

TALENTED ATHLETE SPONSORSHIP SCHEME 2007

<http://www.tass.gov.uk/>

Frequently Asked Questions

Question 1:

Why has the confirmation of athletes on the TASS programme taken longer this year?

UK Sport took on responsibility for TASS in April of this year and is managing an alignment of this scheme with the new 2012 funding and the World Class Pathways for Olympic and Paralympic sports. UK Sport's aim is to drive the creation of a performance system that is flexible enough to support athletes who meet the High Performance standards and choose to undertake higher education alongside commitments to achieving World Class success.

As part of this alignment, confirmation of TASS athletes from summer Olympic and Paralympic sports is later this year compared to previous years because athlete nominations have been linked with post competition season performance reviews and have to underpin athletes confirmed for Performance Pathway support. Once nominated, a process of verification by UK Sport then followed.

Question 2:

Why have a couple of sports decided not to continue with TASS support?

A number of sports feel that the resources available to support young talent must be specifically directed in support of those athletes most likely to progress onto and through the performance pathway. Their experience has shown that those athletes most likely to succeed are best supported through the NGB system. They have focused on the development of that system and at this stage do not require underpinning TASS support.

Question 3:

I have received a TASS welcome letter, when will I receive further information?

The next step is to provide each confirmed TASS Athlete with more detailed information; this comes in the form of a 'Welcome Pack' which contains:

- Introduction Letter
- Athlete Filofax, including handbook and calendar
- Athlete Contract
- Contract Guidance Notes
- 100% Me Information, CD and questionnaire
- TASS Media Card
- Performance Report
- Medical Consent Form
- Dental Insurance Information
- Personalised Service Level Agreement
- Stamped Address Envelope

These packs are now being issued to athletes. The process for this is:

Athletes hosted at Institutions will have their packs sent to the relevant host institutions. TASS Support Officers confirm the contact point at each institution for these packs and the athletes will then receive a letter informing them to collect their packs from the identified member of staff.

Athletes hosted by NGBs will normally have their packs sent directly to their home address, unless the NGB wish to be the central point of distribution.

Question 4:

I've heard that TASS might be changing in 2007/2008. What will happen?

There has been some change in the 2006/07 TASS year as support for the Olympic and Paralympic sports is aligned with the performance pathway. The TASS programme from 2008 is currently being reviewed and partner organisations will be involved in a consultation process early in 2007. Minimal further change is expected in 2007/8. Any significant changes emerging from the review will be outlined in a new strategy to take effect in 2008/9.

Question 5:

A number of sports currently not on TASS wish to apply to be part of TASS. Can new sports be added or will this happen from 08/09? Will Non-Olympic Sports be excluded from TASS?

Sports to be included from 2008/09 will be confirmed in 2007 within a new strategy for TASS from 2008. No new sports will be added in the interim.

Non-Olympic sports currently included will continue until the end of 2007/08. Any changes to sports will be considered as part of the new strategy from 2008 onwards.

Question 6:

Will the age range for TASS be reviewed?

This will be addressed in the new strategy from 2008.

Question 7:

To help integration with the UK performance pathway, will TASS become UK wide and not just English based?

For sports that operate at a UK level, the aim should be to ensure that athletes of equal talent across the UK can access equal support. This will be considered within the strategic review.

Question 8:

Will the Institution Standards be revised for 07/08 and will this have any impact on the number of Institutions involved in TASS?

The Institutions Standards (Basic Level Entry Requirements – BLER) for 07/08 will be issued on the 1st Feb 2007 and, as has been the practice in previous years, the standards within the BLER will be raised. The BLER for 2007 will be accompanied by a programme of support which is designed to assist those institutions who wish to attain the necessary standards to be considered as a TASS host Institution. The initial assessment of whether an institution can deliver the BLER will be made over a one month period. Institutions that successfully complete the initial assessment will then work with TASS for a further two months to ensure all the necessary support services will be in place for 2007. TASS institutions will then be finally confirmed by the end of May 2007.

Question 9:

Will NGBs receive either the TASS funding or the equivalent of the TASS funding in their direct funding from UK Sport in 07/08?

This question is being asked because within UK Sport's 2012 funding model, UK Sport identified the optimum investment required to support Performance Pathway athletes in each Olympic cycle. At the time of the 2012 investment announcement, most of these sports were already receiving value from TASS in support of some athletes who would fall within the pathway. This value was deducted from the additional 2012 award to the sport to eliminate duplication. As these sports are now positioning TASS below their Performance Pathway funding, no such deduction will be made in 2007/2008 and so the equivalent of the TASS support will be added to their award from UK Sport in that period.

Question 10:

Will TASS awards still be Athlete awards to support specific identified athletes or rather programme funding direct to NGBs?

The current format of TASS awards will continue through 2006/7 and 2007/8. Any change thereafter will emerge from the strategic review.

Question 11:

It has been stated that TASS funding is 'ring fenced', what does this mean? If there is a balance in the funding will it be used to support initiatives in line with the TASS aims and objectives?

When we refer to TASS funding being 'ring fenced' it means that it has been separately identified in UK Sport's Funding Agreement with DCMS and must be separately reported. It is ring fenced in 2006-2008 to deliver the TASS objectives. The 2006/07 TASS year budget is on target for full spend. Carry over of any underspend at the end of the year has to be approved by DCMS. A new Funding Agreement between UK Sport and DCMS will be in place for the 2008-2011 period and the new TASS strategy will influence this.

Questions 12:

In previous correspondence a consultation paper was mentioned on the future of TASS, what is happening with this paper, and who ultimately decides the future direction of TASS?

The TASS programme from 2008 is currently being reviewed. The TASS Implementation Advisory Group (IAG) (which includes UK Sport, DCMS, Sports Aid, TASS National Manager, EIS, an independent adviser, UCS and an independently nominated Chair) is contributing to this review. Partner organisations will be involved in a consultation process early in 2007. Feedback will help shape the review.

As funding for TASS is channelled from DCMS to UK Sport, it is UK Sport's responsibility to make the case to DCMS for continued funding from 2008 to deliver the TASS strategy. As such the strategy, current or new, has to be agreed by UK Sport's Board for presentation to DCMS and final approval is then in the hands of DCMS and Ministers.