

Planning for Success

A resource setting out expectations in the lead up to National Team Selection in the Pathway.



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1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

JAIME FERNANDEZ, DEPUTY PERFORMANCE DIRECTOR

Our role in the Pathway is to identify, develop and support athletes with the potential and capability of successfully transitioning into the National Training Centres (NTCs) and Senior National Team. The Rowing Australia (RA) Pathways Team and I, together with our state-based Pathway Program partners, look to support athletes' off-water ambitions and ensure they are equipped to appropriately manage their 'life load', including study, training, employment, relationships etc. This is a key pillar of the Underage Pathway Network and its focus on developing and retaining our best young talent in the sport for many Olympic cycles.

This resource looks to set out and highlight the requirements and expectations of national team representation and help athletes better understand and manage their own circumstances and commitments in order to inform decisions and optimise performance in all aspects of their life.

I wish you all the best for your rowing journey, wherever that takes you, and hope this resource provides you with all the information you feel you need in order to make informed choices about your rowing future.



2. THE ATHLETE 'LIFE LOAD'

“It is recognised that for an athlete to successfully progress into, within and beyond their sporting journey, they are required to have multiple identities; be highly self-regulated; be able to prioritise their own development outside of sport and be connected to their community.”

We recognise it is a significant challenge for athletes at the Pathway level to combine and manage their competing goals and life demands; that is, manage educational and vocational goals with sporting goals, juggle work obligations with training commitments, maintain connection with family, friends and partners, ensure good recovery and find time to switch off. There are multiple commitments and demands that effect athletes' performance, decision making and overall wellbeing - we call this the athlete 'life load'.

It is critical for us to understand each individual athlete's life load in order to provide the best support, to effectively tailor appropriate programs and provide opportunities to achieve dual career goals (sporting and vocational), now and long-term.

Perhaps even more importantly is helping athletes to recognise these factors themselves in order to best manage the demands on their time.

Some examples of the competing life load factors our underage athletes manage in addition to training are:

- Academic commitments – school, university, apprenticeships
- Employment – financial reliance, part-time, casual
- Personal life – family and partners
- Living situation – who with and where
- Financial pressures – cost of involvement in the sport, attending events
- Travel – methods of transport, distance to school/university/work, training facilities and home
- Downtime and wellbeing
- Time, stress and mental load of managing commitments



ROB SCOTT

Rowing Australia President | CEO, Wesfarmers |
1996 Olympic silver medallist, Men's Pair |
6 x national team member

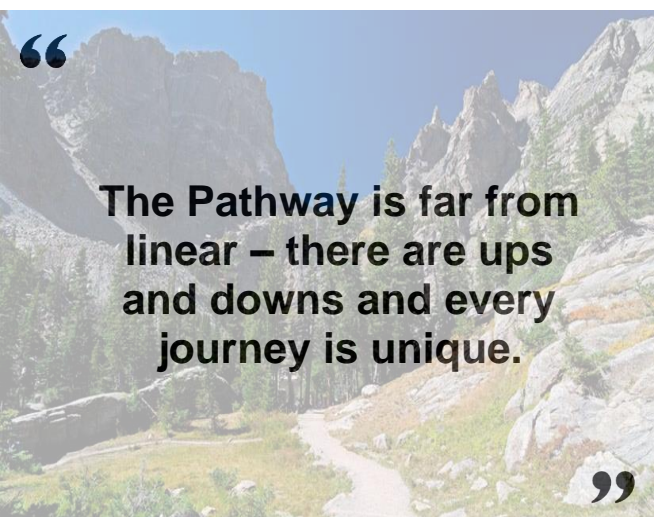
“We are committed to developing holistic rowers, supporting our athletes to strive for excellence both on and off the water as they prepare themselves physically, mentally and vocationally. We believe that adequately supporting our athletes, in all areas of their life, as they progress through the Pathway is integral to the depth and success of the long-term future of our sport.”

