British Judo

World Class Performance Programme

Athlete Performance Award Policy for the LA Paralympic Cycle

1 December 2026 – 30 November 2027

Contents

This document outlines the process for nominating judo athletes to the British Judo World Class Performance Programme (WCPP) for an Athlete Performance Award (APA) in alignment to UK Sport's Athlete Performance Award Policy for the LA cycle.

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Executive Summary

This policy details how British Judo will select and nominate athletes for Athlete Performance Awards (APAs) and inclusion into the British Judo WCPP in the LA Paralympic Cycle.

This policy will come into effect from 1 October 2026.

British Judo reserves the right to amend this policy and will conduct an annual review to ensure the policy:

- remains fair and efficient;
- considers any external rule changes or amendments; and
- considers relevant input from selectors, athletes, coaches, and appeals panels.

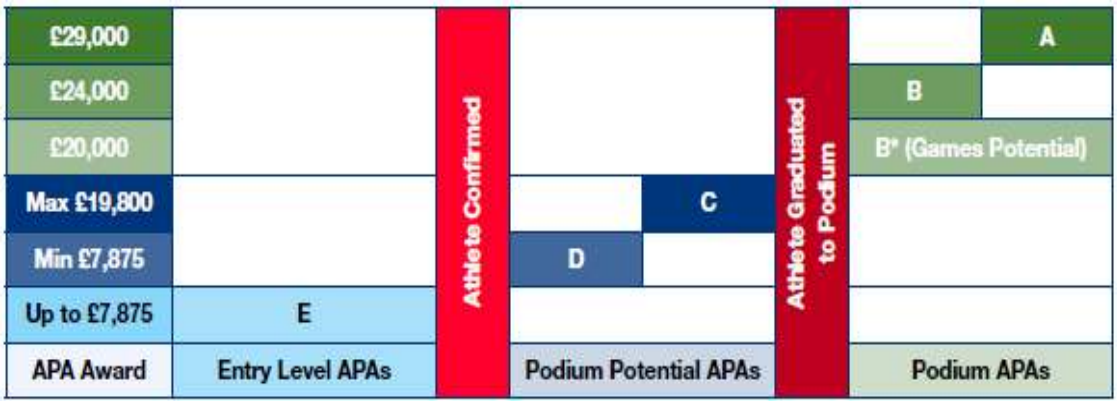
All APAs will continue to be administered centrally by UK Sport. APAs are a UK Sport and National Lottery funded grant award enabling athletes to pursue medal success in the Olympic or Paralympic Games and in other major championship events. The APA system continues to be aligned to investment in sports' high-performance programmes, with APA funding designed as a contribution to enable athletes to fully engage with their training and competition programmes (living and sporting costs), to prepare them to meet the demands associated with progression towards the Olympic and Paralympic podium.

An athlete's eligibility to receive an APA is subject to them meeting the eligibility criteria detailed in the Eligibility and Nomination Process section.

Training partners are not eligible for APA Funding.

Policy Framework – Overview

The figure below shows the LA Paralympic cycle UK Sport APA Framework. British Judo set performance criteria for each level of award.



Podium APAs are designed to contribute to an athletes' living and sporting costs, whose profile indicates a strong prospect of achieving/contributing to medal winning performances at the Olympic or Paralympic Games within the cycle and who are already achieving/contributing to international results within the medal zone.

- Podium awards are made at A and B grades.

Games Potential APAs are designed to contribute to an athletes' living and sporting costs. This is an opportunity for athletes who have been in receipt of a Podium level award, do not currently meet the competition outcome standards to retain an A or B award, yet remain a strong medal prospect for LA 2028 or French Alps 2030. See below at 2.3 for detail of the application of flexibility in cycle.

- Games Potential awards are made at B* grade.

Podium Potential APAs are designed to contribute to sporting costs for athletes' who have been identified and confirmed as having the potential to bridge the gap to Olympic and Paralympic medal success at the Brisbane 2032 or Salt Lake City 2034 Games and have made the commitment to pursue this goal.

