



Talent Framework 2010 -2013

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Introduction

Talent Identification and Development are critical to the development of sport across all levels in Northern Ireland. This is evidenced within Sport Matters: the Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation for Northern Ireland 2009-19 which identifies that “by 2019, High performance athletes in Northern Ireland will be identified at an earlier age, receive World class support services and will be more successful”. This will require “Governing Body programmes that identify, develop and select the most talented athletes regardless of age, gender, disability or social background”. In working towards the achievement of the strategy targets, SNI must have a clearly defined Talent Framework in the context of current resources and capacity to deliver.

The purpose of the Sport Northern Ireland Talent Framework **(TF)** 2010 – 13 is to act as a reference point to guide the work of Sport NI, through improving existing sports pathways, where necessary create new working models to maximise the number of talented athletes within Governing Body pathways. The Sport NI TF will be used to define all the working areas relating to Talent Identification and Development.

The primary objective is the desire to develop a talent system that is sustainable, successful and effective beyond 2013.

Definition of Terms

Talent Framework (TF)

This document uses the term 'Talent Framework' (TF) to illustrate the operational processes required to develop successful talent systems.

Talent Identification (TID)

Identification of participants with the potential to become Elite performers.

Talent Development Environment (TDE)

A world class environment would address coaching, sports science, sports medicine, training and competition programmes.

1 Talent Framework Key Planning principles

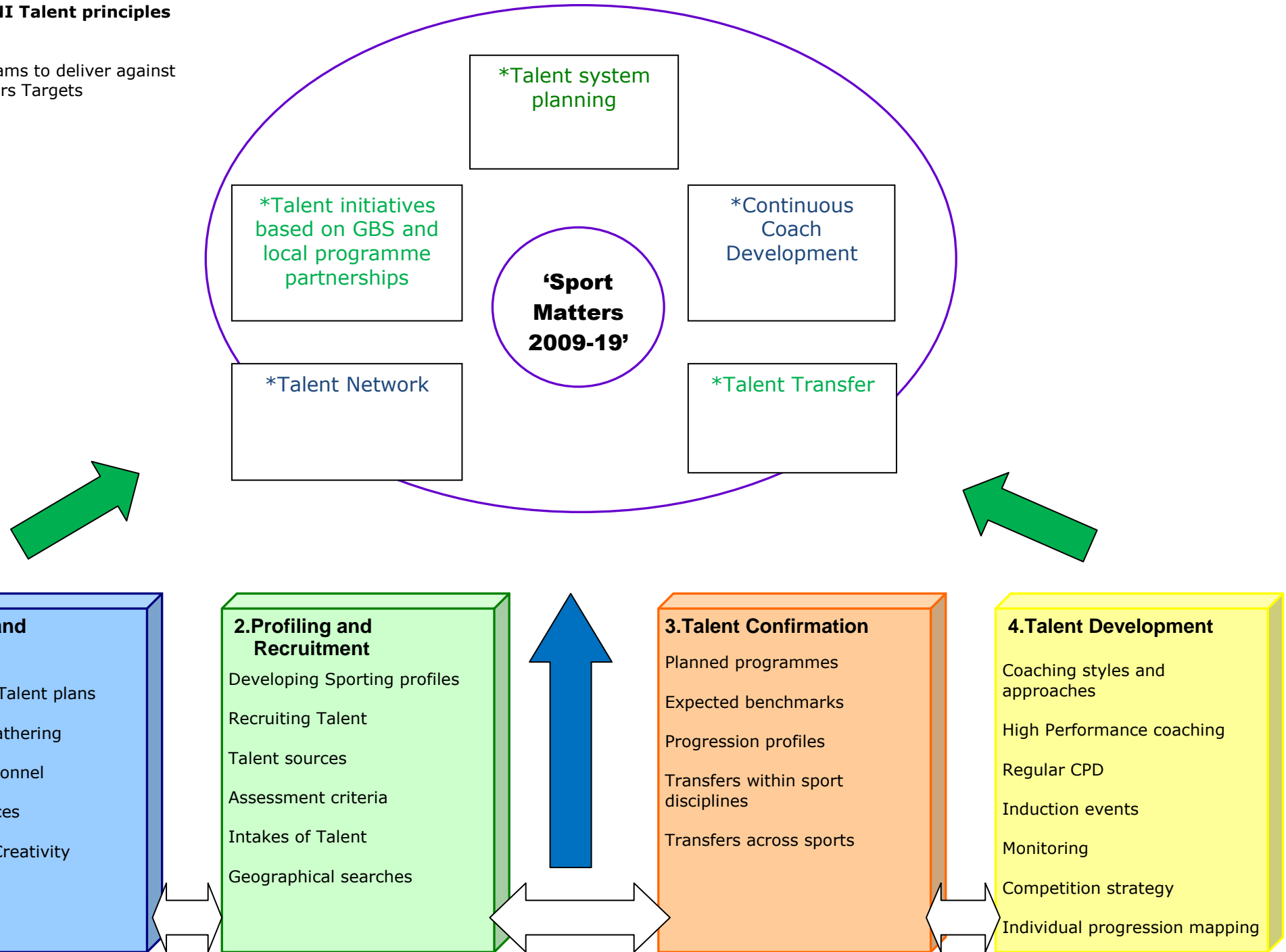
The 2010 – 2013 Talent Framework comprises four key planning principles (see figure 1 – NI Talent principles) and will be used to build the Talent system:

