

Rio 2016


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2017 Culture Health Check Report

MAY 2018

Foreword – Dame Katherine Grainger, Chair of UK Sport

The Culture Health Check was already underway when I arrived at UK Sport last year but in the time I have been Chair it is one of the things I am most proud of the Olympic and Paralympic high performance sport system for undertaking. The process has been brave, bold and ambitious in holding a stark mirror up to our system to get a true picture of what is really going on. The result is a system that will be stronger and more self-aware both in terms of performance and experience.

Our system has always been curious to learn and keen to improve and so we went to industry-leading experts to find out how the best and most challenged go about their work. We engaged as widely as possible, with more than 2,500 people consulted in all corners of our organisations, ranging from athletes to staff and stakeholders who know the system best. This health check is also just one part of our wide set of work on improving the culture in our world class programmes, developing our duty of care towards staff and athletes, and reforming the governance of sport.

As in all aspects of high performance, regular reviews, in-depth analysis and subsequent meaningful actions are needed to be sure improvements are as good as they can be. We are not shying away from any of the difficult issues we may have in our sports or what we need to improve. I am proud that all of our sports have shown huge commitment to this process, even when it asked them to face some uncomfortable findings. They all want to be better and recognise that looking after their people is at the heart of that.

Last year I challenged our system to be the best in the world at culture, governance and integrity in sport, just as we aim to be the best at performance. The Culture Health Check is an essential part of that process and publishing its findings is an important staging post on that journey that will enable us to improve further and do the right thing more often. I hope it is read in the same spirit in which it was developed – by a system which asks everyone to be honest, acknowledges its weaknesses as well as its strengths, learns from both, and ever strives to be the best it can be; so that we can continue our mission to inspire the nation with Olympic and Paralympic success.



2017 Culture Health Check

Your opportunity to let us know what it is like to be an athlete or staff member in your sport.

This survey provides a chance for you to feedback on what you SEE, HEAR and FEEL on a daily basis in you Programme.

It is totally anonymous, run on behalf of your sport by an independent company called 'Future Thinking'.

Your views are really important and the feedback will be used to ensure that we continue to build on the success of Team GB and Paralympics GB and provide the best environment in which you can excel.

You will shortly receive an email invitation containing a link to the survey from uksportsurveys@euro.confirm.it

If you do not receive your email invitation please contact your Performance Lifestyle Advisor.

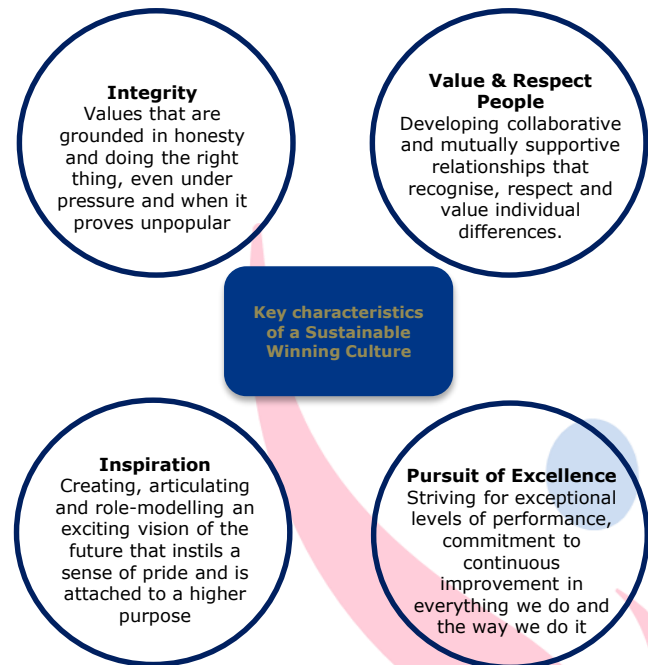
futurethinking


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The Culture Health Check: Background and Context

