

Pole Vault Event Group Plan



2026-2028 Pole Vault Event Group Plan

Panel members: Aaron Balloch (Vic), Olivia Carah (ACT), James Fitzpatrick (WA), Lauren Hyde-Cooling (WA), Zsuzsanna Olgyay-Szabo (NSW), Kym Simons (SA), Mark Stewart (Vic & panel facilitator), Ilse Way (NSW).

All event group's objectives are guided by the overarching statement of '*Australia versus the Rest of the World*', the fundamental purpose of the panels is to:

- Bring together event group coaches/experts to discuss ways to enhance the "Spirit of the Event Group".
- Establish a Three-Year Event Group Plan which will include items such as a calendar of camps/workshops/initiatives aimed at upskilling emerging and established coaches and enhancing the overarching "Spirit of the Event Group"; and
- Identify and implement initiatives that will enhance Australia's capability to achieve sustainable success (i.e. by achieving Medal and Top 8 performances) at Major Championships by the 2032 Brisbane OGs and beyond.

The pole vault event group's plan, aims to achieve these objectives by:

1. Increasing the **participation** in the event around Australia. There are many athletes with the potential to become international pole-vaulters that never have the opportunity to vault.
2. Providing opportunities for existing pole vaulters and coaches to **collaborate**. With the purpose of providing opportunities for athlete and coach development along a high-performance pathway.
3. **Up- skilling** existing pole vault coaches. To provide quality event specific information to coaches on all aspects of high-performance pole vault.
4. **Recruit new coaches** and establishing more pole vault clubs across the country. A key objective will be to increase the number of accredited pole vault coaches operating in all states of Australia in order to provide opportunities for more athletes to pole vault.
5. **Reduce impediments** to pole vaulting:
 - Assist multi- event athletes.
 - Age group rules.
 - Equipment information and assistance.

The pole vault event group's performance indicators:

1. Pole vaulters competing from every state and territory at the Australian All Schools and/or the National Underage Championships from 2026 onwards.
2. More athletes vaulting in the under 14 age groups at the Australian All Schools and/or the National Underage Championships.
3. Full team of pole vaulters (2 female and 2 male) qualify for each World Under 20 Championship from 2026 onward.
4. Full team of vaulters (2 female and 2 male) qualify for each World University Games from 2027 onwards.
5. Full team of vaulters (3 female and 3 male) qualify for the World Championships & Olympic Games from 2030 onwards.

Event group recommendations (note this is an advisory group)

1. Where possible provide input/consultation into the event grid for major domestic competitions.

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2. Decathlon to replace heptathlon for boys under 15 & 16 at state and national championships, with support to help athletes to learn to pole vault, and with an appropriate lead time. Currently under 15 & 16 boys do a heptathlon that does not include pole vault.
3. No lower age limit on pole vault competitions. Competent vaulters of any age should be allowed to compete in the current under 14 categories. There is no need to introduce any younger age group categories for pole vault – just allow younger athletes to compete in the existing under 14 age group.

2026 Event Group Initiatives

January	Collaboration Pole vault camp conducted at the AIS 2 to 8 January. This camp was for vaulters (and their coaches) with a chance of making the Commonwealth Games. 10 vaulters and six coaches attended.
March	Up-skill coaches Presentation by Tim Reilly, coach of Hana & Amada Moll “Building World Class Fundamentals from the Ground Up” https://vimeo.com/1194585123
April	Advice The Pole Vault Advisory Panel identified an issue with conducting the National Championships with Little Athletics, which would have prevented 12-year-olds from competing in the Under 14 Pole Vault. Following the Panel's advice, the rule was amended. Similar issues were identified and resolved for the Hammer Throw and Para events.
June	Collaboration Pole vault camp conducted at AIS 18 to 21 June, generally aimed at vaulters (and their coaches) age eligible and have performances that indicate they could represent Australia at the 2028 World Under 20 Championships. 9 vaulters and five coaches attended.
July	Reduce impediments to pole vaulting The establishment of a pole bank to rent and swap poles.
December	Up-skill coaches Coach education session(s) at the Australian All Schools in December.

2027 to 2028 Event Group Initiatives

2027	<p>Camp in January aimed at vaulters (and their coaches) who can represent Australia at World University Games 2027.</p> <p>Conduct coach/vaulters education session(s) at National Championships in April.</p> <p>Camp in May/June aimed at vaulters (and their coaches) who can represent Australia at the World Under 20 Championships in 2028.</p> <p>Coach education session(s) at the Australian All Schools in December.</p>
2028	<p>Camp in January aimed at vaulters (and their coaches) who can represent Australia at the World University Games 2029.</p> <p>Conduct coach/vaulters education session(s) at National Championships in April.</p>

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Camp in May/June aimed at vaulters (and their coaches) who can represent Australia at the World Under 20 Championships in 2030.

Coach education session(s) at the Australian All Schools in December.

Previous Activities

2025:

- **January, collaboration** Pole vault camp conducted at the AIS in January. This camp was for vaulters (and their coaches) who are age eligible and have performances that indicate they can represent Australia at the World University Games. 12 vaulters and nine coaches attended.
- **Up-skill coaches** Conduct coach/vaulters education session at the National Championships in April in Perth. Howard Arbuthnot is presenting on the Reno Pole Vault Summit and Mark Stewart on running for pole vault and horizontal jumps.
- **Collaboration** Pole vault camp conducted May is aimed at vaulters (and their coaches) who are age eligible and have performances that indicate they can represent Australia at the 2026 World Under 20 Championships. 10 vaulters and six coaches attended.

2024:

- Athletics Australia media did a video with Nina Kennedy to promote participation in pole vault: <https://fb.watch/uVMmfegOfp/> Australia has many great pole vault coaches. Head to: <https://www.athletics.com.au/official-finder/56> to find a pole vault coach in your area.
- Presentations by James Fitzpatrick at the 2024 Australian Championships in April. Link to the video of the: <https://vimeo.com/935750968>
- The Pole Vault panel advised Australian Athletics about the problems with rules associated with the introduction of the new under 13 age group at the national championships. The rules had the unforeseen consequence that 12-year-olds would not have been allowed to compete in under 14 pole vault. On the advice of the panel the rule was changed. There were similar problems for walks, TJ & HT, these rules were also changed.

2023:

- Kurtis Marschall & Nina Kennedy spent time with young athletes at the Australia All Schools in December. The idea of the session was for Kurtis and Nina to talk about the opportunities pole vault had provided them and compare this to what would likely have happened had they kept going with the events they started in track and field – in the end this session became more of a meet and greet.
- Question and Answer session with Kurtis Marschall & Nina Kennedy and eleven pole vault coaches from around Australia. This was also done at Australian All Schools in December 2023.

2022:

- Two pole vault camps were conducted in Perth in June and July, with elite open and under 20 years of age vaulters and their personal coaches.