1. Planning and preparation
 - Sport specific Talent plans
 - Intelligence gathering
 - Managing personnel
 - Support services
 - Innovation and creativity
2. Profiling and recruitment
 - Developing sporting profiles
 - Recruiting Talent
 - Talent sources
 - Assessment criteria
 - Intakes of Talent
 - Geographical searches
3. Talent Confirmation
 - Planned programmes
 - Expected benchmarks
 - Progression profiles
 - Transfers within sport disciplines
 - Transfer across sports
4. Talent Development
 - Coaching styles and approaches
 - High performance coaching
 - Regular Continuous Professional Development (CPD)
 - Clearly defined programmes
 - Yearly targets
 - Induction events
 - Monitoring
 - Competition strategy
 - Individual progression mapping

The Talent framework will have an impact on all associated Governing Body's of Sport (GBS) linking closely and in partnership with local District Councils, Further Education Establishments, Schools and relevant organisations. Individual Talent plans will be devised with each Governing Body to assist them in developing more proactive practices to address Talent areas identified through the Governing Body Talent Health Check (See Appendix 1)

Figure 1. NI Talent principles

*Work streams to deliver against Sport Matters Targets



2 The 2010 – 2013 Talent Framework

The 2010 – 2013 TF has been informed following the delivery of a range of talent projects and consultation with key stakeholders in NI Sport. This comprises 5 work streams:

- **Talent System Planning**
- **Talent initiatives based on GBS and local Programme partnerships**
- **Talent transfer**
- **Continuous Coach Development**
- **Talent Network**

2.1 Talent System Planning

The talent programme will also work in consultation with up to 14 sports per year to review and develop their talent recruitment and development models.

2.2 Talent initiatives based on GBS and local programme partnerships

Working in partnership with targeted GBS and local District Council partnerships, to design and implement initiatives to capture talent from the targeted environment and to assist in the development of smarter detection systems to confirm existing talent. This will include:

- Undertaking 3-4 projects with identified sports and local partnerships per year, to run proactive, large scale talent identification initiatives delivering 'new' athletes with outstanding potential into the system.
- Utilise the existing NI support services network and database to develop more sophisticated and accurate talent identification assessment and monitoring tools to assess both talented athletes and existing talent within the sport.
- The talent programme will also work in consultation with up to 14 sports per year to review and develop their talent recruitment and development models.

2.3 Talent transfer

This work will be a small and highly selective component of the TF. Initially the programme will establish a referral network with Performance Lifestyle Staff and other Institute performance sport colleagues to identify talent transfer opportunities for former elite athletes looking for a new challenge in a compatible sport. Key aspects of this work will be as follows:

- 2-3 targeted opportunities per year with detailed tracking of progress. Examples include within:
 - Sport talent transfer (discipline to discipline)
 - Between sports talent transfer
- Establish and recognise the unique demands of performance coaching in elite talent transfer athletes including profiling, understanding the process and managing expectations.

