

FOCUS AREAS FOR PERFORMANCE DIRECTORS OF WORLD CLASS PROGRAMME FUNDED OLYMPIC/ PARALYMPIC SPORTS

The purpose of this overview is to provide the core responsibilities, skill and experience requirements, and personal attributes that apply to the majority of Performance Director (PD) roles in Olympic and Paralympic sport. It aims to provide aspiring PDs with a guide to the essential capabilities needed for sustained success in the role. To note this is not a job description, this document encompasses the breadth of the role, a job description would be considerably shorter.

INTRODUCTION - ROLE CONTEXT

Each of the funded World Class Programmes (WCP) will be at different phases and stages of evolution. Areas that are important to consider are the WCP's current international standing and their mission/aspiration for the future which will provide essential context as to the scope and scale of the role and the degree of change and/ or progress expected. This may include additional facts and figures about strategic objectives, performance targets, pathway size and structure, staffing structure, number of direct reports and budget responsibility for the cycle.

ABOUT THE ROLE - JOB PURPOSE

The Performance Director's role is to lead the continued development and delivery of the National Governing Body high performance strategy, which includes the UK Sport funded WCP. As the strategic leader of the Performance Team, the PD will drive a vision, direction and world-leading culture that delivers sustainable success and inspiring performances at World Championships, Olympic and/or Paralympic Games. The PD will lead a Senior Leadership Team (SLT) which will typically include heads of function across event disciplines, coaching, pathway, operations and performance support, to optimise athlete performance and to achieve agreed strategic objectives. Teams could be a blend of employed, contracted and/ or English Institute of Sport or Home Nation staff.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Performance Leadership

- Lead the development and implementation of performance strategy, quadrennial and annual planning with the SLT, and report regularly on progress against objectives to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Board.
- Lead and manage the SLT to integrate and align excellent, evidence-based coaching and performance support (science and medicine, performance and data analysis, equipment, research and innovation, talent development, lifestyle and welfare support) as appropriate to each programme/stage of the pathway.
- Ensure best practice approaches to athlete selection/de-selection, classification (where relevant), and individualised planning and reviewing are in place throughout the pathway.
- Ensure best practice standards for athlete health, well-being, safeguarding and anti-doping are adhered to throughout the pathway.
- In conjunction with the SLT develop and maintain a healthy performance culture and climate that respects athletes, staff and partners.
- Ensure heads of function and direct reports are resourced, supported and professionally developed to meet their objectives and deliver consistently in their roles.
- Ensure effective leadership and management of GB representative teams at World Championships, Olympic and/or Paralympic Games.

2. Organisational leadership

- Oversee performance investment processes with funding agencies, delivery providers and partners.
- Lead the SLT to create annual operational plans and detailed budgets for all areas of responsibility including governance, legal aspect and the organisational health of the performance programme.
- Ensure strategy, plans and budgets are robustly tracked and monitored with regular reporting of progress against agreed targets/measures.
- Lead by example and champion core cultural values by ensuring that the organisation's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded into the strategy, plans, actions and behaviours of everyone within the WCP.
- Inspire all staff to reach their potential by driving a culture of continuous improvement, learning and innovation at all levels.

3. Relationship management (internal and external stakeholders)

- Report to the CEO on all aspects of the performance strategy and its implementation.
- Work closely with Selectors, the Performance Management Group and other relevant committees to ensure achievement of strategic objectives.
- Work collaboratively with the support functions of HR, Marketing, Commercial, Communications, IT and Finance* to achieve WCP and organisational goals, maximising resources wherever possible.
- Actively contribute to the strategic direction of the wider NGB through collaborative working with the Board and Senior Executive.
- Develop and maintain strong relationships with key external stakeholders such as the International Federation, funding agencies, partners, sponsors, training centre operators and support providers.
- Develop strong professional networks that include relationships with GB Performance Directors and international counterparts to capture and share best practice.
- Represent the sport with the media and act as a respected voice of authority across the domestic sporting landscape.

*the range of functions within a WCP will be dependent on the size of the sport and several sports may have the full range whilst others may have a smaller number of functions

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Based on an understanding of what it takes to be successful, the following are considered essential requirements for all PD roles.

Leadership Skills and Experience

- Significant experience of strategically leading and developing successful high-performance sport programmes and international level teams.
- Proven experience of leading a multi-disciplinary team in an elite sport environment.
- Strong track record of working through others to deliver results, of influencing behaviour change and impacting on progression.
- Strong track record of developing effective working relationships with multiple partners, stakeholders and providers.
- Experience of creating and maintaining a thriving team culture and environment.
- Proven experience of working in and adapting to different cultural contexts and environments.

High Performance Sport Knowledge

- Thorough understanding of world-class standards in high-performance sport environments (not necessarily in Olympic or Paralympic sport)

- Comprehensive knowledge of elite sport functions and good practice in performance planning, coaching, science and medicine, technology, international competition and talent pathways

Personal Qualities, Values and Behaviours - PDs baseline requirements are that they should:

- Have High emotional intelligence with a strong sense of cultural sensitivity.
- Be Self-aware, able to give and receive feedback and flex/adapt approach.
- Provide Inspiration to others, and have clarity of vision and direction, engendering confidence and followership.
- Be Adaptable and highly organised with the ability to multi-task and prioritise.
- Show sound judgement to solve problems and make decisions.
- Maintain a positive mindset in the face of difficult or pressured situations.
- Be Committed to and gain satisfaction from developing and empowering others.
- Be Passionate about and able to share the organisation's vision and values.

WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

- Paralympic Lead (if appropriate).
- Head of Performance Support.
- Athletes on WCP and their Coaches.
- Employed Coaches.
- Performance Staff.
- NGB Staff.
- Media.
- Sponsors.
- CEO, Board, Home Country Representatives.

Place of work, travel requirements and benefits package will be dependent on the WCP

Supporting resources:

- ***UK Sport Leadership Framework (with hyperlink)***
- ***For further information please contact Alex Stacey at talentqueries@uksport.gov.uk***