- Since the advent of National Lottery funding more than 20 years ago, the UK's Olympic and Paralympic High Performance System has experienced a stratospheric rise in success to the extent that it is now envied by many other nations around the world. In particular, the last three quadrennial cycles (Beijing, London and Rio) have seen a period of unparalleled success that has inspired the nation.
- At the start of the new Tokyo cycle it was essential that we avoided complacency and continued to be mindful of not just 'what' we deliver but 'how' we go about it. In the spirit of continuous improvement, we have committed to pursue new and innovative ventures that could enable us to achieve even more in Tokyo and Beijing. It is clear that one of the areas where we believe we can create a better High Performance System is the promotion of sustainable, winning world class cultures.
- UK Sport has routinely collected feedback from athletes and staff since 2009. The 'Athlete & Staff Insight' surveys contained questions related to 'Climate' which informed each Sport's annual review process. Given the rapidly changing environment across society, which rightly puts an even greater emphasis on our duty of care towards those within the system, a new generation of athletes that have only ever experienced full-time funding in Olympic and Paralympic Sport, and a commitment to promote sustainability across the system, UK Sport designed the Culture Health Check (CHC) to provide a clear signal of the cultural health of the High Performance System.
- The design process started in March 2017, when UK Sport, in partnership with Lane 4 consulting, facilitated a series of culture focus groups with more than 140 delegates (including athletes, coaches, performance directors, support staff, chief executives and chairs) from across the High Performance System to help us define the key characteristics of a 'sustainable winning culture'. Reflecting on these characteristics an expert advisory group then helped us to design a survey which placed a greater emphasis on 'lived experiences', ie what you see, hear and feel on a daily basis in a World Class Programme. In addition to asking a larger number of insightful questions, the Culture Health Check was designed to offer a triangulated perspective (from athletes, staff and stakeholders) of the cultural health of each World Class Programme. Furthermore, many of the new CHC questions have been designed based on the four key characteristics of a 'sustainable winning culture' (described right)

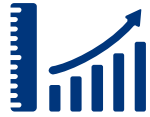


Methodology

- The Culture Health Check (CHC) is an independently administered survey which provides athletes, staff and stakeholders an opportunity to give feedback about their experiences of their own sport's World Class Programme. The survey is split into three sections; Culture, Athlete and System. It gives respondents the chance to describe what they SEE, HEAR and FEEL on a daily basis in their World Class Programme.
- It was compulsory for all funded World Class Programme athletes and employed World Class Programme staff to be invited to take part in the CHC. Each World Class Programme then nominated a minimum of five stakeholders (including international federations, Board members, Paralympic parents and carers and/or critical support services such as the British Olympic Association, British Paralympic Association, home country sports institutes and national governing body staff) in consultation with the relevant UK Sport Performance Advisor.
- Each survey contained approximately 45 questions in total, four of which were qualitative in nature. Each sport was able to add up to six sport-specific questions which were particularly relevant to their context.
- Each sport's survey was typically open for three to four weeks with a number of interventions, including a weekly reminder sent to anyone who was yet to complete the survey, to ensure a high response rate. Sports were required to reach a minimum 60% response rate otherwise their results were considered invalid and an alternative intervention was put in place by UK Sport
- After the survey was closed the independent research company compiled a comprehensive report for each sport within seven working days. The comprehensive report was initially reviewed by a panel of internal executives within UK Sport with guidance provided by the expert advisory panel.
- Within seven days the report was debriefed with the sport's Chief Executive, Performance Director, UK Sport Performance Advisor and/or a senior UK Sport executive. Within 12 weeks each sport was expected to feed back directly to every athlete and staff member to interpret and contextualise the results and develop a Culture Action Plan in conjunction with UK Sport.
- UK Sport compiled an independent panel of experts to review every World Class Programme Culture Action Plan and to provide constructive feedback and support where required. The Culture Action Plan panel convene several times a year to review and monitor progress against agreed actions.
- The outcomes of the CHC process were shared with every sport's Chair and Board with UK Sport personnel present at the relevant Board meeting. The results of the CHC also inform UK Sport's annual review of world class programmes, specifically the dimension related to culture.



Who took part?



Overall

2,074 were invited to take part and 1,525 completed the survey

73%
Response rate

All fieldwork for funded summer sports took place between July and November 2017 using an online survey methodology