2.4 Continuous Coach Development

To succeed, a key area for the TF is the assurance that athletes with outstanding potential are provided with the coaching expertise and the environment to enable them to medal. To enable this to happen a network of GB talent staff will drive the talent identification, recruitment and education opportunities to create a pool of sport specific Talent Coaches. It is proposed that these coaches will operate in key sports areas as talent specialists to create the environment necessary to maximise the potential of identified athletes. The following is proposed by way of providing clarity:

- Sport specific pathway athletes (GBS Development coach)
- 'Talented' Athletes (GBS Talent Coach)
- Elite athlete fine tuning and management (HP Coach)

It is envisaged that these roles will require a very specific combination of breadth of knowledge and delivery skills which will need to be 'grown' over time. The following are initial talent programme priorities:

- Develop a template of the skill-set required and provide assessment against these abilities for existing and potential Talent Coaches.
- Following this assessment, establish a package of support around these coaches to improve coaching practices.

2.5 Talent Network

The aim of the talent network is to generate and access talent knowledge that can be applied in practice to improve GBS talent systems. The initial focus has been the establishment of a Talent Officer workshop programme focussing on key areas where specific talent knowledge can be gained as part of a generic and as necessary topic specific CPD programme. Talent 'related topics' identified from GBS coaches in the SNI GB talent health check include:

- Talent conversion rates
- Talent profiling
- Fast-tracking safely
- Competition focus
- Monitoring and evaluating training hours
- Managing parents
- Using science to predict and forecast talent
- Genetics and talent
- Psycho-social elements around training and development
- Prediction of talent from trainability studies

3 Governing Body Sports (GBS)

The TF will target the work programmes and systems in funded sports to assist them in developing more proactive practices to address specific talent weakness and 'gaps' building towards 2013. GBS with Talent Officers in post will be prioritised. The sports are as follows:

3.1 Funded Sports

The GBS with Talent officers currently in post are:

- Archery
- Athletics
- Badminton
- Canoeing
- Cricket
- Cycling
- Hockey
- Mountaineering
- Orienteering
- Rowing
- Rugby
- Show Jumping
- Squash
- Wrestling

3.2 Assisted Sports

Further assistance will be provided to GBS building a Talent system within their Sport although not currently having Talent as a funded prioritised post and include:

- Bowls
- Boxing
- GAA
- Gymnastics
- Judo
- Netball
- Volleyball
- Sailing
- Shooting
- Swimming
- Tennis

3.3 Other Targeted Sports

The TF retains the ability to develop talent projects with targeted sports in the medium to long-term while offering the opportunity to learn peripherally from the outputs of the main initiatives.

4 Measuring Success

The following areas will be monitored to track progress and assess the TF's overall impact. These indicators are split into 4 areas and include:

4.1 Best Athletes

- Quality of athletes invited and applying to be assessed
- Athletes making it beyond initial testing
- Athletes making it to Irish/Great Britain programmes
- Ability of testing to accurately assess key factors
- Talent transfer targeted athletes taking up the challenge
- Range of innovative identification methods out-with normal pathways.

4.2 Suitable Coaches/Support Staff

- Recognised assessment processes for employing coaches
- Amount of CPD delivered
- On-going assessment of CPD implementation
- Measured improvement of key factors of talented athletes
- Talent Officers with Talent coach support groups
- Talent Coaches/support Staff recognised and employed in NI sport

4.3 Exceptional environments

- Contact time
- Athlete satisfaction of experience – ongoing feedback
- Coach to athlete ratio

4.4 Winning performances

Based on medals won at major events:

- Olympic
- Paralympic
- Commonwealth
- World
- European

The process to conduct monitoring of GBS implementing an effective Talent Identification and Development system is through the RAG assessment document (See Appendix 2)

Conclusion

In order for NI's athletes to win consistently on the world's stage it is essential to implement and improve talent recruitment, confirmation and development systems.

To achieve this will require the underpinning of the four Key Talent principles and the interaction of all key delivery agencies and their staff. The SNI Talent Framework will ensure clear guidance to enable the development of skills and expertise in the area of identifying, confirming and developing athletes with outstanding potential.

Talent Identification and Development Health Check

The development of clear systems and structures within governing bodies for the identification, confirmation and development of talent is critical to the success of performance sport in Northern Ireland.

The implementation of effective strategies to reduce the accidental nature of how talent is discovered, confirmed and developed is essential in the creation of a sustainable pathway which increases the flow of talent through to World Class performance level. This is an important area in terms of the development of 4 year plans from 2009 to 2013.

