

SINGAPORE CHESS FEDERATION SELECTION & TRAINING GUIDELINES

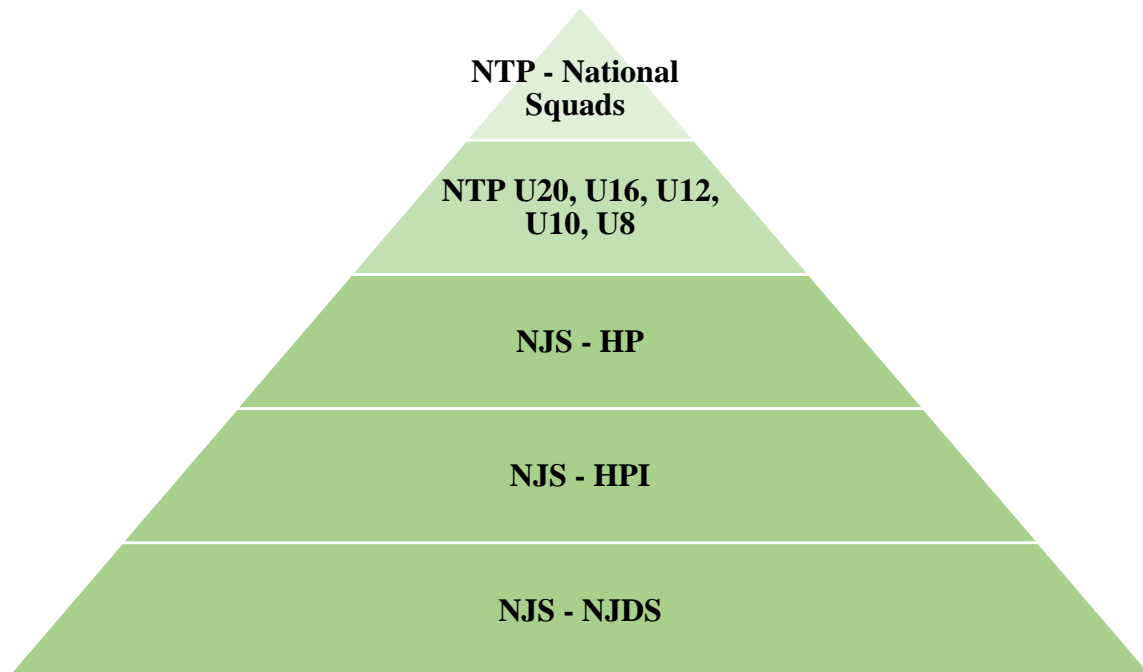
with effect from 1st January 2026

1. Introduction, Scope, and Key Committee Members

- 1.1. The Singapore Chess Federation's (SCF's) qualification criteria for our National Training Squads as well as selection criteria for official representatives of Singapore in international events are outlined in this document.
- 1.2. These guidelines do not apply to Fischer Random or any other games not covered under the FIDE Handbook which might be featured in major multi-sports events such as the Asian Games or the South-East Asian Games. The selection and training guidelines for such games shall be outlined separately when applicable.
- 1.3. The High Performance (HPE) Selection Committee (hereafter referred to as "Selection Committee") of the Singapore Chess Federation (SCF) oversees these selection guidelines. Any enquiries for the committee regarding the Selection Guidelines or the selection process and outcomes can be sent to hpe@singaporechess.org.sg.
- 1.4. This document also provides details about training guidelines and expectations that are determined by the SCF Training Committee.
- 1.5. The Selection Committee consists of the following members:
 - IM Jason Goh (SCF Honorary Treasurer)
 - IM Hsu Li Yang (SCF President)
- 1.6. The SCF Training Committee consists of the following members:
 - Training Director, GM/FST Thomas Luther (gmthomasluther@singaporechess.org.sg)
 - Assistant Training Director, GM/FT Andrey Kvon (andrey@singaporechess.org.sg)
 - National Trainer, WGM/FT Aleksandra Obolentseva (aleksandra@singaporechess.org.sg)
- 1.7. The Selection Committee reserves the right to modify these guidelines whenever appropriate. Reasons of any modifications made during the work year will be provided and published in advance as early as practicable.

2. National Training Squads

2.1. The SCF's National Training Squads are depicted in the figure below.



2.2. National Junior Squad (NJS)

Overview

- i. The aims of the NJS are to:
 - i. Provide young chess athletes with a good foundational understanding of chess.
 - ii. Develop potential talents for the NTP.
- ii. The NJS is only open to athletes aged 20 years or below as of 1st January of the calendar year.

