



# HORSE SPORT IRELAND

## Athlete Selection Policy for the FEI World Championships (Eventing) 2026

### Introduction

This Policy sets out the process for selecting athletes and horses for the FEI World Championships (Eventing), Aachen (GER), 17–23 August 2026.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Horse Sport Ireland Eventing High Performance Squad Selection Policy (February 2026) and the 2026 Eventing High Performance Squad Structure, which establish the framework for athlete identification, progression and selection within the High-Performance Programme.

<https://www.horsesportireland.ie/2026-irish-eventing-squad-structure-announced/>

[https://www.horsesportireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/High-Performance-Squad-Selection-Policy\\_Feb-2026.pdf](https://www.horsesportireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/High-Performance-Squad-Selection-Policy_Feb-2026.pdf)

Selection decisions are made by the Eventing High Performance Manager (HPM) in consultation with the HSI Eventing High Performance Selection Panel, having regard to performance, championship objectives and horse welfare.

### Section 1 – Key Timelines

<b>Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2026</b>	Horse Sport Ireland publishes a long list of athletes for the FEI World Eventing Championships.
Monday 06/07/2026 23:59 CEST	Horse Sport Ireland formally submits the nominated entries to the FEI, to include a certificate of capability for the CH-M-C pursuant to FEI General Regulations.
<b>Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2026</b>	The Eventing High Performance Manager, in consultation with the Selection Panel, determines the selected combinations who will represent Ireland at the FEI Eventing World Championships.
Monday 27/07/2026 23:59 CEST	Horse Sport Ireland will submit the Definite Entries to the FEI for the CH-M-C.

### Section 2 - Eligibility for Selection

- 2.1 All athletes and horses must achieve the Minimum Eligibility Requirements (MERs) in accordance with FEI Qualification Procedures. The achievement of the MER is a basic requirement only and does not confer any obligation upon Horse Sport Ireland to select a combination.
- 2.2 It is the sole responsibility of each athlete to ensure that they have achieved the required MERs, including one CCI5\*-L or one CCI4\*-L and one CCI4\*-S.
- 2.3 In accordance with the HSI Eventing High Performance Squad Selection Policy, athletes must be members of the High-Performance Squad or High-Performance Development Squad at the time of selection.

### **Section 3 - Responsibilities**

- 3.1 It is each athlete's responsibility to be fully cognisant of the current FEI Rules for Eventing 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 Eventing 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 NF kit where provided while participating at the CH-M-C.

### **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 The 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 30 days before the event until the conclusion of the EU-CH-C.

- 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-C. The decision of Horse Sport Ireland on advice from Team Veterinarian is final.

## **Section 5 - Specific Nomination Criteria**

### **Core Objective**

This policy combines competition and general criteria to enable the Eventing High Performance Manager, in consultation with the Selection Panel, to select the Irish team for the CH-M-C. The objective is to identify the combinations most capable of delivering a strong championship performance.

### **5.1 Assessment Framework**

Selection will be based on an overall assessment of all relevant factors. No single criterion shall be determinative. Decisions are made at the discretion of the Eventing High Performance Manager, in consultation with the Selection Panel, and in the best interests of the Irish team.

#### **(A) Competition Measures**

In assessing the performances of combinations, the Eventing High Performance Manager, in consultation with the Selection Panel, will have regard to the following competition measures.

- i. The Eventing High Performance Manager will primarily consider competition results achieved within the top 25% at CCI5\*-L, CCI4\*-L and CCI4\*-S competitions during the 2025 and 2026 seasons.
- ii. In order to maximise nomination prospects, combinations should aim to demonstrate performance at CCI4\*-S level or above (including CCI4\*-L and CCI5\* competitions) with finishing scores in the region of 33.0 penalties or better, indicative of a level of performance consistent with championship requirements.
- iii. In assessing performances, the Eventing High Performance Manager and Selection Panel will consider the overall quality and consistency of results, including the final overall score achieved across all three phases, the scores achieved in each individual phase, and the final placing of the combination at each relevant event. For the avoidance of doubt, scores and placings will be evaluated but shall not automatically rank one combination above another for selection purposes.
- iv. In addition, the Eventing High Performance Manager and Selection Panel may have regard to factors including the consistency of performance across multiple events, the demonstrated soundness and fitness of the horse and athlete, and the ability of the combination to perform under team and championship competition conditions.