The key purpose of the health check is to:

- to accurately describe the talent landscape in Northern Ireland
- to understand individual sports talent models
- to identify critical gaps in knowledge and expertise
- to identify examples of best practice across the talent landscape of sports

The information will be utilised to formulate a Talent Action Plan for Northern Ireland within which a phased approach to the levels of interaction with individual sports will be defined.

The Health Check will explore the following key areas:

- Planning and preparation
- Profiling and recruitment
- Confirmation
- Development

Key definitions:

Talent identification, development, selection, confirmation, transfer, detection, performance gap, performance pathway, to be included.

Please provide the following information:

- Sport:
- Specific discipline (if appropriate):
- Name of sport representative completing:

1. Does your sport have a well developed talent strategy embedded within a defined player / athlete performance pathway?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please reference the sport document where this is defined.

Note – a talent strategy should include how your sport recruits, confirms and develops talented performers.

If no, please progress to Question 5.

2. Does your sport have any Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure the effectiveness of the talent programme?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Please provide details of your KPIs

3. Please define your sports vision / mission for your talent programme. List the top three defining aspects of this vision / mission?

- _____
- _____
- _____

4. Please detail the strategies your sport plans to implement in order to achieve these visions / missions?

- _____
- _____
- _____

5. Has your sport undertaken an extensive analysis of the performance gap to podium success taking into account past, present and future world trends?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

If no, please progress to Question 7

6. From this information, can you identify "soft" medal opportunities at Olympic / Commonwealth / World Championship level? For example notable events, weight categories, disciplines, genders that may have less strength in depth at world level.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

If yes, please describe these events / disciplines?

If yes, is your sport actively working to maximise these opportunities? Please tick any of the following that apply;

- Concentrated / aggressive recruitment drives
- Appointment of specialist coaches and / or dedicated talent personnel.
- Development of a targeted recruitment strategy to address these opportunities
- Other
- Don't know

7. How many of your current senior international representatives were previously junior international representatives?

- Males:
- Females:

8. Please detail the conversion rate from junior international representation to senior international representation, An estimate of the percentage conversion rate would be appropriate.

- Males:
- Females:

9. How important would your sport rate performance results at Junior Championships level as an indicator for predicting future senior international success?

- Very important
- Moderately important
- Not very important
- Don't know

10. Please identify any barriers which you are aware of that typically prevent juniors progressing to become successful seniors in your sport? Mark any of the following that apply.

- Specialist coaching
- Inappropriate training programmes
- Inappropriate performance profile
- Repeated injury, illness
- Over competing, under training

- Loss of motivation, commitment, hunger, drive for excellence
- Money / funding
- Self doubts about talent / future potential
- Self doubts about skill / technical ability
- Social distractions
- Access to training facilities
- Impatient to make junior to senior transition
- Complacency
- Problems travelling internationally and competing on the world circuit
- Family issues or lack of social support structure
- Educational expectations
- Late developers – athlete not initially physically mature enough to successfully compete at senior level.
- Transfer to another sport
- Poor programme support – lack of a proactive approach by your sport to retain the athlete and nurture through the transition stage.
- Lack of successful Olympic/World performers as role models within your sport
- Other
- Don't know

If possible rate the top three barriers which prevent juniors from progressing to senior level. Please number the above barriers.

11. Please detail the approximate number of people within your sport dedicated to recruitment, assessment and initial confirmation of talent (this would be the point where participants first enter the performance pathway) (this would include coaches, sports scientists).

- Full time staff:
- Part time staff:
- Volunteers:

If possible provide the name of the primary person responsible for activity at this stage.

12. Please detail the number of people within your sport dedicated to the talent development programme (this would include coaches, sports scientists).

- Full time staff:
- Part time staff:
- Volunteers:

If possible provide the name of the primary person responsible for activity at this stage.

13. Does your sport have any of the following systems for identifying, developing and mentoring specialist talent coaches? i.e. coaches who work with World Class talent and / or Development athletes.

- Formalised recruitment system to recruit specialist talent identification and development coaches.
- Formalised programme of study, experiences, regular CPD opportunities in developing and mentoring talent identification and development coaches.

14. Please detail the key support services your sport provides for athletes on talent identification and development programmes (e.g. sport medicine, physiotherapy, performance analysis, biomechanics, nutrition, strength and conditioning)?