Qualification Criteria

- iii. Athletes can automatically qualify for the NJS based on their performance in designated NJS qualification tournaments. These include:
 - i. National Schools Individual Chess Championships (NSI)
 - ii. National Age Group Chess Championships (NAG)
 - iii. Singapore National Chess Championships
 - iv. SG Chess Festival Classical Open, such as the Singapore International Open
- iv. Players finishing in the top 50% of the athlete's category in the NAG (Dec '25) shall qualify for the NJS from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2026.

- v. If the qualification criteria is not a whole number, we will round down to the next placing, as illustrated below:

If an NSI U16 category has 115 athletes in the starting rank list. The qualification rankings for U16 athletes into the various squads are:

- **NJS:** 30th to 58th position (top 50% = 57.5, round down to 58)

Table 2: Example of round-down procedure

- vi. Sorting Assessment - Applicants for the NJS shall be required to take an entry assessment, and athletes will be grouped into NJDS, HPI and HP based on their assessment results. The assessment shall be prepared by the SCF Training Committee, and the dates of the assessment shall be announced within a week after these guidelines are published.
- vii. Other local tournaments may be designated as NJS qualification tournaments by the Selection Committee, with specific qualification criteria that will be publicized at least two months in advance.
- viii. Rating Criteria – There shall no longer be any rating criteria to qualify for any of the NJS squads. The Sorting Assessment shall determine the suitability of the athletes for any of the squads.
- ix. The result from any designated NJS qualification tournament is only valid for 1 calendar year. For example, if an athlete qualifies for the NJS via the NSI 2026, his qualification period shall take effect only from 1 April to 31 December 2026. If an athlete qualifies for the NJS via the NAG 2025 (Dec'25), his qualification period shall take effect from 1 January 2026 – 31 December 2026.
- x. Players who did not take part in the NAG in 2025 or did not meet the 50% criteria may be invited to a second round of assessment, subject to availability of places. Such applicants must be NJS trainees in the previous year, i.e. 2025.
- xi. The Selection Committee reserves the right to exercise final discretion in the selection of players for the NJS.

Promotion within the NJS

- xii. Quarterly promotion reviews will be conducted for athletes in the NJS at the end of each term. Athletes who demonstrate exceptional improvements, such as outstanding tournament performances, may be promoted to the next higher squad. Exceptional athletes in the HP or HPI squads may be invited to join the NTP.

Training sessions and Fees

xiii. The following table illustrates the training sessions and fees:

NJS Squads	Training Session	No. of Sessions per quarter	Fees Guidelines per quarter before GST	
			Citizens/PR	Non-Citizens/PR
NJDS	Once a week	8	350	400
HPI	Once a week	8	350	400
HP	One training session on Fridays + training games on Sundays	8 for Friday sessions Recurring for Sunday training games	500	550

xiv. Players in the HP Squad shall be invited for Sunday training games as well as physical training sessions (see 2.3iv).

xv. Players grouped into HPI and HP are eligible to play in the end of term HP/HPI rated tournament.

2.3. National Training Programme “NTP”

Overview

- i. The NTP is a long-term, elite programme with the vision of developing the future chess champions of Singapore, including those who will become International Masters and Grandmasters within a five-year timeframe. Apart from chess skills, the trainers are also focused on teaching applicable life skills, such as independent learning, team learning, time management, and cultivating a winning mindset. This programme is targeted towards passionate chess players who wish to improve their skills significantly and are focused on becoming future Team Singapore representatives.
- ii. All NTP athletes are expected to commit to regular training at a minimum of 3 times a week, and to participate in international tournaments regularly. The SCF may on occasion organise training tournaments for the NTP squads. High performing NTP athletes may also be funded for selected high-quality tournaments overseas.

Squads

- iii. The NTP comprises the following squads:
 - National Squads: Members of these squads are potential representatives of Team Singapore in major events, such as the SEA Games, Asian Games, World Chess Olympiad, Asian Team Championships, and the FIDE World Cup.
 - U20 and U16: Members of these squads are earmarked to be future members of the Open and Women squads. They are expected to demonstrate maturity and to be role models for the junior trainees in the NTP.
 - U12, U10 and U8: Members of these squads are expected to be representatives of Team Singapore at regional and global age group tournaments.