- v. Particular weight may be given to cross-country performance and reliability, including the ability of the combination to consistently deliver clear and competitive cross-country rounds under championship conditions.
- vi. Where available, objective statistical performance analysis, including but not limited to data and metrics produced by EquiRatings, may also be considered as part of the overall evaluation of combinations. Such analysis shall be used as a supplementary decision-support tool only and shall not be determinative of selection in isolation.

## **(B) General Considerations**

In addition to the Competition Measures set out above, the following general considerations may be taken into account by the Eventing High-Performance Manager when assessing athlete/horse combinations for selection:

- i. The soundness of the horse to meet the physical demands of competing at, and travelling to, the CH-M-C shall be a significant factor in any selection decision. Athletes must keep the Team Veterinarian fully informed of any health, medical or soundness issues relating to their horse(s), whether historical or current, throughout the season.
- ii. Athletes are required to disclose any illness or injury (however minor) affecting either themselves or their horse to the Eventing High-Performance Manager and the Team Veterinarian. Where it becomes apparent that a selected horse is unsound or unfit to travel or compete, or where there has been a material non-disclosure relating to soundness, the Eventing High-Performance Manager, following consultation with the Team Veterinarian, reserves the right to remove the combination from selection with immediate effect.
- iii. The health and fitness of the athlete, and their ability to meet the demands of competing at, and travelling to, the CH-M-C, shall be a factor in any selection decision.
- iv. Further consideration may be given to the following general measures:
  - i. Past performances and present form of the athlete and horse as a combination, as well as the historic performance record of the athlete and/or horse individually;
  - ii. The suitability of the combination having regard to the likely characteristics of the arenas and the anticipated conditions at the CH-M-C, taking into account the objectives of the team competition;
  - iii. The ability of the athlete and their support personnel to operate and perform effectively in a championship environment that is highly regulated, structured and pressurised;
  - iv. The ability of the athlete and/or their support team to contribute positively to an effective, cohesive and winning-oriented team environment;
  - v. The overall composition and balance of the team;
  - vi. The ability and experience of the combination to compete successfully at the highest level of international competition;
  - vii. Demonstrated experience and/or success at senior championship level;
  - viii. The ability, or potential ability, of the horse and/or athlete to perform under the stress and pressure of a CH-M-C; and the ability of the athlete to prepare and manage their horse so as to achieve peak condition for a major championship campaign such as the CH-M-C;

- ix. The consistency of performance and the likelihood that the combination can deliver a performance capable of contributing towards a podium outcome;
- x. Evidence of exceptional ability by a combination and the potential to achieve an outstanding result, which may, in the sole discretion of the Eventing High-Performance Manager, result in a combination with less experience or consistency being selected ahead of another combination;
- xi. The athlete's degree of commitment to the Horse Sport Ireland Eventing High Performance Programme.

## **Section 6 – Force Majeure**

- 6.1 In considering the performances of athletes at events or other attendances in line with this policy, the Eventing Manager and Panel may, at their 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 Eventing Manager and Panel to constitute extenuating circumstances.
- 6.3 Athletes unable to compete at events other attendances must advise the Eventing Manager and Panel 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, whether considered as a combination or separately, may be removed from nomination, including from the FEI Long List, Nominated Entries and/or FEI Definite Entries, by the Eventing High-Performance Manager and Panel at their sole discretion, at any time up to and including the latest time permitted under FEI Rules for substitutions prior to the commencement of the CH-M-S, for any reason considered relevant to the objectives of this Policy, including, but not limited to, the following:
  - a) Any violation or alleged violation of Sport Ireland and/or FEI Human Anti-Doping Rules, policies or procedures;
  - b) Any violation or alleged violation of the FEI Equine Anti-Doping and Controlled Medication Rules;
  - c) Any adverse analytical finding arising from testing carried out pursuant to Sport Ireland, FEI Clean Sport protocols (human and/or equine), or Horse Sport Ireland National Equine Anti-Doping Programme policies and procedures;
  - d) Any violation or alleged violation of FEI Eventing Rules, FEI General Regulations, or Horse Sport Ireland General Rules;
  - e) Any violation or alleged violation of the Horse Sport Ireland Athlete Code of Conduct;

