



**Project**                    **An investigation into talent identification and development in English Netball**

**Project No**                **5927/PS/EMR**

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## Executive Summary

- England Netball has had a system of talent identification and development in place since 2000 as part of a policy of Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD).
- This system has been replaced by the Excel Framework in 2008 following changes in strategy by Sport England.
- This research evaluates the impact of the previous system and provides some benchmark data against which the success of the new system can be judged in the future.
- The project design is a single organisational case-study in which current incumbents of Talent groups 1 and 2, who have potential for selection to the National squad, have been investigated.
- Mixed methods of research are employed. A questionnaire investigates the broad profile of netballers playing career, the influences on that career and current experiences with England Netball.
- Interviews with a sub-sample of the netballers yield more detailed insight into the processes and interactions involved in their talent identification and development.
- The main findings of the research are that:
  - There is no evidence of regional or club bias in talent selection, which indicates that a national selection process is operating well.
  - Movements between clubs is linked to the perceived need of netballers to improve, and often linked to coach advice.
  - Netballers are not particularly early maturers but are drawn from a highly talented pool of athletes whose primary experiences are schools and to an extent clubs.
  - There is no evidence of any age bias.
  - Once selected netballers specialise in their chosen sport. This highlights the need for early talent spotting and selection.
  - Netballers understand the objectives and structure of the current programme.
  - Netballers are actively and personally motivated to make best use of the current system
  - Coaching efforts are appreciated both in terms of its objectives and delivery and that this is reflected in a career path.

## 1. Introduction

The Institute of Sport and Leisure Policy (ISLP) at Loughborough University was pleased to respond to a request by Cathy Partridge, Regional Talent Officer for the East Midlands, and Kelly Parkyn, Talent Manager for England Netball, to investigate talent identification and development in netball. The context of the evaluation is the recent change in Sport England's strategy from a policy of Long-term Athlete Development (LTAD) to one in which National Governing Bodies and sports clubs will be charged with ensuring that they *Grow* participation in their sport, that they *Sustain* participation in their sport and also to ensure that talent progresses to an elite level, that is *Excel*.

Specifically,

“Approximately 25% of Sport England's investment will focus on developing and accelerating talent. The outcome will be well-defined, appropriate talent support systems for each sport being funded, resulting in more talented performers moving on to elite programmes and success. Precise targets regarding the size and/or quality of talent pools will be agreed with each sport. NGBs will have the majority of responsibility and will particularly focus on ensuring the right level of coaching provision is being delivered at appropriate levels”<sup>1</sup>

The main aim of this project was to investigate the experiences of current incumbents of Talent groups 1 and 2, who have potential for selection for the National squad, so that the outcomes of the previous system can be reviewed and evaluated, as well as to provide some benchmark data against which the new strategy can be subsequently investigated.

Section 2 of this report outlines the research design, and provides a brief discussion of the research methods and instruments employed. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to generate the research results which are set out in Sections 3. Section 4 then summarises the main overall findings.

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<sup>1</sup> Sport England Strategy 2008-2011  
([http://www.sportengland.org/sport\\_england\\_strategy\\_2008-2011.pdf](http://www.sportengland.org/sport_england_strategy_2008-2011.pdf))

## **2. Research Design**

In consultation with the clients it was decided that an investigation of the current members of the Talent Groups 1 and 2 would form the basis for the investigation. The main reason for this is because it enabled the outcomes of the previous talent selection system to be reviewed as well as to provide a benchmark profile of talent against which future evaluations can take place. In this respect the project design can be described as a single organisational case-study, with all members of the Talent Groups acting as the population.

A mixed method approach to the research was employed, which comprised a self completion questionnaire and semi structured telephone interviews.

There are two main reasons for this design. The first is that the combination of the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews enabled both broad profiles as well as detailed experiences of netballers to be investigated. The combination of the research methods also helps to inform the reliability and validity of the findings from either method.

The other main reason for the choice of methods was that they enabled an efficient form of data collection and one that more easily met the ethical requirements of Loughborough University when researching young people. In this regard the timescale for the research was relatively tight. The research was commissioned on the week beginning 8<sup>th</sup> December 2008 and needed to be completed by the 21<sup>st</sup> of January prior to the national squad selection weekend, including receiving university ethical clearance. To ease the ethical complications the research involved no direct contact with the young people by the researchers other than through telephone interviews in which case it was ensured that a parent or guardian was present at the time of the interview. All other contact was by post with the questionnaires being distributed from and to the researchers by England Netball.<sup>2</sup> Anonymity was

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<sup>2</sup> Following university ethical guidelines participant information sheets were sent to members of the Talent Groups by post and indicating the purpose of the research and the rights of potential participants. Consent forms were then issued and returned by post eliciting consent for participation from parents if respondents were aged under 18 years of age. Separate consent forms were provided for potential questionnaire respondents and also potential

ensured by having completed questionnaires returned in sealed envelopes. Potential interviewees were randomly selected, with the remaining members of the Talent groups being sent a questionnaire. Out of a total of 35 members of the Talent groups 6 were interviewed and the remainder sent a questionnaire. 26 completed questionnaires were returned.

In order to design the questionnaire and interview schedules, reported in Appendices 1 and 2, a number of meetings took place between the authors of the report and the client. Time constraints precluded formal pilot testing. The relevant talent identification and development literature was also informally reviewed.<sup>3</sup> It was identified that data should be collected upon:

- The geographical origin of netballers to assess if there are *hot spots* of netball development.
- The club profile of netballers to assess playing careers and reasons for moving between clubs.
- The playing career of netballers examining where netball was first played and the alternative playing opportunities as the player develops with age.
- The number of other sports and the level of their participation to examine the sporting capability of netballers.
- The important factors that have contributed to the development of the netballer. This includes maturity, as well as personal maturity and the support systems for netballers.
- The experiences of netballers playing and training with England Netball reviewing coaching, and the talent development system.

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interviewees. In the latter case the forms provided details of contact details. During interviews the interviewer checked for the presence of the parent. The questionnaires were distributed by and returned to the researchers by England Netball. Ethical Documentation is presented in Appendix 3.

<sup>3</sup> A good review of the evidence is provided in Fraser-Thomas, J. and Cote, J *Youth Sports: Implementing Findings and Moving Forward with Research*  
<http://www.athleticinsight.com/Vol8Iss3/YouthPDF.pdf>

### 3. Results

This section presents the results of the mixed methods research. The tables present the results from the questionnaire data, following the broad structure of the questionnaire. In all cases both the frequencies of respondents as well as the percentage of responses are presented. These tables are supplemented, where appropriate, with data from the interviews. Clearly because of the relatively small sample sizes the percentage responses should be interpreted appropriately. It should be noted that sample sizes vary because of different response rates to questions.