Training Schedules and Fees

- iv. The table illustrates the minimum number of training sessions **per week** and fees for the NTP:

NTP Squads	Training Session	Homework Group Session	Sunday (130pm) Training Games Classical Time Control of 90+30	Fees Guidelines per quarter before GST
National Squads	1	-	1	Waived
U20/U16	1	1	1	1,500
U12/U10/U8	2	-	1	1,500

- v. NTP Trainees shall also receive the following benefits:

- In official FIDE and Asian Events, such as the World Junior Chess Championships, the World Youth Chess Championships, the World Cadet Chess Championships, the Asian Youth Chess Championships, the Asian Schools Chess Championships, the ASEAN Age Group Chess Championships and the East Asian Youth Chess Championships, all registration and admin fees shall be waived for NTP trainees and one accompanying person.
- All trainees are allowed and encouraged to join training sessions and homework groups across the various squads (with the exception for the National Squads). As the content for each session shall be different, trainees will be able to benefit significantly if they wish to come for lessons each day.
- High performance trainees may be invited to join the National Squads (Open/Women) on a case-by-case basis. This shall be decided by the Training Committee.
- As fitness is a highly valued quality in chess, we have engaged a physical trainer to provide physical training once a week. This is conducted each Sunday after training games.
- NTP Trainees shall also be eligible for a cash incentive pool that shall be disbursed to medal winners of the afore-mentioned official FIDE and Asian events. This incentive pool shall be decided and announced at least one month before each tournament.

- vi. The top 3 finishers of the NAG shall be invited to join the NTP with fees waived as follows:

National Champion of each category	6 months of fees waived with an option to extend by a further 6 months to be decided by the training committee
Runner-up and 2 nd runner-up of each category	3 months of fees waived with an option to extend by a further 3 months to be decided by the training committee

- vii. Trainees who need financial support to join the programmes can apply for the SCF's Financial Assistance Scheme. Refer to <https://singaporechess.org.sg/financial-assistance/> for more information.

- viii. Players who want to be part of this program are to submit their interest via the [NTP Application Form](#). Please refer to the Application Form for more detailed information on application process, timeline, training schedules and requirements.
- ix. Please do not apply unless you or your child are fully committed to fulfil training and tournament participation commitments. Do consider whether the NJS courses would better suit your needs and commitment level.

3. Representing Singapore at International Events

3.1. The SCF classifies international chess events into the following 4 categories:

- i. Multi-Sport events.
- ii. International events requiring National Federation nomination.
- iii. International youth events requiring National Federation nomination.
- iv. Other international events.

3.2. Examples of events classified within each category are shown below. For types of events that are not listed in the table, the Selection Committee reserves the right to classify them as it deems fit.

Multi-Sport Events	International youth events requiring National Federation nomination	International events requiring National Federation nomination	Other international events
Asian Games	World Juniors	Olympiad	World Senior 50+, 65+, 75+ Championships
Asian Indoor & Martial Arts Games	World Youth	World Cities Team Championships	Asian Seniors 50+, 65+, 75+ Championships
Paralympics and other Para-Games	World Schools	World Cup	World Amateur Under-2000 Championships
SEA Games	World Cadets	Asian Individuals	Asian Amateur Under-2000 Championships
	Asian Juniors	Asian Nations Cup Team Championships	World Chess Games for the Disabled
	Asian Youth	Asian Cities Team Championship	Any other Open Competitions
	Asian Schools	Asian Zonal 3.3	
	World Youth U16 Olympiad		

3.3. The selection criteria used to select players for the abovementioned international events is outlined below and are considered in totality.

Selection Criteria	Examples
Performance in competitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Singapore National Chess Championships b. SG Chess Festival Classical Event c. National Age-Group Chess Championships d. Classical events organised internationally. e. National Schools Individuals Chess Championships f. Other local classical events
General Conduct & Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. No misdemeanours in the past year ii. 95% training attendance in the respective squad iii. Positive attitude during trainings and games iv. Sportsmanship
Involvement within the Chess Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Volunteered at SCF organised community or social events. b. Mentored a younger chess player. c. Took on leadership role in chess CCA/chess club
Training Squad	Whether player is in the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. NTP b. NJS c. Others/Not in a Squad
Feedback on the player	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Trainer assessment b. Squad Peer feedback
Selection Tournament	A tournament may be organized for the purpose of aiding in selection for a specific event
FIDE Rating	Minimum FIDE Rating requirements for a competition

3.4. The Selection Criteria for international events will apply to various categories of international events as outlined in Table 3.

