Basketball Ireland U15 Provincial Academy Player Selection Policy

Season 2025–2026

# 1. Purpose

This policy outlines the process and criteria for selecting players to Basketball Ireland’s U15 Provincial Academies. The U15 Academy sits within the National Talent Pathway and serves as a key stage for identifying and developing players with the potential to progress to international competition and senior high-performance programmes.

# 2. Objectives

* Identify and support players with the potential to represent Ireland at U16, U18, and senior international levels.
* Provide players with a challenging and development-focused environment in line with Basketball Ireland’s Long-Term Player Development Plans.
* Foster regional talent development aligned with national high-performance standards.

# 3. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for selection, a player must:

* Be born in 2011or later. (U15 age group for the 2025–26 season).
* Be an Irish citizen or eligible to represent Ireland under FIBA nationality rules.
* Be registered with a Basketball Ireland-affiliated club. -Exceptions can be made for players living outside of Ireland but they will be expected to attend Academy sessions.
* Commit to full participation in the Provincial Academy, including monthly training, Academy tournaments, and any national development camps.

# 4. Selection Process

Players will be selected through Talent Identification Days (TIDs) held in each province. These sessions will be delivered by Provincial Academy Coaches with support from Basketball Ireland’s High Performance staff.

## 4.1 Talent Identification Days (TIDs)

* Each province will host two (2) Talent Identification Day (TID) sessions as part of the selection process.
* Players should attend both TID sessions where possible to give coaches a more complete opportunity to assess their abilities.
* Attending only one TID session does not exclude a player from being selected, but it reduces the number of opportunities for coaches to evaluate the player and may impact their chances of selection.
* TIDs are open to all eligible players who pre-register and will be delivered by each Provincial Academy’s coaching staff.
* Coaches will assess players using a standardised national evaluation framework focusing on skill level, athletic profile, basketball IQ, coachability, and long-term potential.
* Players demonstrating exceptional talent or significant potential who are identified during the season—through club games, regional competitions, or other means—may be considered for late inclusion. The door remains open for emerging talent beyond the TID sessions but the only guaranteed point of entry is by attendance at the TID sessions.

## 4.2 Year-Young Player Consideration

* Players born in 2012 (U14 age group) may be considered for selection to the U15 Provincial Academy.
* year-young players should only be selected if they are judged to be in the top 2/3rds (20 of 30) of the provincial group and are capable of competing at a national level within the U15 age category. Exceptions can be made were positional gaps exist but regardless of position year young players must be capable of competing at a national level within the u15 age category.

Coaches are advised to prioritise long-term development and ensure that year-young players are physically, technically, and emotionally ready to benefit from the older age group environment.

**5. Selection Criteria**

Selections are based on a **holistic evaluation** of the following attributes:

**A. Physical Attributes**

* Height and wingspan relative to position and potential.
* Athleticism including speed, strength, balance, and agility.
* Physical maturity (considering growth stage and biological development).
* Endurance, work rate, and ability to recover in high-intensity settings.

**B. Technical Skills**

* Ball handling: consistency, control, ambidextrous use.
* Shooting: form, footwork, range, and shot selection.
* Passing: decision speed, vision, and accuracy.
* Finishing: ability to finish through contact and under pressure.
* Defensive fundamentals: stance, positioning, and commitment.

**C. Tactical Understanding**

* Game awareness and understanding of space and timing.
* Decision-making under pressure.
* Understanding of defensive and offensive concepts, including team roles and rotations.
* Ability to apply instructions and adapt in live-play situations.

**D. Psychological & Behavioral Attributes**

* Coachability and response to feedback.
* Competitive character and mental toughness.
* Leadership qualities and communication.
* Consistency of effort and attitude.
* Team-first mindset and emotional control.

**E. Commitment & Availability**

* Willingness to commit fully to the programme.
* Ability to attend regular weekly sessions and additional regional or national events.
* Support from parents/guardians for attendance and commitment.

Note – Head coaches still have the flexibility to operate outside this framework from time to time and add players to the academy pathway if they feel have potential to play International basketball in the future.

# 6. Academy Commitment & National Team Eligibility

**Players selected to the Academy are expected to:**

* Attend at least 60% of all Academy training sessions and camps throughout the programme year.
* Full attendance is encouraged, but a minimum 60% participation rate is required to be eligible for selection to the U15 Academy Teams representing Ireland in the Four Nations Tournament or any other international development activity.
* This requirement also applies to players living outside of Ireland who have chosen to participate in the Academy pathway.
* Players who fall below this attendance threshold without valid medical or personal reasons may not be considered for international selection.
* All Academy sessions are considered calendared events and take precedence over other basketball activity on those dates.
* Players should not have club or school games that clash with Academy sessions.
* Advance notice of Academy dates should be given by players to club and school coaches so they can adjust their schedules accordingly.

## 6.1 Four Nations Selection Process

**Teams will be selected by the relevant coaches based on the following criteria**

* Ongoing assessment by Basketball Ireland’s Provincial Academy Coaches throughout the year.
* Performance at Academy Tournaments, including internal development games and competitions.
* Performance at Inter-Regional Tournaments and other events where players are evaluated in live game situations.
* positional needs, and overall team balance will be taken into account when selecting teams.
* Where required, Basketball Ireland may host a separate selection or trials session for invited players to finalise the squad, or to assess athletes returning from injury or joining late in the programme.

# 7. Diversity & Inclusion

Basketball Ireland promotes equal opportunity for players of all backgrounds, ensuring talent from all regions and communities is identified and supported. Coaches are expected to actively seek diversity and representation in all provincial academies.

# 8. Appeals

Appeals will be accepted only on the grounds of a procedural error during the selection process. Disagreement with a coach’s judgment is not, in itself, grounds for appeal.

# 9. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by Basketball Ireland’s High Performance Committee to ensure it remains aligned with best practices in talent identification and player development.