Table 1 presents the current county of residence of netballers, as well as any previous county of residence. Despite the fact that there was a common misreading of *county* for *country* yielding *England* as a response, the important finding is that there does not appear to be particular locations from which elite talent is drawn. Talent identification thus appears not to suffer from regional bias. Likewise there is no evidence that movement in location might be linked to talent selection.

**Table 1 Origin of Players**

<b>Current County</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Previous County</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
England	10	38.5	Bedfordshire	1	4.3
Middlesex	1	3.8	England	1	4.3
Dorset	1	3.8	Same county	21	91.3
Bedford	2	7.7	<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100</b>
Greater Manchester	1	3.8			
Gloucestershire	1	3.8			
West Midlands	2	7.7			
Buckinghamshire	1	3.8			
Kent	1	3.8			
Essex	1	3.8			
Cheshire	1	3.8			
Cornwall	1	3.8			
South Yorkshire	1	3.8			
Merseyside	1	3.8			
Northamptonshire	1	3.8	Missing	3	
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2 reports the current clubs of respondents. Not surprisingly, elite clubs are identified. Responses have been presented faithfully to the way in which the respondent expressed the club. Again there is no evidence that particular clubs are providing the source of elite talent, indicating selection bias. There is naturally evidence of clusters of talent associated with certain clubs, for example with Wyvern and Mavericks, and Leeds. Table 3 also suggests that players have typically played for other clubs.

**Table 2 Current Club**

<b>Current Club</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Wyvrn Mavericks Youth	1	3.8
Watford Premier and Mavericks NTL Academy	1	3.8
Academy	2	7.7
Galmington Poole and Team Bath NTL	1	3.8
Weston Park Blades	1	3.8
Mavericks	1	3.8
Leeds Carnegie	3	11.5
Telstars	1	3.8
Roman Glass	1	3.8
Tibberton Star	2	7.7
Wyvern	1	3.8
Academy	1	3.8
Telstars and Mavericks	1	3.8
Bilericay and Breezers	1	3.8
Mavericks Youth	1	3.8
St Austell	1	3.8
Team Bed	1	3.8
Oldham	1	3.8
Tongham	1	3.8
MK Netters	1	3.8
Parkside	1	3.8
Pennine	1	3.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>100</b>

**Played for Other Club**

No	6	23.1
Yes	20	76.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 3 Previous Clubs**

<b>Previous club 1</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Previous club 2</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
MK Netters 2 to 3 years	1	5	Grangers 2003-9	1	12.5
Troy 2007-8	1	5	Tameside	2	25
Peeks 2003-7	1	5	Thornbury Tigers 2002-4	1	12.5
Team Beds 2006-9	1	5	Luton Gold - 1 year	1	12.5
Trafford	1	5	Jade 2000-3	1	12.5
Hornets - 2 years	1	5	Westoning Navy - 1 year	1	12.5
Almondbury 2005-7	1	5	Sheffield Concorde -six months	1	12.5
Dudley leisure 2002-8	1	5	<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100</b>
MK Netters - 7 years	1	5			
Clan Netball Club - 3 years	1	5	<b>Previous club 3</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Robins 2003-8	1	5	Chadwicks	1	25
Stockport	1	5	MKL Diamonds - 2 years	1	25
Team Beds - 2years	1	5	Amphill Amazons	1	25
Mavericks - 1 year	1	5	Sheffield Stormers	1	25
Oldham NC six months	1	5	<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100</b>
Grangers - 5 years	1	5			
Capricorn Junior Netball Club	1	5			
Eagles - 2.5 years	1	5			
Alfa - 4 years	1	5			
Newcastle Tow - 4 years	1	5			
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>			

Table 3 reveals that typically netballers have played for one other club, but for a few cases this involves up to 3 clubs. Table 4 indicates that this movement is clearly related to the perceived need of players to develop and to access higher levels of activity, both playing and training. This suggests that a talent identification and development system is working effectively.

<b>Table 4 Why Move Club</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
I wasn't improving	1	5
To gain experience	1	5
Play in Premier league and better coaching	1	5
Higher standard of play	4	20
One club disbanded and coach advised to get higher standard of training/match play	1	5
Better opportunity and coaching	1	5
To progress to a higher level	1	5
Recommended to Robins, they folded, got recommended for Regional team Breezers	1	5
Coach left Stockport. Asked to leave Tameside	1	5
To play in Premier League	1	5
Played for both	1	5
Better competition	1	5
Progression	1	5
To further my development	1	5
Play in better division	1	5
Alfa folded	1	5
Moved school and club was closer	1	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

This was supported by the findings from the interview data. The players moved clubs to access a higher standard of play on the advice of England Netball. The choice of club was made in consultation with national coach and RTC. For example,

“England Netball suggested that I play for a higher regional team and a premier team so I moved...”  
(player 1)

“...it had like more opportunities, like standard of play...more opportunities really...”  
(player 2)

“...after being in the programme it was suggested...and I wanted more competitive netball...better training, more matches and stuff”  
(player 4)

Table 5 presents the broad playing profile of the netballers. It is clear that most were introduced to netball by schools, revealing the importance of having netball on the curriculum, and that most were playing by the age of 10, being selected to play and train with England netball by the age of 15 or 16. This suggests that the five year window is crucial for player development.

These findings reflect the characteristics of the participants in the interview research:

- Interviewees started playing between 9 and 11 years of age - most were 9 years old.
- All started at school.
- All started with England when they were 15.
- All were tall when they started and considered themselves to be normal in weight. Now, two are tall while four consider themselves to be average. All consider their weight to be average. Their periods started between 12 and 13 years of age

**Table 5 Overview of Playing Profile**

<b>Where first played netball</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
School	20	80
Netball club	5	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

<b>Age started playing netball</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
6	2	7.7
8	6	23.1
9	2	7.7
10	9	34.6
11	2	7.7
12	5	19.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>100</b>

<b>Current age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
15	5	19.2
16	6	23.1
17	10	38.5
18	5	19.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>100</b>

<b>Age selected to play/train with England Netball</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
14	4	16.7
15	7	29.2
16	9	37.5
17	3	12.5
18	1	4.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100</b>

<b>Age when had first period</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
11	1	4.2
12	3	12.5
13	7	29.2
14	7	29.2
15	4	16.7
16	2	8.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 6 provides an outline of the players' netball and other sporting profiles. The profile is broken into three age bands for players aged between 12 to 14, those between 15 to 16 and those aged 17 to 18. The table reaffirms the importance of club and school/college netball for the players as well as providing evidence of career progression. For example, whilst most players continue to play for clubs and school or college, there is evidence of progression through to County, Regional, and National Levels. The relatively lower levels of the latter in the age group 17-18 reflects the age profile of the respondents.

