



AUSTRALIAN ATHLETICS

AUSTRALIAN ATHLETICS SELECTION POLICY

2026 WORLD CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS

TALLAHASSEE, USA

10 January 2026

Version of 23 July 2025



1 Overview

- 1.1 This selection policy (Selection Policy) sets out the basis on which Australian Athletics will select its representative team (Team) for the World Cross Country Championships in Tallahassee, USA, 10 January 2026 (the Competition). This Selection Policy aligns with the Australian Athletics Strategic Plan.
- 1.2 This Selection Policy constitutes the Selection Criteria (as defined in the Australian Athletics By-Laws) in respect of the selection of individuals or teams for the Competition.
- 1.3 The only person authorised to provide advice on the content of this policy is the Chair of Selectors and any other advice received either from Australian Athletics personnel or others, either verbally or in writing, has no validity in relation to selection matters.
- 1.4 A selection trial is planned on Friday 28 November 2025 (in the evening) in Canberra for this competition.

2 Selection Policy Aims

- 2.1 Australian Athletics aims to facilitate the following outcomes through the selection of athletes for the Competition:
 - 2.1.1 Selecting athletes that are realistic top 24 finishers (as an individual athlete) or top six (6) finishers (as part of a team) or;
 - 2.1.2 Select athletes who are considered potential medallists or top 8 athletes in future World Athletics Championships and Olympic Games.
- 2.2 Each event will be run as both an individual championship and team championship event. World Athletics rules permit a maximum of six (6) athletes per event with four (4) athletes to score points for a team (Team Event).
- 2.3 Athletes may be selected and entered as individuals only or as part of the Team Event. An athlete selected as an individual will represent Australia as part of the Team Event if the required number of athletes are selected to represent Australia in the relevant division. Athletes should not assume that Athletics Australia will select enough athletes in a particular division to form a team in the Team Event. The discretion is absolute and need not be exercised.
- 2.4 Any decision to take a relay team will depend on the availability of suitably qualified athletes to make a competitive team. If the team is not deemed competitive then no relay team shall be selected.
- 2.5 In all cases, the Selection Committee will consider each athlete's competitive record and demonstrated ability to plan the peak of their season at a major championship. Those athletes who, when given international opportunities, repeatedly fail to meet or exceed the levels they achieved to gain selection cannot assume to be selected.



3 Athlete Eligibility Criteria

Only those athletes who qualify according to this clause will be eligible for selection in the Team:

- 3.1 Be a citizen of Australia. For the avoidance of doubt, Australian permanent residency is not acceptable. Athletes must hold or be eligible for an Australian passport;
- 3.2 Be eligible to be selected as an athlete in a representative team pursuant to the Australian Athletics By-Laws;
- 3.3 Be a registered member of Australian Athletics through their Member Association;
- 3.4 Satisfy all participation/eligibility rules of the governing body for the Competition;
- 3.5 Meet the minimum age of eligibility as determined by the governing body for the Competition;
- 3.6 Complete and submit the online nomination form (which may be found at www.athletics.com.au) for each event in which the athlete is seeking selection. The form must be submitted no later than 31 October 2025 all events. The date for submission of the nomination form may be extended at the discretion of the Chair of the Selection Committee on the recommendation of the General Manager - High Performance;
- 3.7 Be and remain in 'good standing' with Australian Athletics and at all times comply with Australian Athletics' Code of Conduct and conduct themselves in a way that does not bring themselves, their sport or the Team into disrepute. Australian Athletics may consider past and present behavioural conduct in determining whether an athlete is in 'good standing'. If Australian Athletics determines that an athlete is not in 'good standing', Australian Athletics may in its absolute discretion choose not to select that athlete;
- 3.8 Commit to signing and/or abiding by any Australian Athletics Team Agreement, Code of Conduct and other relevant Australian Athletics policies and procedures as reasonably directed from time to time;
- 3.9 Commit to completing all reasonably expected education courses, including but not limited to anti-doping e-learning modules level 1 & 2, the National Integrity in Sport Unit's "Keep Sport Honest" e-learning (anti-match fixing) module and any other integrity education requirements Australian Athletics sets from time to time;
- 3.10 Agree to comply with any pre-Championships preparation policy that may be published by Australian Athletics General Manager - High Performance, including travel plan and travel arrangements outlined for the Competition. This policy may include the requirement to prove form and fitness to compete in the Competition; and
- 3.11 The rules of the governing body applicable to the Competition can be found here at the [World Athletics site](#).



