

Proposal

Pursuit of Excellence Implementation Plan

February 25, 2020

Draft v.4

FOR DISCUSSION & FEEDBACK



Source Documents and Reader's Responsibility

The following is provided to the reader with the understanding that the reader is fully aware and understands the goals and objectives of the Ringette Long Term Athlete Development Framework, the Ringette Canada Competition Review and its supporting documents.

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Executive Summary

Our research shows that because athletes participate in sport for different reasons, diversifying our programs to meet these reasons is necessary for our sport to grow. To achieve this, Ringette Alberta is phasing in distinct participation contexts.

This document concerns itself with the Pursuit of Excellence context which is designed to support the following outcomes:

- support the development of athletes with long-term high performance goals
- help individuals fulfill their potential, whatever that may be
- help individuals learn and live the athlete lifestyle for future benefit within or outside ringette

The Pursuit of Excellence program resembles the AA of today, but with significant differences. The main differences are:

Program Choice and Enrollment

Only / all athletes who meet or exceed the minimum enrollment threshold may enroll in the Pursuit of Excellence program. For U16 & up, assessment is based on the Train to Train stage in the Ringette Athlete Development Matrix. For U14, enrollment criteria will be extrapolated from the U16 & up criteria.

Athlete Grouping

While athletes who meet or exceed the minimum enrollment threshold may enroll, to optimize training and competition, grouping (tiering) of like-athletes within the program can occur; not everyone will necessarily be at the same tier.

Holistic and Individualized Training

True long term athlete development means understanding each individual's needs and designing and delivering a program to meet them. This goes beyond just technical and tactical skills and includes physical, psychological and life skills. Individual development objectives will be established and support to achieve them will be provided.

Part Time / Full Time Programs

Once the transition is complete, U14s will remain on their Classic Ringette teams and, those who qualify, may enroll in a part time, supplemental Pursuit of Excellence Program. Programming for U16s & up will be full time.

Yearly Training Plan & Sport Performance Support

Programs will follow a science-based, stage-appropriate yearly training plan that accommodates team goals and the training needs of each athlete. Sport performance professionals will support volunteer coaches.

Centres of Excellence

In Alberta, Pursuit of Excellence programs will be delivered by licensed Centres of Excellence. These are virtual centres meaning the program delivery will take place throughout the region as facility access, athlete location and other factors dictate.

Satellite Programming

To mitigate the cost of travel, starting in year three of the transition, athletes outside the immediate service area of each Centre will be supported through satellite programming. These athletes will remain on their Classic Ringette teams.

Section I: Introduction

Ringette Alberta's stakeholders continue to express a desire to see ringette's registration grow.

This is reflected in the Ringette in Alberta Strategic Plan (2017) which aims to increase registration to 7,500 players in Alberta by 2022. The strategic plan includes the tactic of implementing various participation contexts, or options, to provide a better match between the varied reasons athletes play and the programs designed to meet those reasons.

The Player Exit Survey (2004) results, validated by the Athlete Focus Group (2017) research, tells us people participate for very different reasons, but our generally one-size-fits-all approach to delivering ringette negatively impacts registration; a poor fit equals quit.

Additionally, joining the sport at different times can have a significant impact on individuals' relative performance, but our structure tries to squeeze everyone into the same program. This usually results in a sub-optimal environment for everyone involved. A classic example is the practice of inserting a brand new skater on a U12 team, with peers who have been skating for 5-6 years, instead of placing that individual in a learn to skate program first.

To address this, Ringette Alberta has defined six distinct participation contexts, which are:

- Learn to Skate
- Intro to Ringette
- Children's Ringette
- Classic Ringette
- Flex Ringette
- Pursuit of Excellence

Descriptions of each context can be found at [YourRingette.ca](https://www.yourringette.ca). These are reflected in [Ringette Canada's Competition Review and Restructuring Report \(2018\)](#), some by different names.

This following concerns itself with the Pursuit of Excellence context only.

Section 2: The Vision for Pursuit of Excellence

From the Ringette Canada Competition Review (2018):

“Excellence Ringette provides systemic and systematic training and competition environments, based on Ringette Canada’s Athlete Development Matrix (ADM), with the intention of helping athletes achieve their highest level of performance, and preparing them to represent their province at Canada Games, play in the NRL, and represent Canada at the World Ringette Championships.”

The Pursuit of Excellence also exists to:

- help individuals fulfill their potential, whatever that may be
- help individuals learn and live the athlete lifestyle for future benefit within or outside of ringette

Values and Principles

The following values and principles will be respected in the design and delivery of Pursuit of Excellence programming in Alberta:

- [True Sport Principles](#)
- [Ringette Canada Corporate Values](#)
- [Ringette Alberta Corporate Values](#)
- [Athlete-centred](#)
- [Financial Accessibility](#)
- [Ringette Canada Guiding Principles for Competition](#)

For the Pursuit of Excellence context, the most notable of the Guiding Principles, are:

4. ...Participants can choose to enroll in a program which places them on the excellence pathway.
5. Nobody is disadvantaged by playing at a “lower” level. Participants are provided access to appropriate development pathways to progress to a “higher” level if they desire.