The last two columns of the table indicate that on average playing commitments for each form of netball are about once/twice per week, with club-based activity being the most frequent, followed by national talent league and higher levels of play. This was also established by the interviews where respondents claimed that netball and related activities happen six days a week, with competition twice a week and training four times a week. Training consists of two netball sessions and two netball related sessions such as speed and agility. For example,

“well games, I have at least one or two a week and there’s training every week as well, so probably three or four times....because we have to do our own training as well in the week, so that’s 6 days I would be training”  
(player 5)

“well I have games like at the weekend and on Wednesdays and then all of the other days it’s either technical training or like strength and conditioning...I have one rest day”  
(player 3)

Of course the overall number of times played or trained increases across each age group because of the number of opportunities available. This is reflected in a commensurate reduction in other sports played as indicated in the final column of the table and supported by the interviews, as set out below.

Table 7 provides details of the other sports practiced by the netballers. The results are not presented in any order of importance but simply as listed by the respondents. The total columns at the far right of the table indicate that for the age groups 12 to 14 it is quite common for netballers to participate in 2

to 3 other activities, this falls to 1 or 2 other sports for the age group 15 to 16 and to a minority doing one other sport between 17 to 18 years old. This drop in other activities and its rationale was apparent from the interview research where players had all been involved in other sports that they dropped once they became successful at netball. This occurred when they entered the England programme because they thought that this was evidence that they were best at Netball. For example,

“...I did athletics but I stopped that a couple of years ago because of my netball. I didn’t have the time and I think as I became better at netball my athletics started to drop a bit”

(player 5)

“...I used to do like every sport but as I’ve got more higher up the ladder, I’ve had to stop, well not stop, but like cut down on it a lot because I’ve had to focus more on netball”

(player 6)

“I used to do swimming, joined a swimming club and go to like galas and events, but I chose netball”

(player 2)

It appears that Athletics, Hockey and Swimming are the more common activities undertaken.

Table 8 reports the form of this participation and its level. Whilst inevitably school and clubs provide the source of this activity, particularly for second and subsequent sports being undertaken, there is a relatively high level of representative activity at both County and National levels. This suggests that England Netball is recruiting primarily from a highly talented pool that has potential to succeed in other sports. This suggests that early talent spotting is essential for England Netball.

<b>Table 6 Netball Career</b>		<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Missing</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Average times</b>	<b>Other sports</b>
Played school netball aged 12 to 14	Frequency		21	5	26	1.38	2.19
	%		80.8	19.2	100		
Played netball at a club aged 12 to 14	Frequency		21	5	26	1.45	
	%		80.8	19.2	100		
Played netball at another organisation aged 12 to 14	Frequency	21		5	26	n/a	
	%	80.8		19.2	100		
Played Satellite/County Academy netball aged 12 to 14	Frequency	2	19	5	26	1.11	
	%	7.7	73.1	19.2	100		
Played school netball aged 15 to 16	Frequency	2	21	3	26	1.48	1.04
	%	7.7	80.8	11.5	100		
Played netball at a club aged 15 to 16	Frequency		23	3	26	2.00	
	%		88.5	11.5	100		
Played netball in the national talent league aged 15 to 16	Frequency	2	20	4	26	1.50	
	%	7.7	76.9	15.4	100		
Played netball at another organisation aged 15 to 16	Frequency	21	1	4	26	1.00	
	%	80.8	3.8	15.4	100		
Played Satellite/County Academy netball aged 15 to 16	Frequency	13	9	4	26	1.11	
	%	50	34.6	15.4	100		
Played Regional Academy netball aged 15 to 16	Frequency	13	10	3	26	0.93	
	%	50	38.5	11.5	100		
Played National (Talent 1 or 2) netball aged 15 to 16	Frequency	3	20	3	26	1.04	
	%	11.5	76.9	11.5	100		

<b>Table 6 Netball Career Continued</b>		<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Missing</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Average times</b>	<b>Other sports</b>
Played netball at a club aged 17 to 18	Frequency	1	13	12	26	1.85	0.57
	%	3.8	50	46.2	100		
Played school/college netball aged 17 to 18	Frequency	1	13	12	26	2.38	
	%	3.8	50	46.2	100		
Played netball in the national talent league ages 17 to 18	Frequency	1	13	12	26	1.50	
	%	3.8	50	46.2	100		
Played netball at another organisation aged 17 to 18	Frequency	13	1	12	26	1.00	
	%	50	3.8	46.2	100		
Played Satellite/County Academy netball aged 17 to 18	Frequency	12	1	13	26	1.00	
	%	46.2	3.8	50	100		
Played Regional Academy netball aged 17 to 18	Frequency	9	4	13	26	1.00	
	%	34.6	15.4	50	100		
Played National (Talent 1 or 2) netball aged 17 to 18	Frequency	1	13	12	26	0.72	
	%	3.8	50	46.2	100		
Played Superleague aged 17 to 18	Frequency	11	2	13	26	4.00	
	%	42.3	7.7	50	100		

<b>Table 7</b>	<b>Other Sports</b>								
<b>Other sports 12-14</b>	<b>Athletics</b>	<b>Dancing</b>	<b>Curriculum Sports</b>	<b>Swimming</b>	<b>Hockey</b>	<b>Badminton</b>	<b>Football</b>	<b>Total</b>	
First sport	Frequency	9	1	1	4	2	1	2	20
	%	45	5	5	20	10	5	10	100
Second Sport	Frequency	<b>Hockey</b>	<b>Football</b>	<b>Horse riding</b>	<b>Karate</b>	<b>Athletics</b>	<b>Basketball</b>	<b>swimming</b>	<b>Total</b>
	%	4	3	1	1	1	1	1	12
		33.3	25	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	100
Third Sport	Frequency	<b>Lacrosse</b>	<b>Hockey</b>	<b>Football</b>	<b>Rounders</b>				<b>Total</b>
	%	1	2	2	2				7
		14.3	28.6	28.6	28.6				100
Fourth Sport	Frequency	<b>Basketball</b>	<b>Rounders</b>	<b>Cross country</b>					<b>Total</b>
	%	2	1	1					4
		50	25	25					100
Fifth Sport	Frequency	<b>Rounders</b>	<b>Swimming</b>						<b>Total</b>
	%	1	1						2
		50	50						100