- Podium Potential awards are made at C and D grades.

Entry Level APAs are designed to contribute to an athletes' sporting costs in their first 1-2 years of inclusion in high-performance programmes, and to provide a period through which the potential of the athlete is explored and confirmed.

- Entry Level awards are made at E grade.

Athlete Places

UK Sport has confirmed 7 APA places for British Judo for the LA cycle and athletes will be nominated for an APA against the British Judo Performance Matrix using the Eligibility and Nomination Process detailed below.

APA Funding and Performance Timelines

The British Judo APAs are scheduled to run on an annual basis from the 1st of December through to the 30th of November of the following year.

Throughout the funding period, each athlete will have a 6-month review to discuss progress against their agreed goals within their Medal Winning Plan (MWP) and an annual performance review at least 1 month prior to the end of the current award period.

Following the 12-month review process, the Selection Panel ("the Panel") will review all athletes who meet the minimum performance requirement against the British Judo Athlete Performance Matrix as outlined in this document.

Eligibility and Nomination Process

Eligibility

To be considered for membership of the British Judo WCPP, an athlete must fulfil the following:

a. Meet the UK Sport Eligibility Policy. For details download the UK Sport Eligibility Policy & Rules.
b. Be eligible to compete for ParalympicsGB at the Paralympic Games and for Great Britain & Northern Ireland in all relevant International Blind Sports Federation (IBSA) championships and events.
c. A British Passport holder.
d. Meet the IBSA classification criteria for Judo in the J1 or J2 category. For details visit https://ibsajudo.sport/about-judo/classification/
e. Not serving a period of ineligibility as a result of a transfer of allegiance.
f. Not serving a provisional or permanent suspension for an anti-doping violation.
g. Not serving a period of ineligibility from Judo for reasons other than anti-doping.
h. Not currently serving a period of ineligibility to receive public funding and/or publicly funded benefits by UK Sport and/or not fully complied with any conditions applied by the Eligibility Panel; and
i. Has not, whether by an act or omission, brought British Judo into disrepute.

Nomination Process

All athletes who have met a performance standard between 1st December of the preceding year to 30th November (i.e. 1st December 2025 to 30th November 2026 for the 2026/2027 WCPP year) on the British Judo Performance Matrix will be considered for nomination for an APA using the nomination process below.

1. The Panel will comprise of the following voting and non-voting members:
    a. Non-voting members:
        - Chairperson - a member of the Performance Leadership Team
        - Head of Performance Assurance & Athlete Health
        - Observer from UK Sport
        - Independent observer from the British Elite Athletes Association
        - Recording Officer
        - WCPP Coaches as required
    b. Voting members
        - Performance Director
        - Head Paralympic Coach
        - Performance Analyst & Technical Coach
2. The role of the observers, along with the Chairperson, is to ensure the selection policy is followed. The role of the Performance Analyst is to share all performance data with the Panel and be a voting panel member. The role of the recording officer is to take notes and record all decisions made by the Panel. Voting members will have one vote each, with the Performance Director having a casting vote if required.
3. The Panel will consider athletes for places on the WCPP starting with Podium awards A, B and LA Potential, followed by Podium Potential awards C, D and Entry.
4. The Panel will first consider athletes that have met the performance standards in the British Judo Performance Matrix.
5. Where there are more athletes than places available (maximum of 7 places), in addition to athletes meeting the performance criteria in the British Judo Performance Matrix, the Panel will use the criteria below to decide any further

nominations. The Panel will review from the previous 12 months:

a. Athlete competition results.
b. Injury and illness status.
c. Commitment and adherence to the Competition and Training Programme detailed in their MWP.
d. Any other extenuating circumstances; and
e. Athlete progression and future potential.