PATHWAY ADVICE

- Rowing provides so many wonderful opportunities to develop transferrable skills such as discipline, time management, resilience and teamwork. Take every chance to develop these attributes as they are important in every aspect of your life, particularly in preparing for life after rowing.
- In times when your work, training, study and personal commitments seem to be conflicting and piling up, seek out support and stick at it! When you're prepared to work, anything is possible!
- Build versatility with regards to your rowing skills – train in sweep and scull boats and ensure you can row on both bow and stroke side. Your versatility will be an asset.

3. THE DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY

The Pathway is undoubtedly a learning environment, providing both challenge and opportunity. It must be recognised that athlete progress is anything but linear and is in fact a complex series of highs and lows. There are many factors that shape each journey and every athlete story will be different - it is therefore important to consider the following key points:



- Development is an evolutionary process meaning every athlete journey will be different. There will be periods of injury, success, transition and adjustment – establishing clear long-term goals will allow you to navigate each of these stages with clear purpose.
- Underage performances are often variable and inconsistent and are likely to be somewhat compromised in the short-term as a result of the focus on building well-educated and well-rounded athletes. Accommodating educational and vocational goals along the pathway should in time assist in retaining the best young talent for long-term success in the sport.
- Setbacks should be expected and create valuable learning opportunities. Your approach and response to these events is critical to your development. Our most successful athletes will tell you that the setbacks and failures they experienced were important events that enhanced their learning and development.

4. KEY SELECTION PERSONNEL

In addition to the state Head Coaches and Pathway leads, there are a number of key personnel involved in the selection process that you should be familiar with. While the process is overseen by Deputy Performance Director, Jaime Fernandez, the following personnel play vital roles within the selection structure:

- **Underage Selection Panel:** responsible for assessing performances and making all selection decisions. The Panel consists of two Non-Executive Selectors (one of whom performs the role of the Chair) and the National Pathways Head Coach.
- **Selection Ombudsman:** The Selection Ombudsman is RA's appointed official observer, advisor, mediator and appeal body at National Selection Trials and events and is the person who investigates complaints or inquiries from athletes and coaches against Selection Panel decisions. The Ombudsman's role is in relation to questions of process and compliance with the Selection Policy - it is not the Ombudsman's role to be involved in judgment decisions relating to the quality and ability of athletes or coaches under consideration by the Selectors.



GIORGIA PATTEN

Current NTC athlete | 2019 Under 23 World Championship silver medallist, Women's Double Scull | 3 x national team member

“My biggest challenge would absolutely be managing a full time Physiotherapy degree whilst also training to make the Australian team and then training for the World Championships. There was a period where I was having to attend uni five days a week for classes, including an 8am class on my one morning off, while also trying to manage 20+ hours of training a week.

It was more difficult in my first year of Under 23s as I was selected in a crew boat so I wasn't able to be as flexible with training hours, however, in my second year when I was training in the scull, I had the option to train at alternate times and create a schedule which worked for me, around my uni.”

PATHWAY ADVICE

- Build an open and honest relationship with your coach which allows you to communicate confidently about managing your training/work/uni. This makes stressful periods, like exams, much easier.
- Create a relationship with a mentor figure in the rowing community who can provide guidance and advice around selection, performing on teams and managing training with work or uni. I don't know another rower who wouldn't be willing to help out and have a chat - find someone you would be confident in reaching out to!
- Ensure you set clear goals with your coach at the start of each season and make sure you're both clear on what you want to get out of the season ahead. This is really important during the stressful times as it helps ground you and keep you focused.
- Build a strong relationship with an Athlete Wellbeing/Personal Excellence Advisor as this support is really important for managing uni/work with training load and also for communicating with unis. It helps if you build a strong relationship early so your AWE/PEA is well informed of your situation and knows you well enough to assist with any bumps or hiccups with uni/work.

