



Athlete Selection Policy for the FEI Para Dressage World Championships 2026

Introduction

This Policy sets out the process for selecting athletes and horses for the FEI Para Dressage World Championships in AACHEN (GER) 17th – 23rd August 2026.

Section 1 – Key Timelines

Monday, 22nd June 2026	The Para Dressage High Performance Managers announces the long list of combinations under consideration for selection for the FEI World Championships (Para Dressage) Aachen (GER) 2026
Friday, 3rd July 2026	Horse Sport Ireland publishes the list of nominated entries. Horse Sport Ireland reserves the right to amend or supplement the list of nominated entries up to the FEI deadline, where additional Athlete/Horse combinations achieve the Minimum Eligibility Requirement within the FEI qualification period.
Monday, 6th July 2026	Horse Sport Ireland formally submits the nominated entries to the FEI, to include a certificate of capability for the FEI World Championships (Para Dressage) Aachen (GER) pursuant to FEI General Regulations. Inclusion on the nomination entry list does not confer selection to the team.
Wednesday, 8th July 2026	The Para Dressage High Performance Manager will determine the selected athlete combinations who will represent Ireland at the FEI World Championships (Para Dressage) Aachen (GER).
Monday, 27th July 2026	Horse Sport Ireland will submit the Definite Entries to the FEI for the FEI World Championships (Para Dressage) in Aachen (GER).

Section 2 - Eligibility for Nomination

- 2.1 All athletes and horses wishing to compete at the CH-M-PED must in the first instance have attained (as a combination) one result of minimum 64%, attributed by the Ground Jury, in a Team test or Individual test in their respective grade at a CPEDI3* or above event from the 1st January 2025 until the date of nominated entries (FEI MER). Please note that the achievement of the MER is basic requirement and in no way confers an obligation upon the PDHPM to select an Athlete/Horse combination.
- 2.2 It is the sole responsibility of each Athlete to ensure that they have the required MER for the

level of Championship.

Section 3 - Responsibilities

- 3.1 It is each athlete's responsibility to be fully cognisant of the current FEI Rules for Para Dressage and the FEI Clean Sport policy.
- 3.2 Athletes must strictly abide by the following:
- a) FEI General Regulations and FEI Discipline Sport Rules
 - b) FEI Code of Conduct for the Welfare of the Horse.
 - c) FEI Equine Anti-Doping Rules and Equine Controlled Medication Rules and the Human Anti-Doping Rules as set out by the FEI and Sport Ireland.
 - d) Horse Sport Ireland General Rules.
 - e) The Horse Sport Ireland Athlete Code of Conduct.
 - f) Prompt communications with the Para Dressage High Performance Manager, Team Veterinarian, and Horse Sport Ireland in relation to the HSI High Performance Programme requirements/requests.
 - g) Athletes must show a commitment to personal fitness and professional behaviour.
 - h) All Athletes selected will be required to wear the official Team Ireland kit where provided while participating at the [CH-M-PED](#).

Section 4 - Veterinary

- 4.1 Horse Sport Ireland can request that a horse be made available for inspection by the Team Veterinarian(s) or an appointed Veterinarian at any time. Athletes must comply with this request.
- 4.2 Athletes must notify Horse Sport Ireland of any change in their horse's health status or of any veterinary issues when they first become apparent.
- 4.3 Horse Sport Ireland can send the Team Veterinarian or an appointed Veterinarian to take a blood and/or urine sample from a horse at any time, for the purposes of testing for prohibited substances, and/or FEI Pre-Arrival Testing and/or as part of an assessment of the horse's well-being.
- 4.4 Athletes (at their own expense) shall make available, upon the request of the Team Veterinarian or an appointed Veterinarian, the veterinary records of horse(s) being considered for selection. In addition, athletes, (at their own expense), shall be responsible for supplying any follow-up diagnostic information requested by the Team Veterinarian for horses being considered for selection. Failure to comply with any request of the Team Veterinarian or an appointed Veterinarian may adversely affect a combination in respect of selection.
- 4.5 Each athlete will be required to keep a medication logbook for their horses in which they shall record all products, treatments, foodstuffs and all supplements used on or given to their horse commencing 42 days (six weeks) before the first horse inspection of the CH-M-PED until the conclusion of the [CH-M-PED](#). The commencing date of this logbook is the 28th of June.
- 4.6 The Team Veterinarian will be entitled to view this logbook at any time. Athletes are required to submit this logbook together with the Medication and Anti-Doping Control Declaration (Appendix 3) to the Team Veterinarian for assessment on or before the FEI Final Definite Entries in line with Rule 8.12 of the Horse Sport Ireland General Rules.
- 4.7 In the event that treatments and medications are necessary subsequent to the submission of the logbook, express approval is required from Team Veterinarian and Horse Sport Ireland. This is a mandatory requirement to ensure that squad horses are managed appropriately within the pre-competition window and before departure.

