

What is a Regional Academy?

The Regional Academies are a vital part of the Badminton Wales player pathway. Badminton Wales currently have three Regional Academies. Nationally their aim is to provide talented Welsh athletes the expertise within a performance environment delivered by fully qualified UKCC Level 2/3 Coaches and personnel.

The Regional Academies provide the link between the Satellite Centres which feed into the Badminton Wales' High Performance and the GB Talent pathway. The alignment of Badminton Wales' player pathway with the GB Talent, will enable us to monitor and develop our Regional Academy players in accordance to GB and High Performance requirements.

How do you become part of the Regional Academy?

For any player to gain selection into any of our three Badminton Wales Regional Academies, players will be required to be recommended by a Lead Coach of an accredited Satellite Centre. Selection into the Regional Academy will be dependent on the recommended player providing evidence and the potential to reach the minimum entry criteria and will be asked to complete a basic fitness test and an on-court trial. Trial duration is at the discretion of the Regional Academy Lead Coach. To support each player's submission for Regional Academy consideration Satellite Lead coaches will be required to submit information regarding the history of a player(s) badminton profile. (What is a player's profile?)

What does a Regional Academy provide?

Regional Academies provide a performance environment which closely mirrors the requirements of becoming an elite athlete. Performance monitoring through a structured and planned tournament and training programs tailored for each individual provides the foundation for a player's early development. Strength and Conditioning will be provided and carries a considerable amount of focus providing the basic fundamentals of strength and condition to aid our player's physical development and long term injury prevention.

The program will be overseen by the expertise of Takumi Nishida of Sport Wales and Jason Pedley of Cardiff Metropolitan University. The content of the Strength and Conditioning program will be centrally controlled by National Performance Manager in-conjunction with local partners to deliver a consistent program nationally.

Regional Academy players will be fitness tested a minimum of two times per season. The testing is an essential element to our players' physical development, allowing the coaching team to analyse progression and then process the fitness data into their training programs, that will highlight the areas of focus and development for that particular period. Both players and parents will receive regular feedback highlighting and explaining the areas which need to be developed by providing advisory comments and guidance on how to address.

Regional Academy coaches will advise on each player's tournament program ensuring players are competing at an appropriate level. Planning of the tournaments will take place on a regular basis, where numerous players are attending the same tournament(s) Badminton Wales will provide coaching support for our Regional Academy players at this event.

What is the next step from Regional Academy?

On becoming a Regional Academy player all players will be continually monitored regarding their on-court and physical development. Player standards and expectancy will be closely aligned to the GB talent pathway enabling our coaching team to effectively plan by using historical GB benchmarking data to measure players progress.

The Regional Academy structure will target the development of each player to the highest standards to enable them to reach their maximum potential, with the ultimate aim to become part of the High Performance and GB Talent pathway. Continuation from Regional Academy to High Performance will be criteria driven, and coaches will guide players and parents through these stages of transition by offering support in all areas of performance.

What is the age range of a Regional Academy?

The performance pathway will aim to be ability driven by using age as a point of reference regarding monitoring and results. However, in the initial set-up of the Regional Academies the entry age will be around 9-11 years of age, which is expected to rise as the required entry standards rise. Recruiting talented players with potential at this age will enable them to receive support and development over a prolonged period, that will increase their chances of progressing to the highest level.

The introduction of these newly formed tiers is to encourage our players to remain an integral part of their Club/Satellite Centre. A player once established within the Regional Academy can expect to be in there until their ability and progress dictates to them being recommended to High Performance. As a guide we would not expect players who compete at under 17 level to be in the Regional Academy tier.

Satellite inclusion

*Frequency of Regional Academy may differ region to region.