6. British Judo reserves the right to use as many places as they believe will best support the WCPP winning medals at the LA Paralympic Games and are not required to fill all 7 places at any time during the WCPP year.
7. British Judo will hold the nomination meeting on Tuesday 3 November. The Performance Director will notify athletes of their nomination by email by Friday 13 November.
    a. Athletes competing at the IBSA Judo Grand Prix Alexandria on 20-21 November will be discussed during the 3 November nomination meeting, subject to their performances at the competitions. The Panel will finalise any further nominations for the WCPP following the competition.
8. Following the nomination process, British Judo will nominate athletes to UK Sport who will confirm the APA selections for the year.

British Judo WCPP – Centralised Programme

All athletes nominated for an APA can be based full time at the British Judo Olympic and Paralympic National Training Centre, or if agreed with the Paralympic Head Coach, can be based elsewhere with an agreed competition and training camp programme.

Grounds for Appeal

The BJA Fast Appeals process is the only method of appeal should an athlete wish to appeal a selection, or de-selection, of an APA. The appeal must be submitted within 24 hours of notification and the BJA Fast Appeals Process can be found on the BJA website at https://www.britishjudo.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/British-Judo-Selection-Nomination-and-Deselection-Fast-Appeals-Procedure.pdf.

British Judo Performance Matrix Overview

Athletes successfully nominated for an APA will normally have achieved a level of performance as outlined below in the British Judo Performance Matrix:

Podium

PODIUM	Funding	Performance Requirement
A	£29,000	Paralympic Games Gold World Championships Gold
B	£24,000	Paralympic Games Top 3 World Championships Top 3
LA Potential	£20,000	IBSA WRL Top 6 ranking (see LA Potential conditions for funding)

Podium Potential

C Level	Performance Requirement
C: £19,000	One of the following: World Championship Top 5 World Games Top 5 European Championships Top 3 IBSA Grand Prix Top 3 IBSA WRL Top 8

D Level	Performance Requirement
D: £13,000	One of the following: World Championship Top 8 World Games Top 8 IBSA Grand Prix Top 8 European Championships Top 5 IBSA WRL Top 16

Entry Level	Performance Requirement
E: £7875	At least one: VI Open Top 3 Placing

Podium Criteria and Performance Standards

PODIUM	Funding	Performance Requirement
A	£29,000	Paralympic Games Gold World Championships Gold
B	£24,000	Paralympic Games Top 3 World Championships Top 3
LA Potential	£20,000	IBSA WRL Top 6 ranking (see LA Potential conditions for funding)

Podium A

- An athlete will have achieved a **gold** medal winning performance at the Paralympic Games or a **gold** medal winning performance at an IBSA World Championships.
- Paralympic medallists can, in principle, remain eligible to receive an A level APA for up to a maximum of four years (i.e. the LA Paralympic cycle), provided they remain on track to achieve a medal winning performance in LA, by maintaining an IBSA WRL Top 6 and/or qualifying for LA in a seeded position.
- Athletes receiving an A level APA that has been triggered through a performance at the **IBSA World Championships** can, in principle, remain eligible to receive an APA at this level for two years provided they remain on track to achieve a medal winning performance in LA, by maintaining an IBSA WRL Top 4 and/or qualifying for LA in a seeded position.

Podium B

- As a minimum, an athlete will have achieved a Paralympic top 3 placing at the Paralympic Games or IBSA World Championships.
- Athletes receiving a B level award can, in principle, remain eligible to receive an award at this level for two years, provided they remain on track to achieve a medal winning performance in LA, by maintaining an IBSA WRL Top 6 and/or qualifying for LA in a seeded position – IBSA WRL top 4.

World Championships in Paralympic Year

- For consideration of Podium APA level awards in a Paralympic year, performances at the Paralympic Games will be considered as the milestone event within that year and **not** the IBSA World Championships.

LA Potential - previously in receipt of Podium A and B Level

- An athlete will only be considered at this level where they have previously been in receipt of a Podium A or B level award and there are **exceptional circumstances** that have prevented them retaining an award at that level.
- Despite not meeting the competition outcome standard to remain at A or B level, there will be strong evidence that the athlete is capable of bridging the gap to medal success in LA, by maintaining an IBSA WRL Top 6 and/or qualifying for LA in a seeded position – IBSA WRL top 4.
- LA Potential awards are made for no more than one year, however, they may be extended for up to two years in the first year of the LA funding cycle to recognise an athlete's developmental requirements during this period.