5. MEDICAL EXEMPTIONS

We recognise that from time to time athletes may be unable to complete a selection activity due to injury or illness. If you find yourself in this position in the lead up to any selection activity or event, there is an official Medical Exemption (ME) process to follow in order for you to maintain your selection eligibility. The steps detailed below must be followed PRIOR to the date of the test/race/activity:

- You or your coach email medicalexemptions@rowingaustralia.com.au to advise if you are unable to complete the activity. You must include **ONE** of the following:
 - A signed and completed RA Medical Exemption form 2020 - 2021 (available [here on the RA website](#))
 - A letter from a medical practitioner (GP, Sports Doctor, Physio), specifying your injury, illness or reason for non-completion. Included in the email must be an estimate of return to training, and when the activity may be able to be completed, backed by medical advice.
 - If the Medical Exemption function in AMS has been used to log the injury/illness and event, a simple comment to indicate this.
- If there is insufficient evidence, no notes in AMS or a problem with the information, you will be contacted by the Pathways Medical Lead, Alice McNamara. Alice can be contacted directly at:
Email: amcnamara@rowingaustralia.com.au
Phone: +61 408 363 925

For clarity, it must be stated that an ME does not absolve you of the need to complete a selection activity – it simply means you were unable to complete it on the specific date. To remain eligible, selection activities must still be completed once you have recovered and are medically cleared to do so.



BIANCA FERMI

Athlete Wellbeing & Engagement Manager | Rowing Australia

“Remember there are a lot of people around you to help you succeed during this stage...but you need to engage with them! Build reliable relationships with the coaches, Pathway staff and support personnel - ask questions, reach out, listen to advice, consult your family and support systems. You are not expected to do it all alone, so use the valuable insights and support, but take ownership and drive the conversations and relationships.”

PATHWAY ADVICE

Being a Pathway athlete is a great opportunity and achievement, however it is also challenging to manage all your life commitments effectively! This is where you set up successful habits for the future and show your professionalism and enthusiasm. Having worked with many athletes over the years from Pathway to Olympic level, my top 3 tips on how to navigate this stage successfully would be:

- Take care of yourself – you are your best resource, and if you’re burnt out, exhausted, injured or unhappy you won’t be able to perform or achieve the goals you set yourself. Prioritise your wellbeing, make sure you schedule time to recharge and have some fun too!
- Build a group of ‘trusted advisors’ – the people you go to learn from, ask advice, the people who will be honest with you and supportive.
- Ask for help early – you’d be amazed at how many supportive people and resources are out there to support you. But they usually can help earlier in the game than at the last minute!

6. US-BASED UNDER 23 SELECTION PROCESS

Recognising that the US-based College system offers some Australian athletes a valuable athletic and academic experience, RA offers a specific selection pathway for those athletes based in the US. All information contained in this document is relevant to US-based athletes, though please note the specific US-based Under 23 Event Requirements available on the [Rowing Australia website](#).

Experience has shown that support provided by College programs and Head Coaches to allow you to fulfil event requirements when vying for Australian national team selection is varied. It is best to speak with your College Head Coach about your intentions sooner rather than later. Pathways Transition Manager, John Bowes, who has established relationships with many personnel within College rowing programs, will be a valuable resource for any athletes looking for guidance navigating the US-based selection pathway. John’s details are included at [9. Pathway Contacts](#).



SIMON KEENAN

Yale Graduate, 2015 | Current NTC athlete | 2018 World Championship silver medallist, Men’s Eight | 5 x national team member

“When I first arrived at college it took me a while to realise there were significantly more demands on my time than in high school. On top of classes, study, deadlines, training and competition, there was also a social life to contend with and taking time to enjoy a new country. At first it was a bit chaotic and I found that if I wasn’t organised, I would most often miss deadlines or be late to classes or training, which reflected badly on myself and the team. However, with some organisation, and some structuring of my days, I soon found it easier to have so many things competing for my time at once and found I could easily achieve more in a day than I thought I could.”

PATHWAY ADVICE

To any student athlete in the US that is wanting to row for Australia, my advice is to be proactive. With an increasing number of Australian students making the decision to study in the US, keeping a track of all the Australian rowers is becoming harder and harder. You will do yourself an incredible service if you proactively keep in touch with Rowing Australia, advising of any performances you are proud of and any competition results you believe are important. Not only will this be important selection data, it will also send a clear message that you are serious about rowing for Australia and potentially increase the number of seats available for selection.