<b>Table 7</b>		<b>Other Sports continued</b>							
<b>Other sports 15-16</b>			<b>Curriculum Sports</b>	<b>Basketball</b>	<b>Rowing</b>	<b>Hockey</b>	<b>Football</b>	<b>Surf Life Saving</b>	<b>Total</b>
First	Frequency	5	2	3	1	1	2	1	15
	%	33.3	13.3	20	6.7	6.7	13.3	6.7	100
<b>Second</b>		<b>Football</b>	<b>Badminton</b>	<b>Discus</b>	<b>Rounders</b>	<b>Basketball</b>			<b>Total</b>
	Frequency	2	2	1	1	1			7
	%	28.6	28.6	14.3	14.3	14.3			100
<b>Third</b>		<b>Hockey</b>	<b>Horse riding</b>						<b>Total</b>
	Frequency	2	2						4
	%	50	50						100
<b>Other sports 17-18</b>		<b>Athletics</b>	<b>Rowing</b>	<b>Football</b>					<b>Total</b>
First	Frequency	3	1	1					5
	%	60	20	20					100

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**Table 8 Level of Participation**

<b>First Other Sports Level 12-14</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
County and English Schools	2	11
School	6	32
School and club	1	5.3
Club	5	26
County	3	16
Town	1	5.3
Gold Award through lessons	1	5.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>

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<b>Second Other Sports Level 12-14</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
School	5	50
Club	5	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

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<b>Third Other Sports Level 12-14</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
School and club and county	1	14
School	5	71
Club	1	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100</b>

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<b>Fourth Other Sports Level 12-14</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
School and club	1	25
School	3	75
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100</b>

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<b>Fifth Other Sports Level 12-14</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
School	1	50
Club	1	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 8 Level of Participation Continued**

<b>First Other Sports Level 15-16</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
National level	5	33
School	4	27
School and club	1	6.7
Club	3	20
County	1	6.7
County Level and England Development	1	6.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

  

<b>Second Other Sports Level 15-16</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Club	1	14
School	6	86
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100</b>

  

<b>Third Other Sports Level 15-16</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Club	2	100

  

<b>Other sports Level 17-18</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
National	1	20
Talent	1	20
County	1	20
Club	2	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 9 identifies the factors which netballer's attributed to their success. What is very striking is that parental or sibling participation in sport is not connected with their perceived development. This is also the case for schools. In contrast, what is important is parental support, club coaches and the commitment of players. These findings were reinforced by the interview research. When discussing the support of family most interviewees noted how important this was. For example,

“...she did but now she's a bit....she's always giving me a lift and stuff from work and whatever, she's always tired....so she thinks it's a big commitment...as the sport won't really help me financially or anything”  
(player 1)

“...they take me everywhere for a start...my dad works a lot so he has to plan ahead...he's taking time out for me really...financially”  
(player 2)

“My mum and dad have to drive me everywhere for my training and things like that and mum is good to talk to like if I'm finding something hard or like stressful with exams and netball”  
(player 4)

“...they are always saying well done, encouraging me and giving me tips to improve...but they keep reminding me about my school work”  
(player 5)

The research suggests that the club coaching system is of strong importance for the system of talent identification and development. It was also noted by the netballers that their being tall and growing had some relevance for their success. This was not particularly marked, however, and is an interesting finding coupled with the lack of early maturation noted earlier.

The remaining tables address the current playing experiences of players with England Netball. Table 10 simply reports the positions played by each respondent and indicates some flexibility of development of the players, with specialisation being in intuitively reasonable combinations of positions. The reason for changing position was set out by the interviewees who had a variety of reasons for changing position. For example, most that have changed position have done so because they were 'asked' to by national coaches. Some play different positions for England and their club and one

player changed position because she got 'shorter' – in that she moved from GA to C as others grew around her.

The first row of table 11 confirms that this is the case. Table 11 also indicates that as far as the netballer's experiences of England Netball are concerned, there is strong evidence that coaching and playing objectives are clear; that whilst coaches emphasise winning, skill development and teamwork are also stressed. The interviewees were very clear about why they were on the programme. For example,

"I know why I'm there....because I've been chosen to play, well train for them and hopefully get higher and higher"

(player 4)

"for training throughout the year, like to improve and the trials for the world champs"

(player 2)

"..training to compete..."

(player 6)

There is also evidence that skills are being matched to the challenges placed on netballers when playing and training and that coaching advice is consistent with other netball activity. Interviewed players were clear about what their strengths and weaknesses are:

"well we always have feedback saying you are good at this and you are bad at that...but also why they've picked you"

(player 1)

"my strengths are like timing on the ball and I am good at working with other people...and my weaknesses are my release points when I pass...."

(player 3)

"the coach will tell us. Like we'll have a chat and she'll tell us how she thinks we've improved and where we can get better"

(player 5)

Relationships with the talent manager and coaches are generally good and the interviewees felt that coaches were supportive and informative. For example,

"they give us examples of how we can improve...when she gives us feedback, if we don't understand some of it, we can just ask her and she will sit down with us and go through it"

(player 4)

“they’ve been there before so they understand most of what we’re going through...so yeah, I think it’s good the coaching”  
(player 5)

All interviewees have at least 5 coaches – England, club, region, strength and conditioning. England coaches put the emphasis on skills development and player development. For example,

“They want you to be the best you can be, so they always encourage you to carry on with you training, your hard work will pay off”  
(player 4)

There was no suggestion that there was conflict between the various coaches and the players clearly understood that each coach had a different role in terms of their netball.

There is evidence that training or playing is fun, that mistakes can be made when learning and that off-court activity, such as training, is considered as important as skill development. For example,

“if I don’t understand something or I’ve done something wrong ...and when she tells me what I could have done, or what I should have done I see it clearly and get much better”  
(player 4)

“I’ve got better because I’ve focused on the weaknesses they given me and then try and do it in training”  
(player 1)

“you just feel better about yourself because you've come along way since you first stated. Like when you end a programme you can really see how much you have improved, like much more confident and your skills are better”  
(player 2)

Consistent with the playing profiles identified in Tables 6 and 7 there is evidence that involvement in other sports is not encouraged.

