

England Development Squad Identification Policy

**Pre Cadet, Cadet, Junior
September 2026 – August 2027**

Introduction

England Judo's commitment to fostering excellence begins at the earliest stages, nurturing young fighters as they progress from their club to representing their home nation. The journey for aspiring judoka starts with the Pre Cadet, Cadet, and Junior categories, providing a structured and supportive environment for skill development and growth as a layer of support for clubs and club coaches.

The England Talent Programme is designed to support British Judo's Olympic and Paralympic objectives. The England Development Squad (EDS) serves as the main approach for identifying athletes within the pathway. Its aims include:

- Identifying potential athletes for future British Judo Olympic and Paralympic teams;
- Supporting athletes to perform at the European Cadet Championships, European Youth Olympic Festival, Junior World and Junior European Championships;
- Assisting athletes in their preparation and transition to compete at Senior International level; and
- Developing an inclusive talent programme to include fighters from diverse backgrounds within the England judo community.

The EDS offers a programme of continuous personal development which includes technical, tactical, physical, psychological and lifestyle support. This is delivered through training camps, based at the British Judo Olympic & Paralympic National Training Centre, and opportunities for international competition.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the EDS, athletes must meet the following criteria:

- Hold a current BJA licence or affiliate membership;
- Hold a valid British passport or meet the IJF/EJU policy requirements regarding refugees. See the IJF rules here: [IJF Rules](#);
- Signed 2026/2027 England Programme Fighter Agreement, see Appendix 1 of the EDS Information Booklet: and

- Meet the appropriate grade / age criteria for each squad as per the table below:

Squad	Minimum Grade	Year of birth
Pre-Cadet	7 th Mon (orange belt)	2013 to 2014
Cadet	10 th Mon/3 rd Kyu (green belt)	2010 to 2012
Junior	2 nd Kyu (blue belt)	2007 to 2012

Identification

There are three opportunities to be identified for invitation onto the EDS:

1. September 2026, following the English Closed Championships;
2. December 2026, following the Welsh Open & British Championships; and
3. February 2027, following the Scottish & English Opens.

To be invited onto the EDS, athletes must achieve the Performance Identification Criteria for their age group as detailed below and attend the England Closed Championships in September 2026 (or have an approved reason for non-attendance that been agreed by the Head Coach PRIOR to the championships).

Athletes with long term injuries may still be considered for EDS on their return to fitness and will be considered by the England Talent Programme on a case by case basis.

Performance Identification Criteria:

Squad	Performance requirements at the English Closed 2026, British Championships 2026 and English Open 2027	Previous EDS Fighters
Pre-Cadet	Top four place with a minimum of two contest wins will be considered for EDS training group 1*	n/a
Cadet	Top four place with a minimum of two contest wins will be considered for EDS training group 2*	2012 born cadets who placed in the top four of the 2025 English Closed will be considered for EDS training group 1*
Junior	Top four place with a minimum of two contest wins will be considered for EDS training group 2*	2009 born juniors who were a cadet EPP last year and adhered to the Fighter Agreement will be

		considered for EDS training group 2*
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**Visit the EDS Information Booklet for details on EDS training groups.*

Co-Option Application

There will be no co-option applications. With three opportunities for identification, if an athlete misses one event, they must wait until the next identification opportunity.

International Camp and Competition Opportunities

An important part of the EDS programme is the opportunity to compete internationally as part of the England team. England Judo aims to provide self-funded international competition opportunities to as many athletes as possible.

EDS Squad Fees

£150 per year

Additional information regarding camps, competitions, and squad fees is available in the EDS & EPP Information Booklet.

Correct as of 12 August 2026.