Athletes who have previously received an award at Podium level will **not be** considered eligible for a Podium Potential Award

Podium Potential Criteria and Performance Standards

Podium Potential C Level - maximum of 3 years to progress to A or B Level

C Level	Performance Requirement
C: £19,000	One of the following: World Championship Top 5 World Games Top 5 European Championships Top 3 IBSA Grand Prix Top 3 IBSA WRL Top 8

- Podium Potential C level athletes should be on the trajectory to progress to Podium A or B level within 3 years and the Performance Requirements at C reflect this.

Podium Potential D Level - maximum of 3 years to progress to C Level

D Level	Performance Requirement
D: £13,000	One of the following: World Championship Top 8 World Games Top 8 IBSA Grand Prix Top 8 European Championships Top 5 IBSA WRL Top 16

- For an athlete to be funded at Podium Potential level D, they must have achieved a minimum of one of the above Performance Requirements.

Podium Potential Entry Level – a maximum of 2 years

Entry Level	Performance Requirement
E: £7875	At least one: VI Open Top 3 Placing

- Athletes will have been identified as having the attributes to pursue success in the Paralympic Games and have committed to the WCPP by relocating and training fulltime at the British Judo Olympic and Paralympic National Training Centre.

- Entry level awards will be offered for no more than two years.
- Athletes who have previously received an APA at D level or above will not be eligible for an Entry level award.
- Athletes who are identified at Entry Level will be in collaboration with the Home Nation programmes and will be aged between 18-22 years old.
- Athletes must have achieved one or more of the Entry level performance requirements.

Athlete Personal Programme Contribution

It will be expected that an athlete will contribute to their own annual Competition and Training Camp Programme.

Following the profiling process, an MWP will be developed in collaboration with the athlete. International competition and training camps will be offered to support the development of the athlete in pursuit of the goals detailed in their MWP.

The athlete will be expected to **supplement their own** international competition and training camp programme that is offered by the WCPP.

If an athlete receives an injury that restricts their international competition and training camp programme, they would be expected to contribute to any additional rehabilitation 'Return to Play' costs outside of the British Judo Olympic and Paralympic National Training Centre, for example residential attendance at the IRU (Independent Rehabilitation Unit).

All major IBSA championships and the Paralympic Games will be fully covered by the WCPP. Selection for the Paralympic Games will be in accordance with the published selection policy.

Major championships will be as follows:

- IBSA World Championships
- IBSA World Games
- Paralympic Games

In addition to the APA, athletes will receive membership of the Athlete Medical Scheme (AMS), which provides private medical insurance for physical and mental health related treatment. They will also be eligible to apply to UK Sport for the Personal Development Award (PDA) to enhance their personal development and facilitate their transition to careers beyond their sport.

Injury and Illness Policy

In the event of injury/illness (both physical and mental), and in cases where an athlete is considered likely to recover to full fitness for training and competition, the athlete will continue to receive their full APA for up to three months from the point the injury/illness occurred or was identified.

If, after three months the athlete remains unavailable for full selection or training, an expert review will be undertaken to confirm the likelihood that the athlete remains able to pursue success in the Paralympic Games, and to agree a programme of rehabilitation and plot a timetable for return to full training and competition. The expert review will include medical personnel relevant to the athlete's condition.

Each case will be considered on its own merit, and further expert advice may be sought where the long-term impact of the injury/illness is unclear (such as referral to the mental health panel). The athlete's progress against the timetable will need to be reported to UK Sport every three months thereafter, until the athlete has either fully resumed training and competition or left the programme.

Subject to satisfactory evidence of the likelihood of return, the APA will continue to be paid at the existing award level for up to a year but will only be extended beyond this in exceptional circumstances.