Selection Criteria	Multi-Sport Games	Official International events	Official International Youth events
Performance in competitions	Assessed over the past year or previous Multi – Sports event	Assessed over the past year	Assessed over the past year
General Conduct	Assessed over the past year	Assessed over the past year	Assessed over the past year
Involvement within the Chess Community	Assessed over the past year	Assessed over the past year	Assessed over the past year

Training Squad	Must be in NTP National Squad	Priority given to: 1) NTP National Squad 2) NTP U20, 16, 12, 10, 8 In order of ranking above	Priority given to: 1) NTP National Squad 2) NTP U20, 16, 12, 10, 8 3) HP No order of priority between 1 & 2
Feedback on the player	From Trainers & Peers	From Trainers & Peers	From Trainers & Peers
Selection Tournament	Only if required to conduct		Only if required to conduct
FIDE Rating			Only if tournament has a rating requirement

3.5. The Selection Committee reserves the right to exercise final discretion in the selection of players as official representatives of Singapore in Official International Youth/International/Multi-Sports events. For multi-sports Events, the final decision shall be made by the Singapore National Olympic Committee “SNOC”. This extends to all matters pertaining to the amount of training subsidies, bonuses and incentives awarded.

4. Discipline

4.1. Players in the National Junior Squads and NTP are expected to comply with all conditions set forth in the present Selection Guidelines.

4.2. As coaches invest a large amount of time to prepare training materials, trainees are expected to commit to attending classes with regularity and conduct themselves in a disciplined manner.

4.3. Players are required to maintain at least 95% attendance to remain in their respective squads, not including the reasons for absences stated under 4.4 below.

4.4. Players can be exempted from training due to the following reasons:

i) Medical illness or emergency: Supporting documentation must be provided at the earliest convenience.

ii) Tournament participation: Players are to inform their respective coaches officially via email (ntp@singaporechess.org.sg) one week in advance.

iii) Examination leave. Players are allowed to take leave on the day of examination and the day prior to the examination. Players are to inform their respective coaches officially via email one week in advance. Please copy ntp@singaporechess.org.sg in your email.

iv) Other extenuating circumstances such as urgent family matters. Please email ntp@singaporechess.org.sg at the earliest convenience.

The SCF reserves the right to exercise final discretion in dealing such requests.

- 4.5. Players are expected to maintain a high level of discipline and professionalism, both during training and while playing in tournaments. Examples of unacceptable behaviour include but are not limited to the following:
- Engaging in hate speech associated with racism, sexism, religion, cultural differences, political differences, or sexual orientation.
 - Engaging in abusive behaviour, such as shouting or posing malicious threats to trainers, fellow trainees, SCF employees or the SCF Governing Board.
 - Being late for tournament games or training repeatedly despite multiple warnings.
 - Excessive use of mobile devices during training.
 - Accounts on chess servers such as lichess.org and chess.com being shut down due to violation of terms of services.
- 4.6. Players who do not comply with clause 4.5 shall be subject to any of the following disciplinary measures.
- i. Verbal warning
 - ii. Formal warning letter
 - iii. Expulsion from the respective squad
- 4.7. The SCF Governing Board reserves the right to exercise final discretion in dealing with any cases related to discipline.

5. Appeals

5.1. The HPE Appeals Committee comprises the following:

- GM Wong Meng Kong (Vice-President)
- IM Terry Toh Chun Eng (Vice-President)
- Mr. Seow Yongli (Former Board Member)

5.2. The HPE Appeals Committee is appointed to handle any appeals related to selection matters.

5.3. All appeals shall be submitted to the HPE Appeals Committee (hpe.appeals@singaporechess.org.sg) in writing. Grounds of the appeal shall be set out in writing, and the HPE Appeals Committee reserves all rights to request for further explanation or documentary evidence to be submitted within a prescribed time period, and if such a request is not satisfactorily complied with, the appeal may be rejected.

5.4. The HPE Appeals Committee may in its absolute discretion require a deposit of \$100 to be paid by the appellant before the appeal is heard. The amount shall be refunded to the appellant in the event of a successful appeal.

5.5. The HPE Appeals Committee shall use the present Selection Guidelines as the primary basis for making its decision but is not required to furnish written grounds of its decision, and if the appellant requires the written grounds of decisions to be furnished, a further administrative fee may be levied. The decision of the HPE Appeals Committee is final.