4 Selection Procedure

4.1 Qualification Standards:

There are no specific qualifying standards defined by the governing body applicable to this Competition.

4.2 Athletes should enter and compete in the Selection Trial (Trial) in the event in which they seek selection, unless an exemption from the Trial is granted. To meet this criterion, any athlete seeking exemption from the Trial, must provide this request in writing for approval by the Chair of the Selection Committee in consultation with the General Manager - High Performance [those seeking medical exemptions must include the appropriate documentation from a medical professional]. Any exemption given does not provide any guarantees of selection and given the short time between the Trial and the Championships medical exemptions would be challenging to then show fitness before the Championships.

4.3 Automatic Selection

4.3.1 The athletes finishing 1st and 2nd in the Open Men's and Open Women's 10km at the Trial will be automatically selected.

4.3.2 The right to automatic selection only applies to the Senior Men and Senior Women. It does not apply to the Under 20 events.

4.4 Selection at the Discretion of Selectors in the non-Relay events

4.4.1 Any remaining selections will be made at the discretion of the Selectors. This discretion is absolute and need not be exercised.

4.4.2 Athletes must satisfy the Selectors that they will be capable of performing at a high level at the World Cross Country Championships, and they are a:

4.4.2.1 realistic top 24 finisher (as an individual athlete); or

4.4.2.2 realistic chance to contribute to a team that will finish in the top six (6) of the Team Event; or

4.4.2.3 potential future Olympic and World Championships top eight finisher.

4.4.3 The selectors will only select a team where there are sufficient athletes of appropriate quality to make up a team. This may include athletes who fall outside of the target standards.

4.4.4 When exercising their discretion in relation to any athlete under consideration for selection in any event, the Selectors may consider results achieved at the Trial, the 2025 National Cross Country Championships and any other competitions after 1 May 2025 including track, road and cross country competition. As a guide athletes should consider the following minimum standards to be considered (outside of the automatic selections):

4.4.4.1 In the Open Women's 10km the athlete has recorded a time over 10,000m or 10km of 32:30 or better since 1 May 2025 or 34:00 in the trial.

4.4.4.2 In the Open Men's 10km the athlete has recorded a time over 10,000m or 10km of 29:00 or better since 1 May 2025 or 30:15 in the trial.

4.4.4.3 In the Under 20 Women's 6k the athlete has recorded a time over 5,000m or 5km of 17:00 or better since 1 May 2025 or 22:15 in the trial.



- 4.4.4.4 In the Under 20 Men's 8k the athlete has recorded a time over 5,000m or 5km of 14:45 or better since 1 May 2025 or 25:30 in the trial.
- 4.4.5 When considering the quality of performance in the events in the Trial, the Selectors must take into consideration the quality and depth of field in each particular category.
- 4.4.6 Without in any way limiting the discretion set out in this clause, the Selectors may take into account the following matters when selecting athletes:
- 4.4.6.1 Results of the Trial and athletes who have met the standards at 4.4.3 as the highest priority,
 - 4.4.6.2 Quality of performances in the 2025 Cross Country season, especially the National Cross Country Championships,
 - 4.4.6.3 Quality of performances in road and track events considered relevant by the Selectors as an indication of form and fitness for cross country,
 - 4.4.6.4 History of past performances in the World Cross Country Championships and other relevant international events including track events,
 - 4.4.6.5 Current form,
 - 4.4.6.6 Potential to be competitive at the 2026 World Cross Country Championships.
- 4.5 For the avoidance of doubt, the matters set out above in this clause are not to be regarded as selection criteria. They are matters that the Selectors may consider in any combination, and in combination with any other matters not listed that in the opinion of the Selectors are relevant in the selection of the Team.
- 4.6 Selection at the Discretion of Selectors in the Relay event
- 4.6.1 A team relay will only be selected where the nominated and selected athletes have proven their competitive ability over 1500m on the track. To be considered eligible athletes need to have run under 3:35 for men and 4:00 for women since 1 January 2025.
 - 4.6.2 There will not be trial for the Relay, a team will be selected if sufficient athletes nominate and the athletes will be chosen on the basis of their track results since January 2025. Where there are more athletes available (who have met the performance requirements) than place on the team then the following factors will be considered:
 - Demonstrates high-level performances since 1 January 2025
 - Proven ability to peak at major championships.
 - Proven ability to meet or exceed qualification-level performances during international competitions.
 - Head to head performances since 1 January 2025
 - Any additional factors deemed relevant by the Selection Committee in consultation with the National Federation General Manager – High Performance.
- 4.7 Official Performance:
- All performances must be achieved during official competitions which must be sanctioned by the relevant governing body and organised in conformity with the rules of that governing body. A list of those sanctioned meets throughout Australia and international is available through the World Athletics website.