f) Any action, behaviour, or conduct which, in the reasonable opinion of Horse Sport Ireland, may bring the sport, the federation, or the country into disrepute;

g) Where a selected horse produces an adverse analytical finding following assessment and/or FEI Pre-Arrival Testing;

h) Where the Team Veterinarian determines that a nominated or selected horse is unsound or unfit to travel to and/or compete at the CH-M-C;

i) Where the Team Veterinarian determines that a selected horse is incapable of travelling to the CH-M-C for any stated reason;

j) Where an athlete falls ill or sustains an injury subsequent to selection and is certified by the Horse Sport Ireland Medical Officer, or their designated medical advisor, as unfit to travel or compete;

k) Where, in the reasonable opinion of the Eventing High Performance Manager, in consultation with the Selection Panel, a selected combination demonstrates a sustained loss of form or performance level subsequent to selection, such that the combination is no longer considered capable of meeting the objectives of this Policy.

#### **(l) Horse Welfare Allegations / Abuse of Horse**

l) Where an athlete is the subject of any horse welfare-related allegation, investigation, protest, disciplinary process or proceedings, including but not limited to matters arising under the FEI Code of Conduct for the Welfare of the Horse, FEI General Regulations Article 142 (Abuse of Horse) and/or FEI Eventing Rules Article 265 (Abuse of Horse), the Eventing High-Performance Manager may, having regard to horse welfare as a paramount consideration and the objectives of this Policy, remove the athlete and/or horse from nomination and/or selection, at any time up to and including the latest time permitted under FEI Rules for substitutions prior to the commencement of the CH-M-C, including pending the outcome of any investigation or proceedings. This may apply where such matters become known through formal complaints, investigations, or credible information emerging in the public domain, including through media or social media, where consideration of the matter is necessary to protect horse welfare, the integrity of the team, or the reputation of Horse Sport Ireland.

#### **7.2 Clarification**

For the avoidance of doubt, eligibility to compete under FEI Rules, including the absence of an FEI suspension at the relevant time, does not of itself confer any entitlement to selection or retention under this Policy. Selection and continued nomination remain matters for determination by Horse Sport Ireland in accordance with the objectives and provisions of this Policy, with horse welfare being a paramount consideration.

#### **Section 8 – Disclaimers and Policy Review**

8.1 This Policy is based on the FEI General Regulations, applicable FEI Sport Rules, and Horse Sport Ireland rules and policies as in force and understood at the time of publication. The selection criteria are based on the best and most up-to-date information reasonably available to Horse Sport Ireland at the time decisions are made.

8.2 Selections made pursuant to this Policy are inherently subject to change as a result of unforeseen, intervening or emerging circumstances, including but not limited to changes

in FEI rules or interpretations, veterinary or medical developments, force majeure events, welfare concerns, disciplinary matters, or information that becomes known after initial selection, including information arising through formal processes or credible matters emerging in the public domain, including media or social media.

- 8.3 Accordingly, Horse Sport Ireland reserves the right to amend, vary or update this Policy and/or to apply it flexibly where necessary in order to give effect to its objectives, to comply with FEI or regulatory requirements, to correct any drafting error or oversight, or where otherwise determined by Horse Sport Ireland to be in the best interests of the sport, the team, or horse welfare.

## **Section 9 - Appeals**

- 9.1 An eligible athlete who fails to be selected for (1) the long list nominated entry list on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2026 or the team selection, and/or reserve athlete in the team of 5, pursuant to the criteria set out in this policy, may appeal against said omission as arising 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 as set out in Rule 14 and Rule 57 of SDSI Arbitration Rules.

Athletes must submit the completed form within 36 hours of published nominated entries on the HSI website and in respect of the team selection and reserve team athlete, the clock starts from the publication of the team selection 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.

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- 9.6 Statement of Appeal:

Within 48 hours after lodging the SDSI Rules, for nominated entry list or team selection 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 and Panel) 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/

Approved by the HPM Eventing