7. UNDERSTANDING EXPECTATIONS

We encourage you to carefully consider what is involved at each step of the selection process to ensure you fully understand what will be expected of you.

It is critical that you consider your rowing, academic and vocational goals and speak with your support network.

If you need more information about the programs, activities and events, the RA Pathway staff and state-based pathway contacts will also be a great resource – please refer to [9. Pathway Contacts](#) for contact details.

Below you will find some information relevant to each stage of the process followed by a checklist that will assist in navigating smoothly through the journey.

7.1 Taking the first step – nominating for the Underage National Teams

- We recommend you speak with a number of people within your support network to ensure you have clear and defined goals. This could include your parents, coach, state pathway lead, siblings, friends, school careers advisor etc.
- It is critical that you understand the time commitment involved, initially to prepare yourself for being invited to the selection trial, then being aware of the additional requirements as you progress.
- It is important that you consider your school, university or work schedule and how this might fit with the calendar of events and activities required for national team selection.
- There are a number of important documents available on the [Rowing Australia website](#) that you must make yourself familiar with:
 - **National Selection Policy – Underage Teams:** The Selection Policy applies to all athletes who nominate for national team selection and sets out the criteria by which selection decisions will be made.
 - The **Event Requirements** for each respective team underpin the Selection Policy and outline the activities athletes must complete in order to be eligible for selection consideration. These activities usually include time-trials, regattas, ergometer testing etc.
 - **Nomination and Eligibility Requirements:** This document sets out the eligibility conditions each athlete must comply with in order to be eligible for selection. These include things such as citizenship, age requirements, compliance with RA policies etc.
- The first step in officially indicating your interest in national team selection is to complete the online nomination form. This is also available on the [Rowing Australia website](#).



BEN SOUTHWELL

Head Coach | Queensland Academy of Sport

“From my experience coaching athletes from school through to Under 23, I’ve seen that there is so much learning and development at this stage of the pathway, all of which helps shape who they are and how successfully they navigate through their sporting career. Their lives can/may become very complex as they try to ‘juggle’ the responsibilities and demands of training, work, study, living out of home, relationships, family and friendship groups etc. The biggest challenge for athletes is developing the skills and learning to manage a training/life balance.”

PATHWAY ADVICE

- Set goals and targets - What are you working towards? How are you going to get there? Take time to reflect on realistic long-term goals and develop some short-term targets that will help direct you towards achieving success. Having these will help anchor your planning and purpose for what you’re working towards.
- Setting up a good support network that aligns to your goals and supports your endeavours is powerful. It’s important to identify what support is available and how you can effectively utilise them. Think family, friends, coach, club, SIS/SAS or SSO.
- Rowing presents so many opportunities for athletes at any level of the pathway. Seek them out and make the most of them!

7.2 On my way – I've been invited to the Underage Selection Trials

- When you complete the online nomination form, you acknowledge that you will complete a number of online education modules relating to anti-doping, sport integrity etc. These are mandatory for nominating athletes and must be completed prior to competing at the Underage Selection Trials.
- Talking to your support network will again be critical at this stage. Your coach, state pathway lead and even training partners can help you understand what to expect at the Trials regatta. Though RA will provide a Trials schedule and handbook detailing the trialling process, speaking to others about their experiences will be extremely valuable.
- Speak to your employer/school/university about any absences required to attend the event – if required, Rowing Australia can provide a letter detailing the requirements and confirming your attendance. Your state Athlete Wellbeing Manager/Personal Excellence Advisor will also be able to help you navigate some of this and can be a great resource of support.



All athletes have an obligation to ensure compliance with RA's anti-doping policies. All nominating Pathway athletes must complete the following online education modules:

- Clean Sport 101
- Level 1 Anti-Doping

- For those studying at University, it is important to understand the key dates for withdrawal of units without penalty, the exam schedule and how your selection may impact your ability to adequately prepare and be successful in your studies during this time.
- Be aware that a 'seat fee' is applicable to all underage team representatives and must be paid prior to team departure. A seat fee is charged to cover a portion of the costs associated with national team touring activities. The seat fee covers items such as flights (domestic and international), accommodation (domestic and international), training camp/relocation activities, meals, ground transport, boat transport, uniform, equipment and repairs, medical, physio and sport science services. For Junior and Under 23 teams the seat fee is approx. \$8,000, and the Under 21 seat fee is approx. \$3,000.