Where there is medical evidence that the injury/illness will affect the long-term potential of the athlete, or where the athlete has shown neither progress nor commitment to the agreed rehabilitation programme, the athlete will be removed from APA support and will be provided with an appropriate period of notice given.

	Injury of up to 3 months followed by return to training and competition	Full APA support
	Injury more than 3 months Unavailable for selection /training	Full performance review APA funding up to a maximum of 1 year
	Lack of engagement to rehab programme, or long-term potential affected	Potential removal from the WCPP

Pregnancy

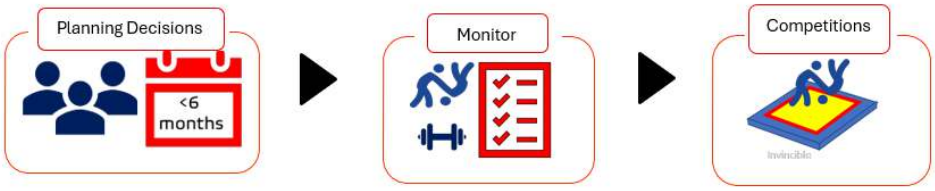
Being pregnant and an elite athlete should not be mutually exclusive, therefore, to ensure support is provided for athletes who wish to have a child whilst they are a member of the WCPP and in receipt of an APA, the following policy will apply:

An athlete in receipt of APA funding will remain eligible to access their full APA (subject to means testing) for the duration of the pregnancy at the APA level they were on at the time of becoming pregnant and for up to nine months post childbirth.

Continued access to the APA after childbirth will be dependent on:
The athlete's intention to return to the sport and the programme being discussed and confirmed no later than six months post childbirth

At the point where the intention of the athlete is clear, forming a mutually agreed plan/timetable for return to training and competition – this plan should acknowledge the athlete's experience of pregnancy, the impact on them physically and mentally and the nature of the event they are returning to

Monitoring, reviewing and confirming that the athlete has made the necessary commitment to this plan and is on track to return.



If the level of commitment and or progress against this plan are not demonstrated, the athlete will be given notice and offered a period of transition before the APA funding stops (see Athletes Leaving the Programme).

At nine months post childbirth, the potential of the athlete will be assessed and confirmed to UK Sport in order to continue to access the APA. It is important to note that this assessment will indicate the athlete's future medal potential and not necessarily performance outcomes.

An athlete who announces retirement from their sport during pregnancy or in the initial six months post childbirth, will not be given a further period of notice before the APA terminates.

In the event of complications either during the pregnancy or post childbirth, this policy will be flexed as is reasonable to accommodate these circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

Athlete Programme Breaks

An athlete may request 'time away' from their sport. Typically, athlete programme breaks will be undertaken in the first two years of a cycle (typically four years).

In the event of an athlete taking a programme break, the APA can continue to be received for a maximum of 12 months.

For breaks of up to 6 months, the athlete will receive their full APA (subject to means testing) from the point the break is agreed with the Performance Director.

For requests of between 7 and 12 months, the athlete will receive the full APA for the first 6 months, and 50% of their APA for the remainder.

Each case will be considered on its own merit, reflecting on, but not be limited, to the following criteria:

a. The athlete's performance trajectory and selection expectations, considering any impact on world rankings, qualification (should the request be made in cycle), and any other considerations that might materially impact on the athlete's ability to meet agreed Games targets. Athletes should acknowledge the impact this may have on the APA grade being nominated for at the formal athlete review.
b. A robust performance rationale for the break.
c. An agreed fitness programme being in place, ensuring an appropriate level of fitness is retained to enable a smooth transition back into the programme at a mutually agreed time.
d. Touch points with the programme being agreed.

Upon agreement of a programme break, the athlete will need to be renominated for an APA on the Athlete Nomination Portal, this can happen for up to a maximum 6 months.

At 6 months, an athlete review will be conducted, and a renomination is required.

For programme breaks of less than 3 months, nominations are not required.