Broadly speaking these results suggest that the coaching and development structures in place are clear to the netballers, that competitiveness but also individual skill and team development is recognised as important, and that relationships within the system are generally good.

<b>Table 9 Success Factors</b>		<b>Not relevant</b>	<b>Unimportant</b>	<b>Fairly important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Parents support</b>	Frequency		1			24	<b>25</b>
	%		4			96	<b>100</b>
<b>Parents participation in sport</b>	Frequency	8	5	6	4	2	<b>25</b>
	%	32	20	24	16	8	<b>100</b>
<b>Club Coaches</b>	Frequency		1	5	7	12	<b>25</b>
	%		4	20	28	48	<b>100</b>
<b>Brothers/sisters participation in sport</b>	Frequency	9	8	4	3	1	<b>25</b>
	%	36	32	16	12	4	<b>100</b>
<b>School teachers college tutors</b>	Frequency	2	4	11	4	3	<b>24</b>
	%	8.3	16.7	45.8	16.7	12.5	<b>100</b>
<b>Own commitment and practice</b>	Frequency	1			2	22	<b>25</b>
	%	4			8	88	<b>100</b>
<b>My growth</b>	Frequency		2	4	9	10	<b>25</b>
	%		8	16	36	40	<b>100</b>
<b>Being tall</b>	Frequency		6	6	8	5	<b>25</b>
	%		24	24	32	20	<b>100</b>

---

<b>Table 10 Position played</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Centre</b>	2	7.7
<b>Goal defence or wing defence</b>	1	3.8
<b>Goal Keeper Goal Defence Goal Attack Goal Shooter</b>	1	3.8
<b>Goal defence or Goal Keeper</b>	7	26.9
<b>Goal shooter and Goal Attack</b>	3	11.5
<b>Wing defence</b>	1	3.8
<b>Goal Defence or Wing Defence or Goal Keeper</b>	2	7.7
<b>Centre or Wing Attack or Wing Defence</b>	1	3.8
<b>Goal Attack</b>	2	7.7
<b>Wing Attack and Centre</b>	3	11.5
<b>Wing Defence or Goal Defence or Centre</b>	2	7.7
<b>Wing Attack or Goal Attack or Centre</b>	1	3.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>100</b>

The final tables presented summarise the best and worst experiences of the netballers, along with a statement of the factors that overall have contributed to their success. Though related in a number of cases, responses are faithfully reproduced as written. As far as the best experiences are concerned, Table 12 indicates that being picked to play at the elite level, to train and compete at higher levels and to receive high quality coaching that develops skills are of importance. It is also recognised that being part of a squad and experiencing the atmosphere this engenders is considered to be important. The results of this table clearly reinforce the evaluation of the players experiences of England Netball noted in Table 11. The upshot is that players see their identity as being defined in terms of becoming skilled, elite players. This is supported by the findings of the interview research:

“the understanding that comes with being around people that know why you like netball and why you want to keep doing it and the commitment”  
(player 5)

“...it’s being able to like have the coaches and being provided with the competition of like, everyone’s fighting to get on in netball, they all want it...you’re all with each other, but you all want to do well so you are all working hard...”  
(player 4)

“...I have met loads of different people from like different places and everywhere in the country and stuff”  
(player 6)

As far as the worst experiences are concerned, naturally enough Table 13 indicates that not being selected for teams, moving position, injury and other factors that affect the players’ success are noted. This is reinforced by the findings of the interview data:

“...it’s not always clear why people have been chosen for a team”  
(player 1)

“...probably the stress. Yeah, how to fit in and catch up with school work and keep up a social life..”  
(player 5)

“...it’s really far for me so that’s probably the worst thing...the travelling”  
(player 3)

“..it can be quite stressful at times...like you want it so much and it drives you to want it a lot and then you’ve got exams on top of that and everything...”  
(player 4)

However, it is worth noting that the interviewed players feel that they are in control of their school/sport balance.

“...sometimes you need to balance social, school and netball...but it’s manageable”  
(player 2)

“...I just have to be more organised really...to find the time..and at school I’ll probably stay in at lunch to finish off work and I get back on track really, so it seems fine”  
(player 5)

There is also some evidence that the summer camps are too long.

Finally, Table 14 reaffirms that as far as the players are concerned parental support, coaching, hard work and a determination to succeed are what underpins the players’ success. Once again these findings were reinforced by the interview data. For example,

“...my club coach – she’s helped me get to where I am today because she’s the one who put me forward”  
(player 2)

“I think it’s a share between my parents and my coaches. Like my mum and dad they have to drive me everywhere...and then my coaches because they’ve kept me going at it and just allowed me to keep going and progressing ....”  
(player 4)

“...because I’ve tried hard like every training session I’ve gone to, or individual training. I’ve always tried hard...and I know I’ve done it, so it makes me feel right good once I’ve known it if other girls aren’t doing it”  
(player 4)

“...my skills, I’m tall that might help”  
(player 2)

“...because of the support from my mum”  
(player 3)

“I guess it’s putting in hard work and the training and the feedback to coaches give you...and having the opportunity really...if my parents didn’t take me...hearing about it...”

(player 5)

In conclusion it can be noted that the current programme is understood by the players and that they are actively and personally motivated to make best use of it. Coaching is appreciated in terms of its objectives and delivery and that this is reflected in a career path that does not seem to be affected by geographic or age bias.