- Now is a good time to consider how your seat fee might be paid – talk to your parents about any support they're able to provide, consider possible fundraising activities, think about how a part-time job might fit in with your schedule and talk to your coach or state pathway lead about club or SIS/SAS assistance. RA can discuss a payment plan with you if required.
- In the event of your selection, you will need a current Australian passport that is valid for the period of travel plus at least **six (6) months** after the return date. These can take time to obtain, so be prepared early.
- If successful in gaining selection, be aware that you may be required to relocate to another state or training centre in order to optimally prepare your crew in the same location. Personal circumstances are considered, though it is best to plan ahead - think about how you might manage a relocation and who you will need to speak with.
- Be prepared to be flexible and agile! At the Trials, there are so many variable factors and plans may change based on any one of those. All effort is made to keep these to a minimum, though changes with very little notice are sometimes unavoidable.

7.3 I made it – I've been selected onto a National Underage Team (Under 23, Under 21, Junior)

- While a lot of hard work has already been done in preparing for your selection, this is the point that rowing will really need to be the priority. You must consider how your studies or employment will be impacted and who to speak with in order to best manage that with minimal disruption. Rowing Australia will provide a letter for your school/university/employer detailing your commitments and absences during this period.
- A good resource at this stage will be your Team Manager whose job is to ensure everything off the water runs as smoothly as possible to enable you to concentrate fully on your on-water performances. They will provide valuable logistical, planning and contact information.
- It is important to recognise that you might need support at this point, be that financial assistance, increased medical or physio treatments, understanding from those closest to you or assistance in managing your wellbeing. Consider what support you might need and who may be able to offer that in order to make this a successful and enjoyable campaign.
- If you haven't already worked towards obtaining a passport, now is the time to get that finalised.
- At this point you will receive an invoice for your seat fee. Again, consider how it will be paid and speak with those that might be able to help you.

8. CHECKLISTS TO HELP SUPPORT YOUR JOURNEY

Once you have considered and understood the requirements and expectations of selection, it is critical that you ask the right questions of yourself and others to ensure you are well prepared for the journey. These will differ from person to person, though the following questions may prove helpful in shaping your conversations and guiding your list of queries (see [7. Understanding expectations](#) for further information).

8.1 Taking the first step – nominating for the Underage National Teams

- ☐ Have I set clear and defined personal goals?
- ☐ Do I understand the time commitment and activities required?
- ☐ Have I read and understood the relevant Rowing Australia documents (Selection Policy, Event Requirements, Nomination and Eligibility etc)
- ☐ Have I spoken to the right people?
- ☐ Have I completed the online nomination form?

8.2 On my way – I've been invited to the Underage Selection Trials

- ☐ Have I completed all the necessary Rowing Australia online education modules?
- ☐ Have I spoken to my support network, coach and state Pathway lead about what to expect at Trials?
- ☐ Do I understand a seat fee must be paid if I'm selected onto an underage team?
- ☐ Have I spoken to my employer/school/university about my absence to attend the event?
- ☐ Have I contacted Rowing Australia for a letter of support, confirming my attendance?
- ☐ Am I aware of the exam schedule and deadlines for withdrawal of university subjects?
- ☐ Do I have a current Australian passport with at least 6 months validity?
- ☐ Do I understand I may be required to relocate interstate if I'm selected?

8.3 I made it – I've been selected onto a National Underage Team (Under 23, Under 21, Junior)

- ☐ Have I spoken with the right people about managing my competing work/university/training schedules?
 - ☐ Have I made contact with the Team Manager?
 - ☐ Do I have a list of people that I can contact for support in different areas?
 - ☐ Do I have a current Australian passport with at least 6 months validity?
 - ☐ Have I arranged for payment of my seat fee?
-

9. PATHWAY CONTACTS

Deputy Performance Director – Jaime Fernandez

Email: jfernandez@rowingaustralia.com.au

Phone: +61 427 271 297

The role of the Deputy Performance Director is to lead and provide strategic direction to all areas of the Pathway, in particular, overseeing and leading the state-based pathway programs, ensuring maximised outcomes and alignment with national strategy.