Continued access to the APA post programme break will be dependent on:

a. The athlete's intention to return to the sport and the programme being discussed and confirmed no later than one month before the programme break end date.
b. At the point where the intention of the athlete is clear, forming a mutually agreed plan/timetable for return to training and competition.
c. Monitoring, reviewing and confirming that the athlete has made the necessary commitment to this plan and is on track to return.

If the level of commitment and / or progress against this plan are not demonstrated, the athlete would be given notice and offered a period of transition before the APA funding stops (see Athletes Leaving the Programme).

An athlete may request 'time away' from their sport only once in an Olympic or Paralympic cycle (typically four years).

An athlete extending a period of downtime following participation at the LA 2028 Paralympic Games, into an Athlete Programme Break must notify their sport within 8 weeks of the LA Games of their intent, i.e., whether they wish to continue to the Brisbane Paralympic Games.

Transitional Funding Support

Athletes Joining the Programme

All athletes should participate in a comprehensive induction process when joining the high-performance programme and when changing between levels of the Performance Pathway. Where athletes are new members of the programme and are receiving an APA for the first time, British Judo will ensure the athlete(s) are

provided with sufficient support and opportunity to effectively transition into the programme.

Transition between Sports
Where an athlete is attempting to transfer between two sports, and is currently in receipt of an A, B, C, or LA Potential APA, the athlete can be nominated for a transitional APA for up to two years before being expected to meet the APA selection standards in the new sport.

The APA can be extended beyond 12 months where circumstances prevent an athlete achieving a result or performance, which could include:

a. Injury, illness, or pregnancy (see below)
b. External factors such as cancelled competition opportunities
c. The sport's schedule for athlete selection not aligning to this timescale.

Transition between Countries
Athletes who wish to transfer from another country to compete for ParalympicsGB or Great Britain & Northern Ireland at international competitions, are not eligible to receive Public Funding and/or Publicly Funded Benefits until the Athlete (in addition to obtaining a British Passport or British Nationality) has received written confirmation from the British Paralympic Association and British Judo of their eligibility to compete at international competitions.

Where a GB athlete wishes to transfer to and compete for another county, and / or if they have already qualified for the other country and obtained results (that means they are no longer eligible to compete for, or represent GB at international competitions), then the athlete will not be entitled to receive any Public Funding and/or Publicly Funded Benefits, as outlined in paragraph 3 of the Eligibility Policy.

Transitions from the WCPP

Transitional Support
Athletes can receive transitional support from the Performance Lifestyle advisor for 6 months after leaving the WCPP.

A minimum of a one-month notice period will be provided to all athletes that are no longer nominated at Podium or Podium Potential level or will receive a reduction in APA funding as a consequence of the level at which they have been nominated.

This period of notice will be within an athlete's current award term, i.e. athlete reviews will be conducted before APAs are due to expire to allow for this notice period and paperwork to be turned around.

Annual reviews will normally take place in October of each year, and new APA's will commence on the 1 December of each year.

Additional transitional funding will be offered at the current grant level for a period of time dependent on the total continuous period of programme membership. This additional transitional funding will be provided as follows:

- >1 year but <2 years = 1 month transitional award
- >2 years but <3 years = 2 months transitional award
- >3 years = 3 months transitional award

Whilst sports are asked to accommodate as much of the transitional award period as possible within the current award term, new athletes can be nominated before the transitional award period ends. Any new athletes brought onto the programme during this period will not count towards the sport's utilisation figures.

Once an athlete leaves the programme, they will no longer receive access to medical cover through AMS. However, AMS cover will continue for up to a maximum three months after the month the athlete's funding ceases for an existing medical claim and treatment to finish. No new claims can be opened within this three-month extension period.

Where an athlete is leaving the programme for disciplinary reasons, or due to a lack of engagement in the programme, British Judo and UK Sport in consultation have the discretion to revoke any transitional funding.

Any athlete returning to the programme having previously received transitional funding will begin a new period of programme membership.

Athlete Transition Strategy and Process

An athlete's journey/experience on the WCPP will inevitably include a transition at some point in their career, either through injury, retirement, limited progression, non-adherence to the programme or lifestyle choices.

