & Pathways.
- 3.9 Any athlete within the Waratah Academy (EAP) group can be asked to attend a training session where required from the GIANTS Netball Academy and QBE Swifts Academy throughout the year in consultation with the General Manager of Performance & Pathways.
- 3.10 These athletes will stop training with the EAP group after the 2026 Nationals unless they are selected in a Netball Australia squad for 2026/27.
- 3.11 Where an athlete who currently holds a scholarship in an Academy sustains a significant injury they can be invited to remain in the Academy for 1 year to access rehabilitation and return to court support. This athlete can be additional to the maximum number of 16 athletes.

Scholarship period

- 3.12 The date for finalisation of the Academy programs will be determined by both Academies when the 2026 competition and National Camp schedules have been finalised.
- 3.13 Athletes who are categorised at the 2026 National Championships or who are selected in a National Squad must remain in an Academy or EAP until national selection has been completed following the 2026 Nationals Championships.

4 Expression of interest

- 4.1 All athletes wishing to be considered for selection into the GIANTS Netball Academy and/or QBE Swifts Academy must submit an expression of interest to Netball NSW.
- 4.2 Athletes currently on scholarship are also required to complete an Expression of Interest.
- 4.3 Expression of Interest applications will open on September 1, 2025 and will close on September 15, 2025.
- 4.4 Expressions of Interest applications submitted after the EOI period should be submitted to the General Manager Performance & Pathways for consideration.
- 4.5 It should be noted that late submissions will limit the ability of selection panels to assess their performance (as outlined in clause 7).
- 4.6 The process for submitting an Expression of Interest registration will be available on the Netball NSW website.

- 4.7 All submissions will be collected and collated by the Netball NSW Performance & Pathways team and reports will be forwarded to each Academy on a weekly basis during the EOI period.

5 Assessment

- 5.1 The GIANTS Netball Academy and QBE Swifts Academy will independently determine the assessment criteria for selection into their Academies.
- 5.2 The GIANTS Netball Academy and QBE Swifts Academy selection panel will review athlete performance in match play and video footage.
- 5.3 The selection panels will also consider previous performance.
- 5.4 The GIANTS Netball Academy and QBE Swifts Academy selection panels are not obliged to provide feedback to athletes.

6 Renewal and release of current scholarship athletes

- 6.1 The GIANTS Netball Academy and QBE Swifts Academy selection panels can offer to renew the scholarship of any athlete currently in their Academy for 1 year in the period from September 1, 2025 to September 15, 2025.
- During this period, it is an expectation that GIANTS Netball Academy and QBE Swifts Academy selection panels will only discuss contracts with athletes currently within their Academy.
- 6.2 Once an athlete has signed a 2026 athlete agreement, the renewal process is complete.
- 6.3 On September 15, 2025 the Executive General Managers from both Academies will provide the General Manager of Performance & Pathways with a list of athletes who have signed 2026 scholarships.

7 Recruiting period

- 7.1 The GIANTS Netball Academy and QBE Swifts Academy selection panel can offer scholarships to any athlete who has been released from the alternate Academy or who has submitted an Expression of Interest for their Academy from September 17, 2025 to October 3 2025.
- 7.2 Final squad lists be submitted to the Netball NSW General Manager Performance & Pathways no later than October 3, 2025.
- 7.3 The GIANTS Netball Academy and QBE Swifts Academy 2025 squad lists will be sent to successful and unsuccessful athletes after October 6, 2025 and then posted on the Netball NSW website.

8 Review and update of policy and process in 2026

- 8.1 A committee including the GIANTS Netball Academy Performance Manager, QBE Swifts Academy Performance Manager, Netball NSW General Manager Performance & Pathways and Netball NSW Competitions Manager will convene following 2026 National Netball Championships to review the policy and determine the schedule of dates for 2026 selection.

2026 SSN Academies - Selection timeline

9.00am-Monday 1 Sep	Expression of Interest Open
5pm -Friday 19 Sep	Expression of Interest Close
Open Mon 1 Sep– Close Monday 15 Sep	Renewal of scholarships within Academies Academy coaches can offer - Current athletes a renewal of scholarship for 1 year - Current scholarship athletes can speak to both Academies within this time to discuss options from both programs, however only current scholarships can be offered throughout this time. - If current athletes do not have their scholarship renewed at the end of this time period, they are encouraged to express an EOI with alternate Academy - Academies will share with NNSW who has been contracted by COB 17 Sep
Wednesday 17 Sep	Lists shared - Current athletes that have been re contracted are shared between Academies - No scholarships or offers of a scholarship to an athlete from an alternate academy prior to the recruitment period.
Open Thursday 18 Sep - Close Sunday 3 Oct	Recruitment period Academy Coaches can offer a scholarship to: - Current athletes who have not already been renewed - Athletes from the alternate Academy that have not had scholarship renewed - Athletes that have submitted an EOI for their Academy
Friday 6 October	Final selection Squads sent to Board and athletes advised