Pathway Head Coach – Lyall McCarthy

Email: lyall.mccarthy@rowingausportnet.com

Phone: +61 418 333 348

The Pathways Head Coach is responsible for providing technical leadership and direction to targeted athletes and coaches in the underage national teams and state-based pathway programs. This includes reviewing and assessing performances in the daily training and competition environment.

National Science Lead – Dr Tony RiceEmail: tony.rice@rowingausportnet.com

Phone: +61 421 011 354

The National Science Lead is instrumental in overseeing the Sport Science support within the Pathway programs. The role aims to provide a direct link between the technical support from coaching staff to the sport science support in both the Pathway programs and competition environment. In addition, the role also supports the tracking and monitoring of athletes and coaches.

Pathways Transition Manager – John BowesEmail: jbowes@rowingaustralia.com.au

Phone: +61 439 958 367

The Pathways Transition Manager primarily focuses on better understanding the local and US environments in order to develop and maintain better connections with student athletes based in the US.

High Performance Pathways Manager – Naomi WagstaffEmail: nwagstaff@rowingaustralia.com.au

Phone: +61 411 896 034

The High Performance Pathways Manager underpins the national Pathway program, administratively supporting all staff in their roles and overseeing national team nomination and Categorisation processes.

The following Pathway network contacts can also provide guidance and information:

ROLE	NAME	EMAIL	PHONE
Head Coach - ACT	David Fraumano	headcoach@rowingact.org.au	0412 652 986
Rowing Manager - NSWIS	Lizzi Chapman	lizzi.chapman@nswis.com.au	0402 115 920
Head Coach - QAS	Ben Southwell	ben.southwell@npsr.qld.gov.au	0400 143 671
High Performance Manager - QLD	Andrew Service	andrew.service@rowingausportnet.com	0414 545 469
Head Coach - SASI	Jason Lane	jason.lane@sa.gov.au	0458 769 631
Talent Pathway Coordinator - SA	Christine MacLaren	Christine.MacLaren@sa.gov.au	0413 042 176
Head Coach - TIS	Brett Crow	brett.crow@tis.tas.gov.au	0428 138 551
Development & Pathway Officer - TAS	Grant Pryor	grant.pryor@rowingtasmania.com.au	0419 401 248
Head Coach - VIS	Noel Donaldson	noel.donaldson@vis.org.au	0417 115 364
Pathway Coordinator - VIC	Cerise Newlyn	cerise@rowingvictoria.asn.au	0430 181 572
Head Coach - WAIS	Rhett Ayliffe	rayliffe@wais.org.au	0488 090 622
Rowing Coach - WAIS	Jamie Hewlett	jhewlett@wais.org.au	0432 854 716

Additionally, your state Athlete Wellbeing & Engagement Managers are a valuable resource and key support contact:

ORGANISATION	NAME	EMAIL	PHONE
Rowing Australia	Bianca Fermi	bfermi@rowingaustralia.com.au	0466 832 246
ACT Academy of Sport	Ruth Owen-Evans	ruth.owenevans@act.gov.au	0435 575 966
NSW Institute of Sport	Tom Livsey	tom.livsey@nswis.com.au	02 9763 0203
QLD Academy of Sport	Liz Hepple	elizabeth.hepple@npsr.qld.gov.au	07 3708 7888
SA Institute of Sport	Mark Gregory	mark.gregory@sa.gov.au	0418 891 440
TAS Institute of Sport	Lindsay Harris	lindsay.harris@tis.tas.gov.au	03 6165 6632
VIC Institute of Sport	Andrea Farrow	andrea.farrow@vis.org.au	03 9425 0000
WA Institute of Sport	Rohan McHugh	rmchugh@wais.org.au	08 9387 8166



PRINCIPAL PARTNER

HANCOCK PROSPECTING

MAJOR PARTNER



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