15. Who is the main support provider to athletes / coaches on your talent programme?

- Sports Institute for Northern Ireland
- University
- NCTC
- Other
- Don't know

16. How creative and innovative do you feel your recruitment strategies have been?

- Exceptionally creative and innovative – cutting edge, very proactive, internationally recognised.
- Fairly creative and innovative – some examples of novel work undertaken.
- Not very creative or innovative – just managing the basics.
- No evidence of anything creative or innovative.
- Not sure.

Please provide details of any special or innovative work your sport has undertaken in the recruitment or development of talent.

17. Please detail the number of years on average it takes to develop male and female world class athletes in your sport (from the point of specialisation)

Male

Female

Number of years to world class?

Minimum age to specialise?

Maximum age to specialise?

Optimum age to specialise?

Please provide any further specific details in reference to particular disciplines within your sport.

18. What is the typical age in which talent is recruited into the performance pathway in your sport?

- Male:
- Female:

19. Does your sport have clearly defined talent profiles that are used as a guiding framework to access new talent?

- Yes
- Part way there
- No
- Don't know

20.How are talent profiles developed within your sport?

- Examining past trends of successful performers
- Coaches eye / gut feeling / intuition
- Performance modelling likely medallists
- Copied from other nations
- Scientific evidence
- Other
- Don't know

21.How accurate do you think your talent profiles are in predicting the future potential of world class athletes?

- Very accurate
- Somewhat accurate
- Not accurate
- Not able to measure

22. Please detail the methods by which talent is recruited into your sport?

- Analysis of competition results
- Examining progression profiles of existing performers
- Talent scouts
- Screening days for existing performers
- Open trial days
- Transfer across disciplines within your sport
- Talent transfer i.e. recruitment of athletes from other like sports
- Schools / PE teachers
- Universities
- Public appeals
- Sibling testing
- Multi sport talent camps
- Through assistance from SINI
- Word of mouth
- Other
- Don't know

23. Please identify any other sports which provide a useful foundation for success in your sport?

24. How satisfied is your sport with the methods utilised for recruitment of talent?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Not very satisfied
- Not sure

25. Who normally carries out the assessment of talent within your sport?

- Head coaches / High Performance Coaches
- Talent or Development coaches
- Sports scientists
- Performance Director
- Other
- Don't know

26. How widespread is your search for talent?

- Nationally
- Local or regional
- Other

27. Are there certain areas which are hot beds for talent in your sport?

- Yes
- No

Please provide details of these areas.

28. Do you have a talent confirmation stage as part of your overall talent assessment process?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

If so, what is the average duration of this phase?

29. Do you have a formalised exit strategy for unsuccessful talent?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

30. Please describe your sports model for the talent development programme.

- Centralised model, i.e. athletes train together at a central venue, coached by a GBS employed coach.
- Decentralised model, i.e. athletes train separately and are coached by a club based coach.
- Camp based, i.e. some athletes in a centralised programme and others remain in regions.
- Partly centralised i.e. intermittent camp based programme
- Other
- Don't know

31. How prescriptive is your sports talent development programme in designing the training and competition programme for selected athletes?

- Totally controlled and prescribed training and competition i.e. daily, weekly, monthly
- Moderately prescriptive, need to plan with individual performance coaches
- Mildly prescriptive, mostly left to individual athletes and their club coaches
- Not prescriptive, left to athlete to develop

- Difficult to say

32. How does your sport monitor training hours and progression of athletes? For example; volumes, intensity, duration, adaptation.

- Training diaries
- Coaching logs
- Governing body central records
- Performance testing
- Other
- Don't know

33. How many training camps on average does a performer on your talent development programme attend per year?

How many days does a typical training camp last?

34. Please estimate the number of domestic and international competitions that a performer on your talent development programme will participate in throughout a year.

- Domestic:
- International:

35. What is the major international competition focus for performers within your talent development programme? For example; World Junior Championships, European Juniors, Under 23.

- _____
- _____
- _____

36. Please detail the maximum length of time you expect a performer to spend on your talent development programme, i.e. before they advance to full senior international level / podium level / ASP / SINI / carding scheme.

- _____

37. How do you measure the progress of the performers within the talent development programme?

- Awareness of what a performer needs to be achieving at the relevant stage of the development programme.
- Based upon knowledge of previous performers
- Use of competition results
- Don't know

38. What methods are used to monitor progress?

- Competition results
- Performance based testing
- Changes in physiology
- Changes in body composition
- Skill testing
- Changes in attitude / lifestyle choices
- Other
- Don't know

39. Which of the above areas are used to select / deselect performers from your talent development programme?

- Competition results
- Performance based testing
- Changes in physiology
- Changes in body composition
- Skill testing
- Changes in attitude / lifestyle choices
- Other
- Don't know

40. Has your sport considered actively searching for performers from other sports in which performers display similar talent characteristics? For example rowing to cycling, gymnastics to diving.