Athletes

895 athletes were invited to take part and 682 completed the survey

76%
Response rate



Staff

787 staff were invited to take part and 630 completed the survey

80%
Response rate



Stakeholders

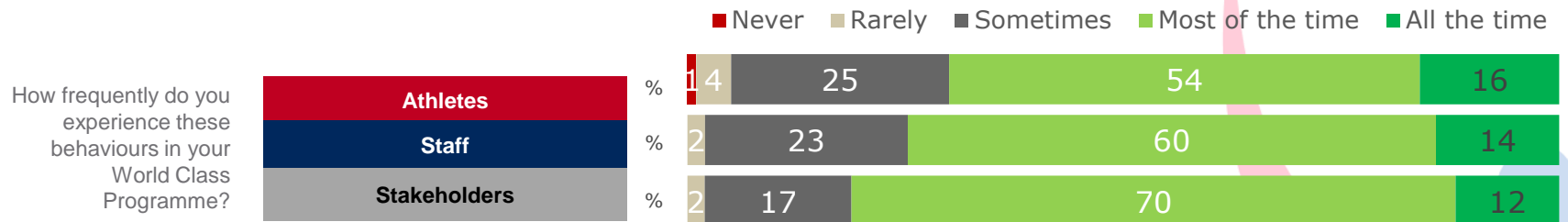
392 stakeholders were invited to take part and 213 completed the survey *

54%
Response rate

* A stakeholder was not necessarily employed but had an association and / or vested interest in the world class programme (eg parents, Paralympic carers, sponsors, board members, International Federations)

Experience of guiding principles and behaviours

Each sport has a set of values, principles and behaviours that they articulate and try to live by. Athletes, staff and stakeholders in 23 sports were asked how frequently they experienced their sport's values, principles or behaviours in their World Class Programme.



Coaching access and quality

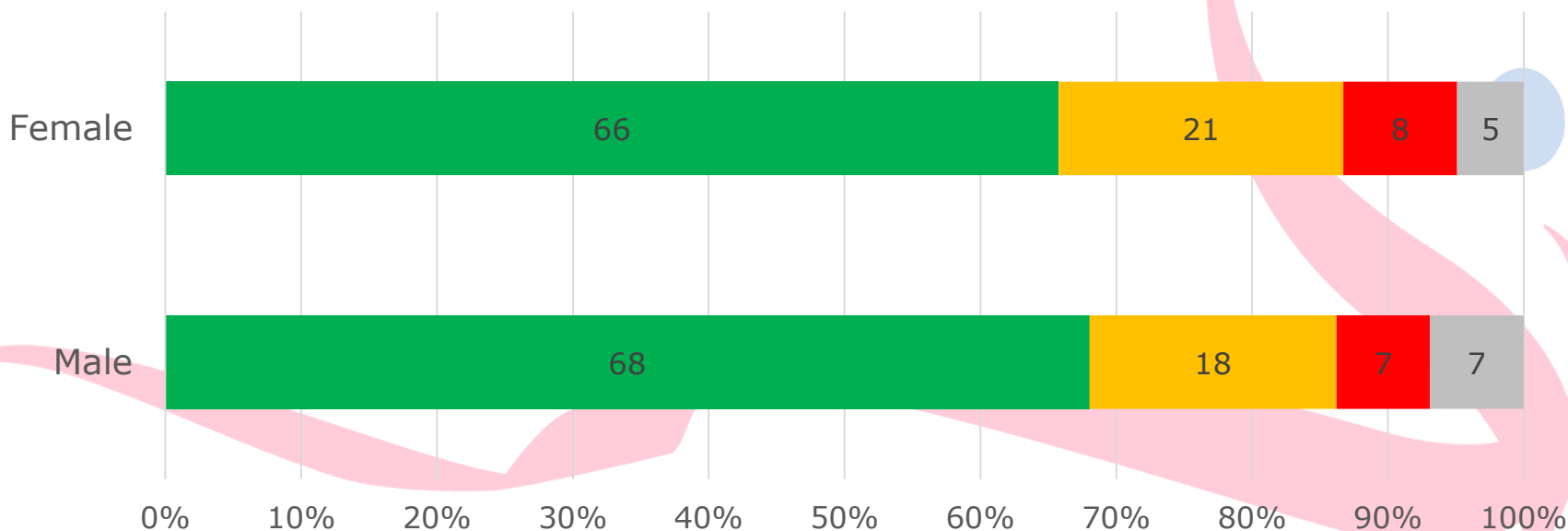
Which of the following statements best describes your views about the coaching you currently receive?