5 Selection Meeting

- 5.1 The Selection Committee will determine the athletes who will be included in this team as soon as practical after the Trial.
- 5.2 All athletes who nominate will be notified of their selection or non-selection as soon as possible.
- 5.3 The team will be publicly announced after the notification to all athletes and any and all appeal periods or appeals are completed.

6 Further Obligations after Selection

Athletes selected in the Team for the Competition pursuant to this Selection Policy must:

- 6.1 Prove their fitness to compete in the Competition by the achievement of pre-Australia departure standards to be set by the General Manager - High Performance if requested to do so;
- 6.2 Undertake any medical assessments and testing requested by the Australian Athletics Chief Medical Officer, or their delegate, and disclose to the Australian Athletics Chief Medical Officer, or their delegate, any relevant medical history and known medical condition or issue that may be or become relevant to participation in the Team;
- 6.3 Adhere to all anti-doping protocols, policies and procedures, as applicable. This includes participation in Out-of-Competition Testing as required by applicable anti-doping rules, including the Australian Athletics Anti-Doping Policy and the anti-doping rules of the governing body of the Competition;
- 6.4 Sign an Australian Athletics Team Agreement and the Australian Athletics Code of Conduct governing their selection in the Team and participation in the Competition; and
- 6.5 Attend any defined mandatory pre-competition training camp in, unless a waiver has been provided by Australian Athletics permitting the athlete not to attend the camp. Such waivers will not be unreasonably withheld.
- 6.6 Failure by a selected athlete to meet these Further Obligations after Selection may, at the discretion of the General Manager of High Performance, result in an athlete who has been selected in the Team being removed from that Team, in line with Section 6 – Removal of Athletes.



7 Removal of Athletes

A selected athlete may be removed from the Team for any of the following reasons:

- 7.1 A voluntary withdrawal notified in writing by the athlete to Australian Athletics;
- 7.2 Injury or illness certified by a medical practitioner approved by Australian Athletics;
- 7.3 A violation of the athlete's Team Agreement or the Australian Athletics Code of Conduct, including refusing to sign these agreements;
- 7.4 A failure to comply with any pre-Competition preparation policy (including a failure to meet an agreed pre-departure standard);
- 7.5 A failure to adhere to anti-doping protocols, policies and procedures;
- 7.6 The athlete's eligibility status changes so that the athlete is ineligible to participate in the Competition; and/or
- 7.7 The athlete's event is removed from the Competition program.
- 7.8 An athlete who is removed from the Team pursuant to this provision has the right to an appeal in accordance with the By-Laws of Australian Athletics.

8 Replacement of Athletes

- 8.1 Due to the short time frame from selection to the competition then replacements will not be considered except in the case of the relay. Depending on the exact timing for any replacement then either an athlete may travel from Australia or if time is an issue an athlete already residing the USA will be considered. Such replacement will be managed by the team staff.

9 Selection Appeal Process

The selection appeal process is available in a separate document.

10 Amendment to Policy

- 10.1 This Policy may be amended at any time by Australian Athletics if it is of the opinion that such an amendment is necessary as a result of any change to the participation/eligibility rules of the governing body for the Competition, to give effect to the Policy following discovery of a drafting error or oversight, or for any other reason determined to be in the best interests of Australian Athletics. Australian Athletics shall not be responsible or liable in any way to any one as a result of any such amendment.



11 Approval and Change log

Date	Summary of Changes	Approved by
23 July 2025	First Version	AA CEO



12 Appendix 1: Funding

- 12.1 While not part of the selection criteria athletes should be aware that Australian Athletics reserves the right to impose a levy on athletes to participate in this Championship. Where a levy is to be imposed, athletes will be notified of the relevant amount payable at the time of selection. As a guide, it is likely to be in the range of \$3,000 - \$4,000. If the athlete finishes in the top 24 then any levy will be refunded.