



Date: 24 February 2026

ROWING SOUTH AFRICA (RowSA)

UNDER 16 PATHWAY DOCUMENT 2026

1. FOREWORD

1.1. This policy outlines the selection process, expectations, and key requirements for athletes aiming to be selected for the **2026 U16 Development Squad tour to England**. The process is performance-based and should be read in conjunction with the RowSA Selection document and U16 Development Selection 2026 Timelines as published on the RowSA Website. This document replaces all previous communications on this subject.

1.2. **Please note:** This tour is a **High-Performance Development initiative** and not an official national team representation. Accordingly, **participants will not be awarded National Colours** for this tour. The focus is on talent identification, skill development, and gaining international exposure.

2. SELECTION PHILOSOPHY

2.1 The selection process is based on the following principles:

2.1.1. **The Good Faith Principle:** Athletes and coaches must uphold integrity, commitment, and transparency.

2.1.2. **IC Mission and Vision:** Maintain South African rowing's elite competitiveness and foster a fair, structured selection pathway to develop the future pool of elite athletes.

2.2. Target Range:

2.2.1. **Primary Objective:** To identify and expose promising U16 athletes to a high-performance training and racing environment in the United Kingdom, focusing on skill acquisition and long-term athlete development.

2.2.2. **Secondary Objective:** Foster positive international racing experiences for athletes and the development of High-Performance behaviours to prepare them for future U19 and U23 National Team selection.

3. PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

3.1 To provide a clear, structured framework for selecting the U16 Development Team, ensuring all athletes are evaluated fairly and consistently.

4. DEFINITIONS

4.1. **RowSA IC:** Rowing South Africa International Commission.

4.2. **Selection Regatta:** Designated regattas for athlete evaluation.

4.3. **Performance Testing:** A combination of ergometer trials, water assessments, and race performances.

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5. SELECTION PRINCIPLES

5.1 Eligibility for Selection

- 5.1.1. Must be registered at a South African school.
- 5.1.2. Must be born in 2010.
- 5.1.3. Must register on the RowSA National Squad portal by **30 November 2025**: <https://rowsa.co.za/national-squad/>
- 5.1.4. Must submit a 2000m ergo score by **28 February 2026**.
- 5.1.5. Must hold a valid passport by **31 March 2026**.
- 5.1.6. Must compete at the South African National Championships, Roodeplaat.

5.2 Selection Panel

The main policy requires the selection panel to be named in the pathway document.

5.2.1. Selection Panel Pursuant to the RowSA Selection Policy, the U16 Selection Panel consists of:

- **Chairperson:** IC Lead Member- Trevor Dedlow
- **Lead Coach:** Caitlin Dace
- **Additional Selector:** James Thompson
- **Additional Selector:** Shaun Keeling

5.3 Selection Process

5.3.1. Athlete Performance Criteria

- 5.3.1.1. Primary selection for the U16 Development Squad will be based on performance at the **South African Schools' Championship in March 2026**.
- 5.3.1.2. The selection panel will assess athletes based on results in the specified U16 boat classes to form a squad of 10 boys and 10 girls, as outlined below.

5.3.2. Boys Selection

- 5.3.2.1. A total of 10 boys will be selected.
- 5.3.2.2. The first four finishers in the JM16 1x A Final will qualify.
- 5.3.2.3. The first three finishers in the JM16 2- A Final will qualify.

5.3.3. Girls Selection

- 5.3.3.1. A total of 10 girls will be selected.
- 5.3.3.2. The first six finishers in the JW16 1x A Final will qualify.
- 5.3.3.3. The first and second place finishers in the JW16 2- A Final will qualify.

5.3.4. Transformation

- 5.3.4.1. The IC aims to achieve a 25% transformation target for the tour.
- 5.3.4.2. The IC reserves the right to select additional athletes to the tour based on performances throughout the season to meet this objective.
- 5.3.4.3. Transformation athletes will be considered based on the fastest prognostic times in the following boat classes: JM16 1x, JM16 2-, JW16 1x, JW16 2-.
- 5.3.4.4. To ensure a fair assessment, a semi-final will be included for the U16 Boys and U16 Girls scull events, regardless of the number of entries.

5.3.5. Coxswains

5.3.5.1. U16 coxswains will be considered for selection based on a gold medal position in the JM16 8+ or JW16 4x+ at the South African Schools' Championship.

5.3.5.2. Coxswains must also meet the general eligibility requirements, including holding a valid passport and registering on the RowSA portal.

5.3.6. Coaches

5.3.6.1. Any coach may apply for a position on the tour.

5.3.6.2. Selected coaches must be available for squad training from the Wednesday after the South African Schools' Championships and commit to training six days a week.

5.3.6.3. Applicants must register on the RowSA National Squad portal and possess the following prerequisites: a long-term career focus; a valid passport by end of March 2026; certification in First Aid Level 1, RowSA Level 1, and Safeguarding; plus a Guardian or Police Clearance (sexual offenders check).

5.4 Appeals

5.4.1. Any appeals against a selection decision need to be considered and submitted as per the IC appeals process published on the RowSA Website.

5.4.2. Athletes are reminded of the strict timelines laid out in this document.

5.5 Additional Assessments

5.5.1. The Head Coach, with approval from the selection panel, reserves the right to organize additional compulsory assessments, ad hoc trials, or crew formation races with reasonable notice.

5.5.2. The selection panel also retains the right to make unilateral changes to the tour composition if performances or testing suggest a faster or more competitive combination can be formed.

5.6 Expectations & Requirements

5.6.1. **Commitment to Excellence:** Consistent high performance in training, testing, and racing.

5.6.2. **Performance Data Submission:** Complete all required ergometer and water trials within deadlines.

5.6.3. **Attendance:** Required at key selection regattas and subsequent training camps.

5.6.4. **Coachability & Adaptability:** Must work within the integrated system under the guidance of the U16 National Coach and RowSA IC.

5.6.5. **Teamwork & Sportsmanship:** Essential collaboration, mutual respect, and alignment with team goals.

5.6.6. **Ethics:** Must be available for drug testing in accordance with WADA guidelines.

5.6.7. **Health Management:** Must submit a medical certificate confirming fitness to the U16 National Coach by a date to be confirmed.

5.6.8. **Financial Responsibility:** The athlete is responsible for all costs associated with the U16 Development tour (travel, accommodation, etc.).

5.7 Attendance and Absence Reporting

5.7.1. If an athlete cannot participate in a trial, assessment, or race due to medical or other exceptional reasons, they must submit their case in writing to the U16 National Head Coach.

5.7.2. **Deadline:** This representation must be received at least 12 hours before the selection event begins.

5.7.3. **Requirement:** No representations will be considered if made after the event has commenced.

5.7.4. **Medical Evidence:** A medical certificate from a doctor nominated or approved by the Head Coach must be provided for all illness/injury claims.

6. FINAL NOTE

7.1. All selection dates are subject to change at the discretion of the RowSA IC, subject to exigencies and due notice to all registered athletes.