- 4.8 For the purposes of section IV, Horse Sport Ireland reserves the right to remove an athlete combination from selection, where the athlete does not comply with any of the above veterinary requests, or the horse is deemed unsound and/or unfit by the Team Veterinarian to travel and compete at the [CH-M-PED](#). The decision of Horse Sport Ireland on advice from Team Veterinarian is final.

Section 5 - Specific Nomination Criteria

Core Objective:

This nomination policy combines both competition and general criteria in order for the Para Dressage High Performance Manager to select the IRL Dressage Team to compete at the 2026 [CH-M-PED](#). The Para Dressage High Performance Managers's primary objective is to nominate the appropriate 'mix of combinations' to give Ireland the best chance of a **Top 12 finish** at the Championships.

- 5.1 In assessing the performances of Combinations, the PDHPM **will consider** the following competition & general measures:

(A) Competition Measures

- i. The following events are deemed identified key events for the purposes of selection for the World Championships Para Dressage 2026. All combinations eligible for selection will be expected to compete at at least two CPEDI3*'s, of which one has to be ridden outside of the UK.
 - Doha 18th – 21st February 2026
 - Hartpury 30th March – 3rd April 2026
 - Aachen 8th to 11th April 2026
 - Fontainebleau 15th – 19th April 2026
 - Waregem 24th – 26th April 2026
 - Mannheim 29th April – 5th May 2026
 - Hickstead 11th – 17th May 2026
 - Wellington 4th – 10th June 2026
 - Sopot 17th – 21st June 2026
- ii. To assess the performances of Combinations, the PDHPM will look at all the results obtained at the events mentioned above. The PDHPM will consider the results with emphasis on team and individual events followed by consideration of those in the Kur.
- iii. Across the identified key events, the PDHPM will look for consistency of scores over 68%. Combinations should note that the PDHPM reserves the right to consider scores below 68% should same be merited.

Thereafter:
- iv. The trend in average Team and Individual scores in 2024, 2025 and 2026. Scores in 2026 will be given greater weight than scores obtained in 2025 and 2024.
- v. The overall quality of the start list (determined by FEI rankings of the other athletes and their current form), the star level of the panels of judges and the star level of the shows.

- vi. The experience of the athlete and horse as a combination and their ability to cope with the pressures and challenges of the CH-M-PED.
- vii. The degree of commitment to the HSI Para Dressage High Performance Programme.

An athlete may request special consideration for competing at less than two CPEDI3*s by submitting a written request prior to the start of the identified key event to the PDHPM, who will seek advice from the HSI Para Dressage Committee, and approve or disapprove the request based on these factors:

1. The athlete/horse combinations scores and consistency of scores at CPEDI3*s since January 1, 2025;
2. Previous international experience of the athlete and/or horse;
3. The circumstances, facts, and in the case of illness or injury to a horse or athlete, documentation by the Team Veterinarian and / or physician(s) approved by HSI;
4. Unforeseen circumstances which create a logistical emergency; and/or
5. Cancellation of Event(s).

If the PDHPM approves the above exception for the athlete to whom the exception was granted, one may also require an additional home visit or a live online session to monitor ongoing “state of preparedness.” If a home visit or live online session is requested, the athlete must comply with the request.

(B) General Considerations

- i. The soundness of the horse to meet the challenges of competing and travelling to the [CH-M-PED](#) will be a significant factor in any selection decision. Athletes must keep the Team Veterinarian fully briefed on any health or soundness issues the horse may have both historically and throughout the season.
- ii. Athletes are required to disclose any illness or injury (however minor) to the PDHPM and Team Veterinarian. Where it becomes apparent that a selected horse is unsound or unfit to travel or that there was a non-disclosure relating to soundness, the PDHPM reserves the right to remove that combination from nomination and selection with immediate effect.
- iii. The health and fitness of the athlete to meet the challenges of competing and travelling to the [CH-M-PED](#) will be a factor in any selection decision.
- iv. Further consideration will be given to the following general measures:
 - a. Past performances and present form of the athlete and horse as a combination and an athlete or horse's historic form;
 - b. The suitability of the Combination with regard to the likely characteristics of the arenas in Herning, DEN and for the expected conditions of the [CH-M-PED](#) (taking into account the objective of the team competition);
 - c. the ability of the Horse and/or Athlete and his/her support personnel to operate and perform in an environment which is highly regulated and pressurised;
 - d. the ability of the Athlete to prepare their Horse to peak condition for a major campaign, such as the [CH-M-PED](#);
 - e. the ability of the Athlete and/or support team to contribute towards an effective team and winning orientated environment;
 - f. the overall composition of the team;
 - g. demonstrated experience and/ or success at Championship level;
 - h. consistency of performance and the likelihood of a suitable performance to contribute towards a podium outcome;

- i. exceptional ability of a Combination (and the potential to achieve a podium finish) may be a consideration and may, in the PDHPM's sole discretion, place a Combination with less experience or consistency ahead of another Combination
- j. degree of commitment to the Horse Sport Ireland Para Dressage High Performance (HP) Programme.

