Rowing Ireland High-Performance Programme

Selection Appeals Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a **transparent, independent, and fair process** for the review of selection decisions within the Rowing Ireland High-Performance Programme.

This policy ensures that:

- Athletes have access to a **clear and credible mechanism** to challenge decisions on defined grounds
- All appeals are managed in accordance with **natural justice and procedural fairness**
- Selection decisions are subject to independent external review **where appropriate**
- The **integrity** of **performance-based decision-making** is maintained

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All selection decisions made by the High-Performance Selection Panel
- All athletes eligible for selection under the Rowing Ireland High-Performance Programme

This policy operates in conjunction with the Rowing Ireland Selection Policy.

3. Principles

The Selection Appeals Process is underpinned by the following principles:

- **Independence** – Appeals are determined externally by Sport Dispute Solutions Ireland
- **Transparency** – Clear process, timelines, and defined grounds
- **Fairness** – Equal and timely access for all athletes
- **Efficiency** – Expedited timelines aligned to competition demands
- **Finality** – Decisions are binding and conclusive
- **Performance Integrity** – Selection judgement remains the responsibility of coaches and the Selection Panel

4. Grounds for Appeal

An appeal may only be submitted on one or more of the following grounds:

- Procedural error (policy or process not followed).
- Failure to apply the published selection criteria.
- Conflict-of-interest not declared/managed.
- The data used by the selection panel did not support the decision.

Not Permitted Grounds

The following are **not valid grounds for appeal**:

- Disagreement with performance assessment
- Selection strategy
- Comparative athlete ranking

5. Appeals Process

Step 1: Notification of Selection Decision

Athletes will receive:

- Written confirmation of selection outcome
- A summary rationale for the decision
- Information on the appeals process, including timelines

Step 2: Submission of Appeal: The appeal must be submitted to the CEO **within 48 hours** of receiving written confirmation of the selection outcome.

To lodge an appeal, the athlete must submit:

- A formal written Notice of Appeal
- Clearly identified grounds (as per Section 4)
- Supporting evidence
- Payment of an **Appeal Administration Fee of €250**

Step 3: Internal Validation (Admissibility) Check (24–48 Hours)

An initial review will be conducted by an independent nominee not involved in the original decision. The independent nominee will be appointed by the board of Rowing Ireland.

This stage will determine whether the appeal falls within the permitted grounds

This is a **procedural admissibility check only** and does not involve reconsideration of the selection decision.

Outcome of Validation Stage

a) Appeal Admissible

- Appeal is referred to Sport Dispute Solutions Ireland
- The €250 fee is **refunded in full to the athlete**

b) Appeal Not Admissible

- Appeal is rejected
- Athlete is notified in writing with reasons
- The €250 fee is retained by Rowing Ireland

Step 4: Referral to Sport Dispute Solutions Ireland (SDSI)

Where an appeal is deemed admissible:

- Rowing Ireland will formally refer the matter to SDSI
- All relevant documentation will be submitted, including:

- Selection Policy
- Selection rationale
- Athlete appeal submission

Rowing Ireland will request an **expedited arbitration process where required**.

Step 5: Independent Arbitration

Sport Dispute Solutions Ireland will:

- Review written submissions
- Conduct a hearing where necessary
- Issue a formal written decision

Step 6: Outcome

- The decision of SDSI is **final and binding on all parties**
- Outcomes may include:
  - Appeal dismissed
  - Decision set aside and remitted for reconsideration in accordance with process

All parties will be notified in writing.

6. Costs

- The **Appeal Administration Fee (€250)** is payable upon submission
- The fee will be **refunded in full** if the appeal is deemed admissible
- Rowing Ireland will bear the **full cost of the SDSI arbitration process**
- Rowing Ireland reserves the right to seek full costs where an appeal is deemed **vexatious or frivolous**

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Selection Panel

- Apply the Selection Policy consistently and fairly

- Ensure decisions are evidence-based and documented

High-Performance Director (HPD)

- Ensure integrity and proper operation of the process
- Facilitate provision of documentation
- Step back from decision-making once an appeal is lodged

Independent Chair

- Conduct the admissibility check
- Ensure only valid appeals proceed
- Safeguard procedural integrity

Athletes

- Submit appeals within timelines
- Ensure appeals are based on valid grounds
- Provide accurate and relevant information

8. Timelines

- Appeal submission: **Within 48 hours** of the announcement of the selection decision
- Admissibility check: **Within 48 hours**
- SDSI arbitration: **Expedited where required (typically 3–7 days)**

Timelines may be adjusted where necessary to meet competition deadlines.

9. Confidentiality

All appeals will be managed with strict confidentiality, subject to:

- Legal obligations
- Governance and reporting requirements

10. Finality

All decisions issued by Sport Dispute Solutions Ireland are **final and binding**, with no further internal right of appeal.

11. Policy Review

In line with governance best practice, this policy will be reviewed:

- Annually
- Following any significant appeal case