<b>Table 11 England Netball</b>		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Nether agree or disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>My netball position has changed a lot</b>	Frequency	10	6	3	3	3	<b>25</b>
	%	40	24	12	12	12	<b>100</b>
<b>Coaching/playing objectives are clear</b>	Frequency	1	1	6	11	6	<b>25</b>
	%	4	4	24	44	24	<b>100</b>
<b>Coaches emphasise winning</b>	Frequency	1	4	5	6	9	<b>25</b>
	%	4	16	20	24	36	<b>100</b>
<b>Coaches emphasise skill development</b>	Frequency		1		7	17	<b>25</b>
	%		4		28	68	<b>100</b>
<b>Coaches emphasise teamwork</b>	Frequency		3	1	9	12	<b>25</b>
	%		12	4	36	48	<b>100</b>
<b>I am encouraged to play other sports</b>	Frequency	5	10	8	1	1	<b>25</b>
	%	20	40	32	4	4	<b>100</b>
<b>I can make mistakes playing netball</b>	Frequency	2	2	11	6	4	<b>25</b>
	%	8	8	44	24	16	<b>100</b>
<b>Training/playing is fun</b>	Frequency		2	6	11	6	<b>25</b>
	%		8	24	44	24	<b>100</b>
<b>Training/playing matches my skills to the challenges</b>	Frequency	1		5	13	6	<b>25</b>
	%	4		20	52	24	<b>100</b>
<b>I prefer netball to other sports</b>	Frequency		2	4	3	16	<b>25</b>
	%		8	16	12	64	<b>100</b>

<b>Table 11 England Netball Continued</b>		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Nether agree or disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>I have a good relationship with my coach</b>	Frequency	1	4	4	10	6	<b>25</b>
	%	4	16	16	40	24	<b>100</b>
<b>I have a good relationship with my Talent Manager</b>	Frequency		1	2	10	12	<b>25</b>
	%		4	8	40	48	<b>100</b>
<b>The coaching direction that I receive is consistent with my other netball activity</b>	Frequency		2	8	9	6	<b>25</b>
	%		8	32	36	24	<b>100</b>
<b>Off court activity is as important to me as netball skill development</b>	Frequency	1	1	5	10	8	<b>25</b>
	%	4	4	20	40	32	<b>100</b>

<b>Table 12 Best Experiences with England Netball</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Picked for squad	1	4.2
High level match play	1	4.2
Playing for England in European Championships	1	4.2
Making friends, coaching and developing my organisation	1	4.2
Trial selection and playing in Talent and Premier Leagues	1	4.2
Squad atmosphere	1	4.2
Support through injury	1	4.2
Picked for U17 short squad	1	4.2
Representing England in the U17 FENA	2	8.3
Making the FENA Squads 2006-7 and 2009	1	4.2
Meeting new people and being introduced to a high level of play	1	4.2
Meeting the girls making new friends	1	4.2
First trials and being Selected for U19 talent	1	4.2
Picked for Talent 1 and training	1	4.2
Meeting good coaches from England and head coaches from Australia and	1	4.2
Meeting people and training to a high standard		
Summer camp, getting closer to other players and improving. Being selected	1	4.2
Summer camp	1	4.2
Selected to play for England	2	8.3
Learning new skills, coached by England coaches, meeting new people	1	4.2
Developed as a player and person and summer camp	1	4.2
Enjoyed Easter, Summer and Weekend camps, enjoyed meeting girls and training	1	4.2
Support received and the organisation of the programme	1	4.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100</b>

<b>Table 13 Worst experiences with England Netball</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Length of summer camp last days irrelevant	1	4.8
Injured during camps	1	4.8
Long summer camp and a coach who makes you feel uncomfortable	1	4.8
Injury and being part of U21s Long Squad	1	4.8
Long journeys	1	4.8
Moving from GK to C and learning a new position	1	4.8
Dropped from U21s and FENA, being notified by the internet after summer camp	1	4.8
Being told off in front of others when not able to do things as good as others	1	4.8
Training hard and not being picked	1	4.8
Not selected for U19 Squad	2	9.5
Length of summer camps after a years hard training.	2	9.5
Affects opportunity for summer job, and opportunity for normal socialising and endurance sessions in the rain. No kit for selected teams	1	4.8
Selection with elements of favouritism	1	4.8
None	1	4.8
Dropped from U21 Long squad	1	4.8
Length of the summer camp	2	9.5
First day of Easter camp when first joined Talent 1 I found it hard	1	4.8
Not being prepared for first training camp and negative about my performance	1	4.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100</b>

<b>Table 14 Why I have been successful as a netballer</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Determined and work hard	3	12
Train hard and athletic training increased strength	1	4
Listen to coaches and try to progress	2	8
Athletic physique, enjoy training and challenges and Jan Crabtree's Centre	1	4
Work hard, good coaching, conditioning and medical support and consistent contact with coach in extension centre and talent system	1	4
Committed parents and coaches	1	4
Dedicated and determined to succeed	1	4
Hard work and family support	1	4
Elevation, long arms understanding tactics	1	4
Unsure, desire and have potential	1	4
Competitive, goal setting, parent and coach support, dreamt of playing for England	1	4
Moved clubs to develop, pushed to do best and coaching at Leeds	1	4
Listen and take on new ideas, listen to coaching and stepping on court	1	4
Commitment to training, parental support and good coaching	1	4
Training hard, support from coaches, teachers and friends. Determination to succeed	1	4
Talent and Coaching	1	4
Train hard and listen to what coaches tell me	1	4
Good skills, Want to achieve, enjoy sport, good team player	1	4
Support from family, good coaches who help and push me and enthusiasm and drive and I enjoy netball	1	4
I have a high potential and work hard on and off court	1	4
Being committed to training for club, NTL, England and school and being determined to improve and become a better Netballer and also support from Parents, Coaches and Teachers	1	4
The programme and perseverance	1	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

#### **4. Review**

The above research focussed on the current Talent groups 1 and 2 in England Netball, to both evaluate the outcomes of the previous system of talent identification and development and to provide benchmark data for the future evaluation of the new system. It should be noted that that by construction there are limitations to the research. For example, by focussing on Talent groups 1 and 2 no counterfactual arguments from unsuccessful netballers or from those that have finished playing netball through dissatisfaction have been investigated. Whilst this introduces sample selection bias, nonetheless the consistency of the results suggests that the current system is working well and successfully developing netballers in a clear and transparent way. The consistency of the results, in particular, suggests credible performance by England Netball. In particular the research identifies that:

1. There is no evidence of regional or club bias in talent selection, which indicates that a national selection process is operating well.
2. Movements between clubs is linked to the perceived need of netballers to improve, and often linked to coach advice.
3. Netballers are not particularly early matures but are drawn from a highly talented pool of athletes whose primary experiences are schools and to an extent clubs.
4. There is no evidence of any age bias.
5. Once selected netballers specialise in their chosen sport. This highlights the need for early talent spotting and selection.
6. Netballers understand the objectives and structure of the current programme.

7. Netballers are actively and personally motivated to make best use of the current system
8. Coaching efforts are appreciated both in terms of its objectives and delivery and that this is reflected in a career path.