Section 6 – Force Majeure

- 6.1 In considering the performances of athletes at events or other attendances in line with this policy, the PDHPM may, at his discretion, give weight to extenuating circumstances.
- 6.2 For the purposes of section 6.1 above, extenuating circumstances means an inability to compete, or perform or contribute at an optimum level arising from:
 - i. Injury or illness;
 - ii. Bereavement or personal misfortune, and/or;
 - iii. Any other factors reasonably considered by the PDHPM to constitute extenuating circumstances;
- 6.3 Athletes unable to compete at events other attendances must advise the PDHPM by email of this fact and the reasons thereof as soon as practicable after the extenuating circumstances arise.

Section 7 - Removal of Athletes and/or horses

- 7.1 An athlete and horse as a combination, or separately, may be removed from nomination to FEI and FEI Definite Entries by the PDHPM for any reason, including in particular the following:
 - a) Violation or alleged violation of the Sport Ireland and FEI (Human) Anti-Doping protocol, policies and procedure.
 - b) Violation or alleged violation of FEI Equine Anti-Doping Rules.
 - c) An adverse analytical finding following on from testing pursuant to Sport Ireland, FEI Clean Sport protocol, (Human & Equine), Horse Sport Ireland National Equine Anti-Doping Programme policies and procedures.
 - d) Violation or alleged violation of the FEI Sport Rules and Regulations and HSI General Rules.
 - e) Violation or alleged of the HSI Code of Conduct.
 - f) Any action which could damage the reputation of the Sport or the Country.
 - g) Selected horse produces an adverse analytical finding following on from an assessment and/or Pre- Arrival Testing.
 - h) The Team Veterinarian determines the nominated horse unsound to travel and compete at the [CH-M-PED](#).
 - i) The Team Veterinarian determines the selected horse incapable of travelling to the [CH-M-PED](#)
 - j) for any stated reason.
 - k) Where an athlete falls ill or sustains an injury subsequent to nomination by the Para Dressage High Performance and is certified by the HSI Medical Officer or his/she designate as unfit to travel and compete.

Section 8 - Disclaimers

- 8.1 These procedures are based on FEI General Regulations, applicable FEI Sport Rules as presently known and understood. The selection criteria are based on the latest information available to HSI. However, the selections are always subject to unforeseen, intervening circumstances, and may not have accounted for every possible contingency.
- 8.2 As such, this selection policy can be amended at any time by Horse Sport Ireland. Horse Sport Ireland reserves the right to amend or change the Policy where necessary at any time in order to fulfil any objective within the Policy. In the event that Horse Sport Ireland is of the opinion that such an amendment is necessary as a result of any change in any of

the above stated rules, regulations and agreements, to give effect to the policy following discovery of a drafting error or oversight or for any other reason determined to be in the best interests of Horse Sport Ireland, Horse Sport Ireland shall not be responsible or liable in any way to anyone as a result of any such amendment.

Section 9 - Appeals

- 9.1 An eligible athlete who fails to be selected for **nominated entries and/or team place** pursuant to the criteria set out in this policy, may appeal against omission from **nominated entries and/or team selection** as set out in this section.
- 9.2 Limitation of Appeal - The sole grounds of any appeal are that: Any appeal is limited to grounds of:
- (a) bias, and/or
 - (b) failure to adhere to the relevant Athlete Selection Policy
- 9.3 Any appeal under section 9 will be dealt with by Sport Dispute Solutions Ireland (Just Sport Ireland Limited) <http://sportdisputesolutions.ie/about/> SDSI is an independent dispute resolution service for Irish Sport.
- 9.4 Appeals will be heard by Sport Dispute Solutions Ireland and otherwise proceed in accordance with the time limits set out below and in accordance SDSI Arbitration Rules for final and binding arbitration. Sport Dispute Solutions Ireland Rules.
- 9.5 Notice of Appeal:
Any eligible athlete wishing to appeal against their omission from the selection must lodge a Notice of Appeal Form (Appendix A, SDSI Rules), and comply with the requirements set out in Rule 14 and Rule 57 of SDSI Arbitration Rules. Athletes must submit the completed form within 36 hours of published decision on the HSI website. Athletes should note that the time limit as set out in SDSI Rules 14.2 (b) does not apply in this instance.
- 9.6 Statement of Appeal:
Within 48 hours after lodging the SDSI Rules, the appellant (the athlete making the appeal) must file a Statement of Appeal as set out in Rule 14.2 (f) & (g) of SDSI Arbitration Rules, Appendix B. Athletes should note that the time limit of (7) days as set out in SDSI Rules 14.2 (f) does not apply in this instance.
- 9.7 Reply
Within 48 hours from receipt of the Statement of Appeal, the Respondent (High Performance Manager) shall file a "Reply Form" in accordance with the provisions of Rule 14.3 (a) & (b) and Rule 57 of the SDSI Arbitration Rules. Athletes should note that the time limit of (14) days as set out in SDSI Rule 14.2 (a) does not apply in this instance.

Ends/