'The coaching I receive is of a quality that enables me to achieve my full potential as an athlete AND I am able to access the necessary amount of such coaching'

'The coaching I receive is of a quality that enables me to achieve my full potential as an athlete BUT I am not able to access the necessary amount of such coaching'

'The coaching I receive is NOT of a quality that will enable me to achieve my full potential as an athlete'

Don't know



Experience of World Class Programme

World Class Programme has added value to their development as a world class athlete



Athletes

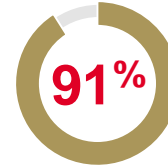
Podium Athletes

Podium Potential Athletes

2017



2015



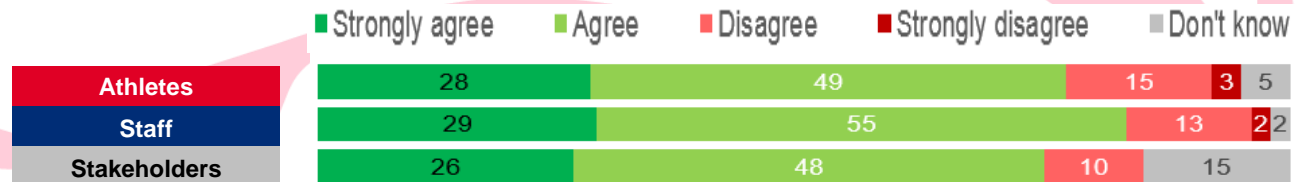
2014



Podium athletes are those that are targeting a medal at the next Olympic Games (eg Tokyo 2020)

Podium Potential athletes are those that are on track to medal at a future Olympic Games (eg Paris 2024)

Staff and athletes in their World Class Programme work effectively together as a team



Key strengths

■ Strongly agree
 ■ Agree
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree
 ■ Don't know

I feel proud to be part of my World Class Programme

Athletes
Staff
Stakeholders



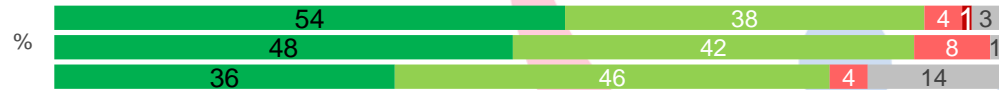
It feels like the people in my World Class Programme have good intentions

Athletes
Staff
Stakeholders



I am clear about what is expected of me

Athletes
Staff
Stakeholders



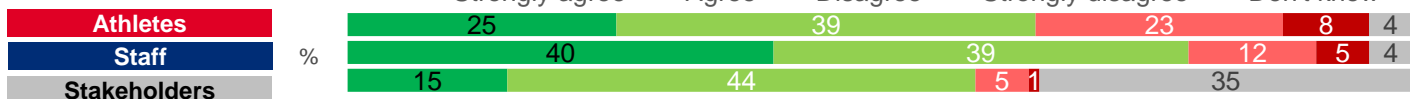
My World Class Programme encourages (and supports me) to be the best that I can be

Athletes
Staff
Stakeholders

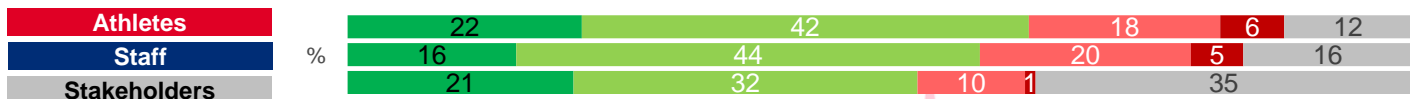


Key areas for improvement

In my World Class Programme I have opportunities to give feedback without fear of negative consequences



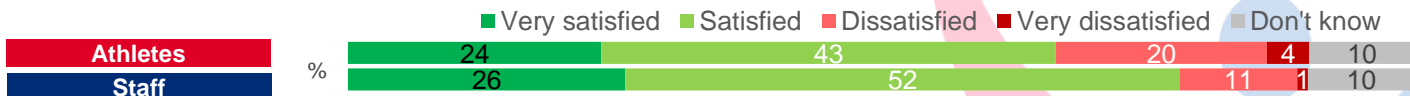
In my World Class Programme, there are consequences when people behave inappropriately



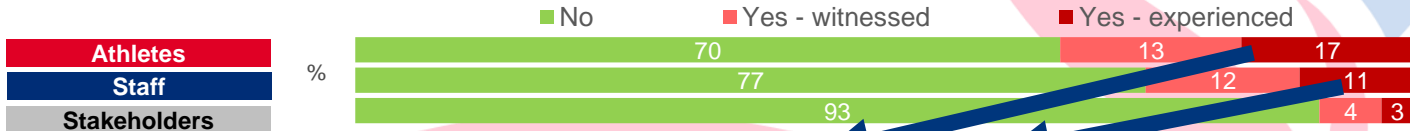
People in my World Class Programme are consistent (eg they do what they say they are going to even when under pressure)



What is your level of satisfaction with the measures taken in your sport to optimise the mental health of World Class Programme athletes?