The Athlete Transition Strategy and Process is designed to articulate the stages that lead to an athlete's transition from the WCPP and to highlight the support that is available from British Judo and other key partners. Please see the figures below which explain the APA funding period and the stages of transitioning off programme following the annual Performance Review:

Figure 1: APA Funding Period

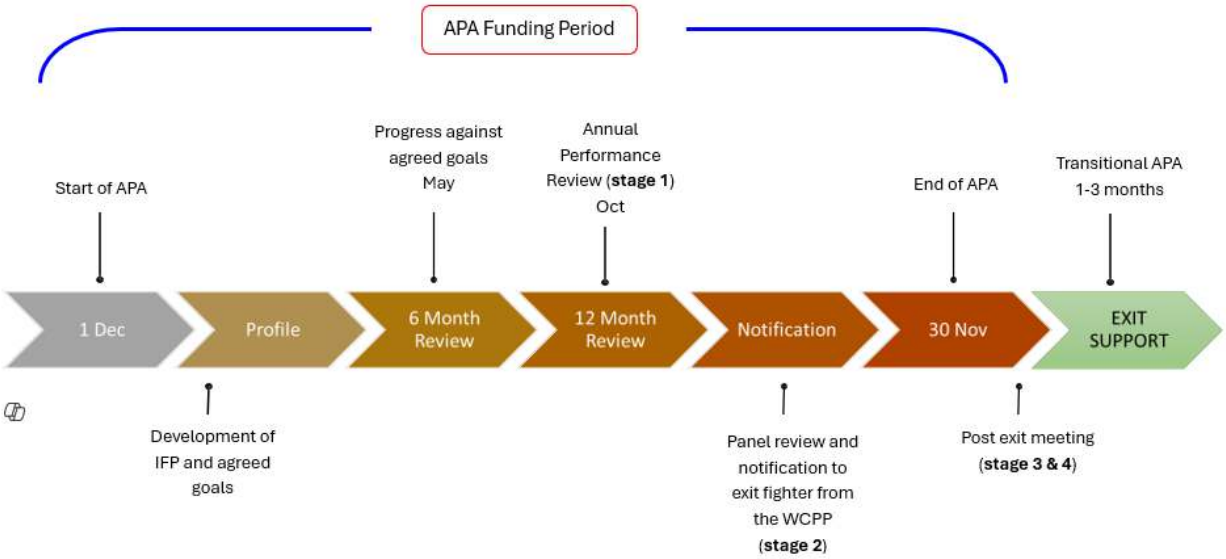
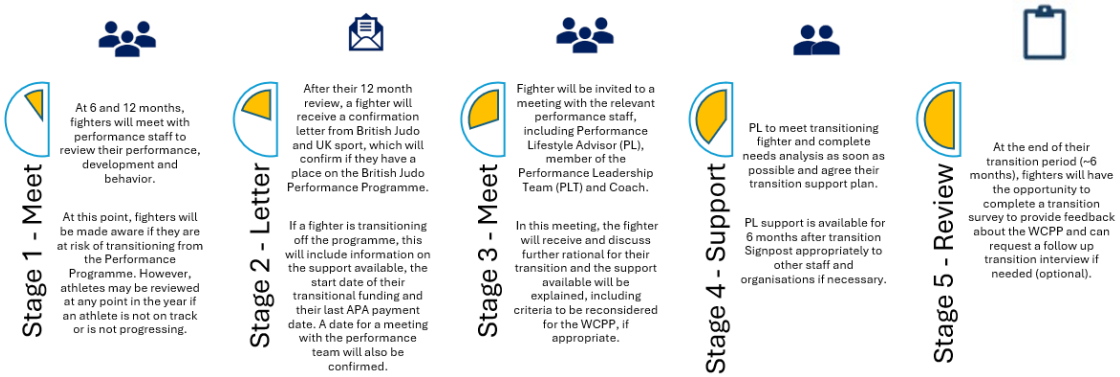



Figure 2: Stages of Exit