Clear strategic issues for England Netball are to ensure that they remain able to recruit from young athletes of high multi-sport potential. This suggests

1. Work where necessary to ensure that schools retain netball on the curriculum
2. That existing school-club links are maintained and developed
3. That the role of clubs in talent identification and development is acknowledged, consolidated and, if possible, strengthened.
4. The consistency of coaching objectives and communication between coaching of different levels is maintained and, if possible, strengthened.
5. To formally acknowledge the significant role made by parents in supporting netballers.

Finally, there is some evidence that the role of the summer camps should be reviewed, in particular their length.

## Appendix 1



### **An investigation into talent identification and development in England Netball**

Dear netballer,

As detailed in previous correspondence, this research is aimed at evaluating the talent identification and development programme offered by England Netball. Thank you for agreeing to complete this questionnaire. All responses will be anonymous and treated confidentially with individual data known only to the Institute of Sport and Leisure Policy. All data will be presented to England Netball in the aggregate and will not be attributable to any specific individual.

Please return the questionnaire in a sealed envelope to Kelly Parkynn at the selection session in January.

***For each of the following questions follow the specific instructions and either write the appropriate answer, or tick the relevant box***

1. In which County do you live now?.....(please state)
2. In which other Counties have you lived during your netball career?  
.....  
.....  
(Please list, or indicate that you have only lived in the same County)
3. Please name your current club?.....
4. Have you played for any other clubs (please tick) Yes [ ]      No [ ]  
(If you ticked yes please answer the next question. If no, go to question 7)
5. Please list any other clubs that you played for and the years that you represented the club

.....  
.....

- 6. Why did you move club? (please state).....
- 7. What is your age now? (please state age in years).....
- 8. At what age did you commence playing netball? (please state age in years)

.....

9. Where did you **first** play netball? (please tick one box only)
- |                                 |     |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| School                          | [ ] |
| Netball club                    | [ ] |
| Other organisation (Guides etc) | [ ] |

10. In order to assess how your netballing career has changed or developed the following sets of questions are asked of you for different ages. Please respond to each question as instructed *for **all** age groups that apply to you.*

**Aged 12 to 14**

- Where have you played netball (training and competition)?  
(please tick any box that applies and enter the number of times per week if applicable)

School	[ ]	Number of times per week.....
Netball club	[ ]	Number of times per week.....
Other organisation (Guides etc)	[ ]	Number of times per week.....
Satellite/County Academy	[ ]	Number of times per week.....

- a. How many other sports did you play each week?  
.....(Please state the number)
- b. Which sports and at what level?  
.....  
.....  
.....(Please state)

**Aged 15 and 16**

- Where have you played netball (training and competition)?  
(please tick any box that applies and enter the number of times per week if applicable)

School	[ ]	Number of times per week.....
Netball club	[ ]	Number of times per week.....
National Talent League (NTL)	[ ]	Number of times per week.....
Other organisation (Guides etc)	[ ]	Number of times per week.....
Satellite/County Academy	[ ]	Number of times per week.....
Regional Academy	[ ]	Number of times per week.....
National (Talent 1 or 2)	[ ]	Number of times per week.....

- a. How many other sports did you play each week?  
.....(Please state the number)
- b. Which sports and at what level?  
.....  
.....  
.....(Please state)

**Aged 17 to 18**

- Where have you played netball (training and competition)?  
(please tick any box that applies and enter the number of times per week if applicable)

School/college	[ ]	Number of times per week.....
Netball club	[ ]	Number of times per week.....
National Talent League (NTL)	[ ]	Number of times per week.....
Other organisation (Guides etc)	[ ]	Number of times per week.....
Satellite/County Academy	[ ]	Number of times per week.....
Regional Academy	[ ]	Number of times per week.....
National (Talent 1 or 2)	[ ]	Number of times per week.....
National Superleague	[ ]	Number of times per week.....

- a. How many other sports did you play each week?  
.....(Please state the number)
- b. Which sports and at what level?  
.....  
.....  
.....(Please state)

11. At what age were you selected to play/train with England Netball?  
.....(please state age in years)

12. At what age did you have your first period?  
.....(please state age in years)

13. How important have the following factors been to your netball career  
(For *each* factor, please tick *one* box only)

	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>fairly important</b>	<b>Unimportant</b>	<b>Not Relevant</b>
'Parents support'	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
'Parents participation in Sport'	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
'Club Coaches	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
'Brothers/sisters Participation in sport'	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
'School teachers/ College tutors'	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
'My own commitment/ Practice'	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
'My growth'	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
'Being tall'	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

14. What position do you play in netball?  
.....(please state)

15. For each of the following statements about your experiences of playing, training **with England Netball** please indicate your agreement or disagreement by ticking one box only for each statement

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>			<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	
'My netball position has changed a lot'	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
'Coaching/playing objectives for me are clear'	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
'Coaches emphasise winning'	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
'Coaches emphasise skill Development'	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
'Coaches emphasise teamwork'	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
'I am encouraged to play other sports'	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>		<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	
'I feel that I can make mistakes playing netball'	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
'Training/playing is fun'	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
'The training/playing that I do matches my skills to the challenges'	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
'I prefer netball to other sports'	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
'I have a good relationship with my coach'	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
'I have a good relationship with my Talent manager'	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
'The coaching direction that I receive is consistent with my other netball activity'	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
'Off court (strength and conditioning) activity is as important to me as netball skill development'	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

**Finally, please add any comments that you would like to concerning**

- your best experiences with England Netball  
.....  
.....  
.....
- your worst experiences with England Netball  
.....  
.....  
.....
- Why you think that you have been successful as a netballer  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Thank you for your cooperation. Please return the completed questionnaire in a sealed envelope addressed to the 'ISLP talent study' to Kelly Parkynn at the selection session on 23<sup>rd</sup> January.**

## Appendix 2

### Interview schedule

- **Explain again purpose of interview; complete confidentiality etc..**
- **Check that adult is with the netballer if U18.**
  
- Netballing career
  - When commenced
    - What single factor got you interested?
    - Why did you start?
    - Age?
    - Periods? Height and weight?
    - Place? – club, school;
    - What clubs did you play for?
    - Do you still play for them?
    - Why have you changed?
  - IMPORTANT TO PICK UP COUNTY THEY LIVE IN AND CURRENT CLUB AND IF AND WHEN MOVED CLUBS AND COUNTY
  - pick up how developed from there;
  - Who suggested that you went to trials
  - When did you become part of the country set up
  - What has kept you going?
    - Selection onto talent pathway
    - chart age profile; height/weight changes; number of times a week played netball, change of position? Why?
  - Best experiences in netball over this career?
  - What has had the biggest impact on your career (coach/clubs/mates)
  - What's the one thing that has kept you going?
  