In your World Class Programme, have you ever experienced or witnessed unacceptable behaviour?



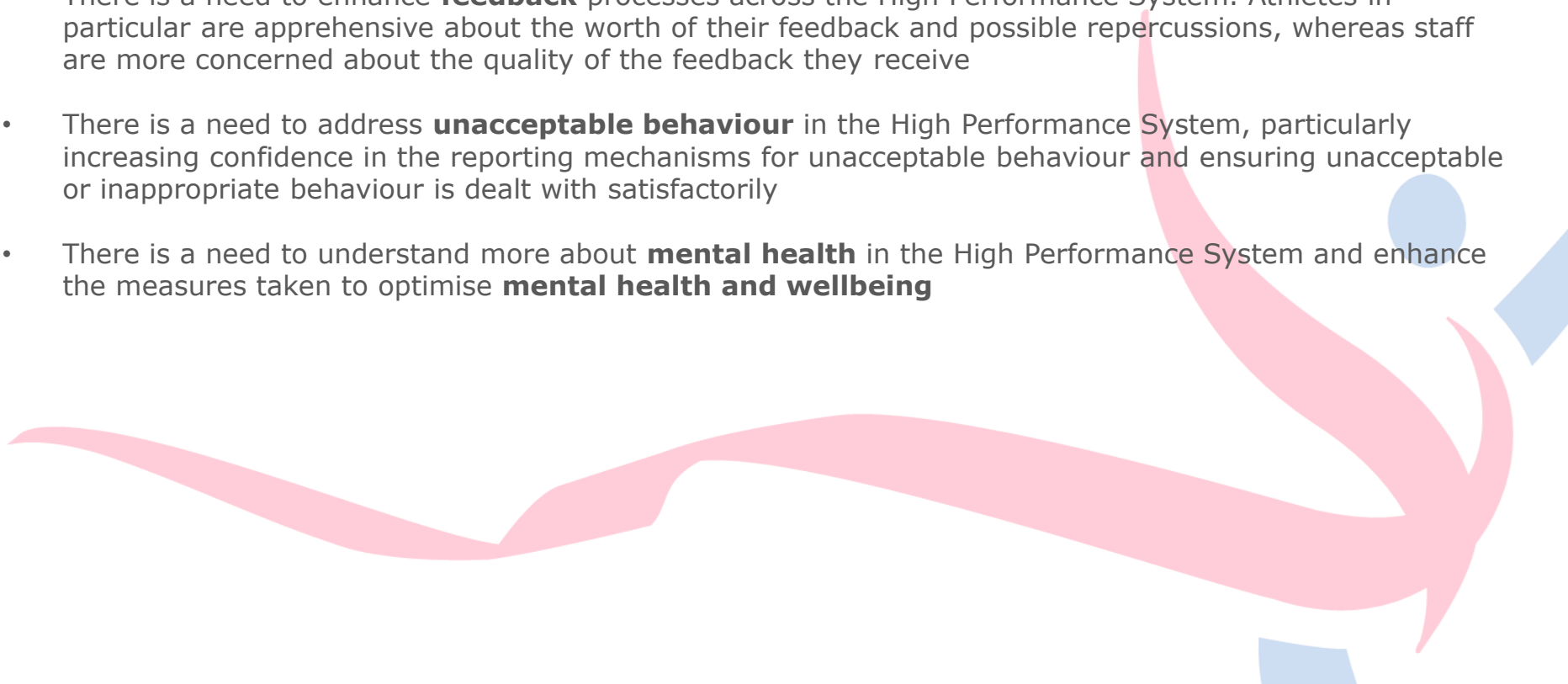
31% of staff that experienced or witnessed unacceptable behaviour formally reported it to their national governing body
 24% of athletes that experienced or witnessed unacceptable behaviour formally reported it to their national governing body