- Yes
- No

If yes, please provide details.

41. Please detail any barriers your sport has faced / faces in delivering targeted talent identification and development projects?

- Availability of specialist talent practitioners to design programmes
- Resource
- Time constraints of existing staff
- Sports ability to attract new talent (the perceived profile of the sport)
- Getting access to talent pools
- Coaching gaps
- Available facilities
- Available equipment

- Other
- Don't know

42. Please detail the main areas in which you would like support regarding general talent issues in your sport i.e. recruitment, confirmation, development, coaching)

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Thank you for undertaking this process.

Signed: _____

Print Name: _____

Contact no: _____

E-mail: _____

5.2 Key Performance Indicators – Talent Identification

Number	Name	Type	Programme Objectives
KPI	Talent Identification	Output	Theme
Definition	<p>The number of governing bodies implementing an effective system that will improve the way: in which talented sports performers in Northern Ireland are identified, confirmed and developed.</p> <p>An effective system will be assessed against the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talent Model • Talent Profiling • Talent Development Environment • Talent Coach Development • Talent Tracking <p>The individual system areas and RAG indicators are identified in Appendix 1</p>		
Baseline at April 2009	Talent Health check tool findings currently processed and with Governing Bodies		
Analysis	This is an indicator of how governing bodies are currently placed regarding a model for Talent, critical gaps in knowledge and expertise and examples of best practice across the talent landscape of sports based on 5 key areas.		

	This figure will be cumulative – it will keep growing as long as SNI continues to undertake assessments (directly or indirectly).
Collection	A governing body will record itself based on where it currently stands regarding the 5 areas based on the Talent Health Check. In addition SNI will verify that information from its own records and risk rating of the sport.
Important Notes	

Talent Identification – Key Performance Indicators

System Area	RED (Not yet Established)	AMBER (Emerging)	GREEN (Effective)
Talent Model	No evidence of how a Talent Strategy will be developed and limited evidence to describe the development of systems for the identification, confirmation and development of athletes.	No evidence of proposals for a well developed Talent Strategy to be put in place, but evidence of plans to develop systems within a number of specific areas.	Evidence of a clearly defined Talent Strategy or plans to develop a Talent Strategy which provides a guiding framework to identify, confirm and develop talent.
Talent Profiling	Evidence of the use of informal systems for identifying talent which will rely on the subjective views of coaches / selectors / others. No evidence of the development or planned use of talent profiles to access new talent.	Proposals to agree a system across the sport to identify new talent. Evidence of the development and planned use of talent profiles to access new talent.	Evidence of a well defined system to identify, recruit and confirm talent, including specific detail of how talent profiles will be utilised, how talent profiles are developed, talent pools to be targeted and proposed recruitment cycles. Evidence of detailed analysis being utilised to develop these systems and of agreement across the sport.
Talent Development Environment	Evidence of proposals to deliver a limited talent development programme which will be mildly prescriptive in relation to training and competition programmes and will not clearly focus upon developing potentially elite senior performers.	Evidence of proposals to deliver partly centralised talent development programme which will be moderately prescriptive in relation to training and competition programmes and not completely focused upon developing potentially elite senior performers.	Evidence of a well structured talent development programme which will be totally athlete centred with a clear focus to develop potentially elite senior performers. The programme will manage and control all aspects of the performer's development.
Talent Coach Development	No evidence of plans to define a system for the recruitment and professional development of coaches / support staff working across the talent landscape.	Evidence of plans for a recruitment system and an informal professional development programme for coaches / support staff working across the talent landscape.	Evidence of proposals for a formalised recruitment and professional development programme for coaches / support staff working across the talent landscape.
Talent Tracking	No evidence of how the performance gap to world class will be assessed or of a system to monitor and review the talent programme.	Evidence of a system to access the performance gap to world class, but no formal monitoring and review process in place to measure the effectiveness of the talent programme.	Evidence of how the talent programme will be monitored and reviewed and kept up to date with world wide best practice including how the performance gap to podium success will be analysed.