- Other sports
  - What other sports played and practiced
    - Number, level, age (try to link to netballing development)
    - Has netball 'crowded out others'; choice to specialise?
    - When did you start to play only netball? (Why?) Only ever liked netball?
    - Always doing some form of sport/play
  
- Family/friends
  - Do/have parents played/practiced sport?
  - Do they encourage you to play netball?
  - How do they support you?
  - Has this caused any problems?
  - Siblings?
  - What do they think of netball?
  - Do they encourage you to play?
  - Friends play/played?
  - What do they think about you playing netball?
  - How many of your friends play sport at a high level?

- Do your friends influence the way you think about netball?
- England Netball
  - Why do you think that you were selected?
  - Aspirations for future development
  - Is the purpose of your membership of Talent Groups 1 and 2 clear to you? What are you supposed to be experiencing?
  - Do you get an individual training plan?
  - Do you know what your specific strengths and weaknesses are?
  - Do you know how to improve your skills
  - How many coaches contribute to your training? WHAT ARE LINKS LIKE TO OUTSIDE COACHES? SIMILAR APPROACHES AND ASPIRATIONS?
  - RELATIONSHIP WITH COACHES AND TALENT MANAGER?
  - HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU THINK THAT STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING IS OFF COURT?
  - With whom do you discuss your training and performance?
  - Are you encouraged to concentrate on netball?
  - Skill/technique development emphasised or competition?
    - At all ages
    - SCHOOL, CLUB, ENGLAND NETBALL
    - Is this good or bad? Mixed messages?
  - How have coaches approached sessions? Dictate? Individual questioning encouraged?
  - 
  - Can you indicate the best thing about the development program that you have experienced? And.... The worst thing?
  - Why have people dropped out?
- Finally
  - Why do you think that you have been as successful as you are with netball?
    - Key person
    - Key characteristic
    - Hard work etc

## Appendix 3: Ethical Documentation



### An investigation into talent identification and development in England Netball

#### Participant Information Sheet

##### Investigators

Dr Paul Downward, Institute of Sport and Leisure Policy, University of Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 3TU, email: [p.downward@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:p.downward@lboro.ac.uk), telephone: 01509 226365

Dr Leigh Robinson, Institute of Sport and Leisure Policy, University of Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 3TU, email: [L.A.Robinson1@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:L.A.Robinson1@lboro.ac.uk), telephone: 01509 226367

##### What is the purpose of the study?

England Netball has a programme of developing young netballers so that as they get older they have the opportunity to compete at the highest level possible. As one of these netballers, we want you to help assess how well England Netball is doing this to help it plan for the future.

##### Who is doing this research?

The research is being undertaken by the above investigators on behalf of England Netball. Dr Paul Downward and Dr Leigh Robinson are members of the Institute of Sport and Leisure Policy at the university and have experience in helping governing bodies to review how they implement their plans. Dr Paul Downward will have overall responsibility for the investigation.

##### Once I take part, can I change my mind?

Yes! After you have read this information and asked any questions you may have, we will ask you or (your parent/guardian if you are aged under 18) to complete an Informed Consent Form. However if at any time, before, during or after the sessions you wish to withdraw from the study please just contact the main investigator. You can withdraw at any time, for any reason and you will not be asked to explain your reasons for withdrawing.

##### Will I be required to attend any sessions and where will these be?

No, all that will happen is that we may telephone you to conduct an interview that asks you about your netballing career. Alternatively, we may ask you to fill in a questionnaire that you can return to us at the selection weekend in January 2009. The interview would last at most for 30 minutes, and the questionnaire will take about 15 minutes to complete. If you are selected for an interview and aged less than 18 years of age you must have your parent or guardian with you during the interview.

**What personal information will be required from me?**

The only personal information that we may require from you is an estimate of your height and weight, and when your periods may have started. This information will help us to identify how physical maturity may affect netballing success. Other questions will simply be about the other sports (if any) that you play, and where you have played netball. We will also ask your opinions about the strengths and weaknesses of the coaching and training offered by England Netball.

**Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?**

All of the information that we collect from you will be kept anonymous. This means that neither the coaches nor staff at England Netball will be aware of your responses. We will make it impossible to identify individuals in the study in the report we write.

All information collected will be stored and then destroyed within ten years.

**What will happen to the results of the study?**

The results of the study will be presented to England Netball as a written report.

**I have some more questions who should I contact?**

You can contact either of the investigators at any time.

**What if I am not happy with how the research was conducted?**

Please make sure that you tell us or someone at England Netball as soon as possible! Alternatively, the University has a policy relating to Research Misconduct and Whistle Blowing which is available online at [http://www.lboro.ac.uk/admin/committees/ethical/Whistleblowing\(2\).htm](http://www.lboro.ac.uk/admin/committees/ethical/Whistleblowing(2).htm).



## **An investigation into talent identification and development in English Netball**

### **INFORMED CONSENT FORM: Questionnaire**

The purpose and details of this study have been explained to me. I understand that this study is designed to further scientific knowledge and that all procedures have been approved by the Loughborough University Ethical Advisory Committee.

I have read and understood the information sheet and this consent form.

I have had an opportunity to ask questions about my participation.

I understand that I am under no obligation to take part in the study.

I understand that I have the right to withdraw from this study at any stage for any reason, and that I will not be required to explain my reasons for withdrawing.

I understand that all the information I provide will be treated in strict confidence and will be kept anonymous and confidential to the researchers unless (under the statutory obligations of the agencies which the researchers are working with), it is judged that confidentiality will have to be breached for the safety of the participant or others.

I agree to participate in this study.

Your name

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Your signature

---

Signature of investigator

---

Date

---



## An investigation into talent identification and development in English Netball

### **INFORMED CONSENT FORM: Interview**

The purpose and details of this study have been explained to me. I understand that this study is designed to further scientific knowledge and that all procedures have been approved by the Loughborough University Ethical Advisory Committee.

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I understand that all the information I provide will be treated in strict confidence and will be kept anonymous and confidential to the researchers unless (under the statutory obligations of the agencies which the researchers are working with), it is judged that confidentiality will have to be breached for the safety of the participant or others.

I agree to participate in this study.

My phone number for the interview is: (please include the STD code if it is not a mobile phone number)

Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Your signature \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of investigator \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_