Culture Health Check summary observations - positives

- The results of the Culture Health Check were **largely encouraging** with athletes and staff in particular providing positive feedback about their lived experience in their World Class Programme
- There is a strong sense among **athletes** that their World Class Programme has added value to their development and generally provides them with a good standard of service, such as coaching and performance support
- Physiotherapy, strength and conditioning, sport science, performance lifestyle advice and sport psychology are widely perceived by athletes as being of a **gold standard**. Similarly, coaches are praised for their knowledge, commitment, experience and the support they provide to athletes
- Generally, **Staff** are positive about their World Class Programme, including most aspects of the culture, performance support and the World Class Programme team. Encouragingly, staff are also strongly committed to a drug-free culture and have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the team
- Most **Stakeholders** view the World Class Programme that they are associated with in a positive light, particularly in terms of their personal involvement and service provision
- Various staff and athletes across sports are applauded by **Stakeholders** for their work ethic, commitment, focus on performance, attitude and leadership qualities

Culture Health Check summary observations – areas for improvement

- **High Performance System culture challenges are not endemic** but there are some clear areas for improvement
- The High Performance System is best received by **young (<24) podium potential athletes**
- There is a need to enhance **feedback** processes across the High Performance System. Athletes in particular are apprehensive about the worth of their feedback and possible repercussions, whereas staff are more concerned about the quality of the feedback they receive
- There is a need to address **unacceptable behaviour** in the High Performance System, particularly increasing confidence in the reporting mechanisms for unacceptable behaviour and ensuring unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour is dealt with satisfactorily
- There is a need to understand more about **mental health** in the High Performance System and enhance the measures taken to optimise **mental health and wellbeing**



UK Sport 7-point culture action plan – progress so far

Area of Interest	Work Completed to Date
Sports Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed and enhanced grievance, discipline and conduct policies and developed better guidance on 'Unacceptable Behaviour' and reporting mechanisms. Introduced greater independence into disciplinary and grievance processes. Provided advice on handling integrity issues and organised briefing days to share best practice and up-skill Chief Executives and Performance Directors. Coordination of the UK Sport Mental Health Strategy.
Culture Health Check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed the first iteration of the Culture Health Check for all funded Olympic and Paralympic summer sport national governing bodies Ensured all summer funded Olympic and Paralympic Sports conducted debrief sessions with their athletes and staff to help interpret and contextualise the information contained in the Culture Health Check. Designed and developed Culture Action Plans for a number of sports which are being tracked and monitored as part of their ongoing Tokyo strategies and annual review processes. Will conduct a Culture Health Check for all the funded Winter sports from October 2018 to coincide with the start of the Beijing 2022 funding cycle. In the process of developing a more sophisticated Culture Health Check for sports which will provide more real-time, meaningful feedback about the cultural health of the world class programmes.
Values & Behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted a system-wide consultation to establish a set of values and behaviours for the High Performance System. Established values-based recruitment for all new leadership positions in the High Performance System. Established a system-wide induction for all new senior staff into the High Performance System with reference to system-wide values. In the process of establishing a new induction process for athletes into the High Performance System with reference to the system-wide values. In the process of developing a set of guidelines which identifies both optimal behaviours that are in line with the system-wide values and behaviours which are considered contrary to the system-wide values.
People Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reshaped and relaunched the People Development Function across the English Institute of Sport and UK Sport with a much greater emphasis on leadership and management skills. Hired a Deputy Director of People Development with an expertise in Learning and Development. Hired a Head of Culture Development and embedded sustainable high performance culture into all existing People Development Modules. In the process of hiring a Head of Leadership Development to amplify the focus on leadership in the High Performance System. Initiated Athlete Representative Training and Development.
Case Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established a new set of Mission Criteria for the Tokyo cycle with a greater emphasis on Culture and Governance. Established a new set of guidelines for effective case management of World Class Programmes.
Code for Sports Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented the world-leading Code for Sports Governance across funded Olympic and Paralympic national governing bodies. The Code ensures more rigour, authority, independence and expertise on governing bodies' Boards.
British Athletes Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commissioned a comprehensive independent review of the future needs of the UK's High Performance System in terms of athlete voice and representation and the services that should be provided for athletes in these areas. Doubled the investment into the British Athletes Commission for the Tokyo Cycle. Worked with the British Athletes Commission to build a future-focused strategy and structure that will meet the needs of athlete voice and representation for the Tokyo Cycle and beyond. The new structure focuses on providing an expert confidential advice and support service for athletes and includes the recruitment of a senior case officer to specifically service this need.