Background

Today’s AA programming is challenged with providing continuity from season to season, coach to coach, and club to club. Programming that is intended achieve long-term individual athlete development objectives, is not being provided universally. Much of today’s AA ringette programming is not satisfying Ringette Canada requirements for athletes to enter its High Performance programs.

Ringette Canada’s Competition Review (2018) states:

“As part of Ringette Canada’s High-Performance Summit (2016), a background document, Current State of High-Performance Ringette in Canada. The document’s introduction articulates the state of High-Performance Ringette in Canada:

‘There has been no clear definition of High-Performance Ringette in Canada.

From one province to the other, from one conversation to the next, the agreement as to ‘who is part of High-Performance Ringette in Canada?’ is never reached. Additionally, athletes competing at the same

level and part of the same development phase are not being given the same daily training opportunities from one area of the country to the other. How is it that programs built to achieve the same goals have such varying structures and priorities?

Through Long-Term Athlete Development, we have determined which programs fit into which phase – we know that Canada Games, National Teams and National Ringette League are part of the phases that fall under the High-Performance umbrella.

However, this has not translated into a uniform system that can be implemented in each area of the country for each of these groups of athletes.”

Ringette Today: Program vs. Tier

Among the biggest challenges we face in ringette today, is in the understanding of the difference between program and tier.

A common perception in ringette today, is that AA is a distinctly different program vs non-AA. In most cases, AA teams are therefore provided more resources, primarily ice time, compared to non-AA teams.

Based on a flawed premise, this inequity wrongly restricts access to what could be a valuable environment for a broader group of athletes at different stages in their development. The premise is that relatively untrained individuals, (compared to highly trained sport performance experts who evaluate athletes with more comprehensive stage-appropriate metrics), observing athletes for a brief period in time, (e.g., a tryout over 3-4 ice times), can “see” talent and subsequently funnel children into disparate programs.

We understand that organizations are doing their best to conduct assessments to group similar athletes together for meaningful competition (tier teams), however, limiting access to a type of program, is fundamentally unethical.

In contrast to AA, the Pursuit of Excellence will clearly be a *program* that includes different groups of athletes organized into tiers where necessary. This is an important distinction; the Pursuit of Excellence is a program first and athlete grouping second.

Section 3: Talent Identification vs Talent Development

A key difference between today’s AA and the Pursuit of Excellence program is a shift from a Talent ID model to a Talent Development Model.

There is extensive research, some of which is summarized in the book, Baker, J., Cobly, S., and Schorr, J., (Eds.) (2012). Abingdon / New York: Routledge, *Talent Identification and Development in Sport, International Perspectives*, shows the shortcomings of trying to predict the ultimate potential of an individual based on observing their performance today.

There is little evidence to support the belief that people can “see” talent, especially in developing athletes, and therefore predict potential.

In contrast, a Talent Development Model does not pretend it can predict the future and instead focuses on providing a stage-appropriate and optimal environment to all participants who demonstrate the baseline state of readiness and are committed to do the work.

The table in [Appendix B](#) offers an illustration of the difference between these two models using a start of season team formation example.

Section 4: Who is Pursuit of Excellence For?

Pursuit of Excellence Ringette is for athletes who wish to participate in a program that:

- Offers universal program standards designed to help athletes become their best
- Requires all involved (athletes, parents, coaches and support personnel) to commit to and maintain a high-quality, science-based, long-term development process
- Provides meaningful competition with similarly skilled athletes

Athletes must meet the minimum qualifying standards to be accepted.

Athletes who do not meet the minimum standards or do not want to participate for the reasons listed above, may enroll in other programs such as Classic or Flex. Excellence Ringette standards will not be modified to accommodate individuals who have other reasons for participating.

Section 5: U14 Introduction to Excellence Program

In one form or another, U14AA exists across most of Canada so even though Ringette Canada's Competition Review does not include this group in the scope of the Pursuit of Excellence context, we must make a choice between including or excluding U14s. In Alberta, an Introduction to Excellence Program will be available for U14s to ensure standardized access and a stage-appropriate program.

The objective of the Introduction to Excellence Program is to prepare as many willing athletes as possible to meet the enrollment criteria of the full time Pursuit of Excellence Program while doing so in an environment that places athlete retention (i.e., fun and intrinsic motivation) among the priorities.

U14s will be full time members of their Classic ringette teams. Those who meet the minimum criteria may enroll in a supplemental Introduction to Excellence program. Coordinated scheduling in each program will ensure opportunity to participate in both.

The Introduction to Excellence Program will follow a defined curriculum to ensure the objectives of the program are met.

Enrolled individuals will participate in Introduction to Excellence programming at regular intervals throughout the season and have the option of taking part in a limited number of bio-banded competitions. Towards the end of the season, non-bio-banded (traditional) teams will be formed to compete to qualify for the Western Canadian Ringette Championship provided that competition remains in its current form.

Section 6: Excellence Program for U16, U19, Open

U16 & U19

U16 is the first opportunity to enroll in a full time Pursuit of Excellence program.

Most athletes who wish to continue on in the Pursuit of Excellence environment are likely to progress from the U14 Introduction to Excellence Program to the full time Excellence Program provided the Introduction to Excellence Program is effective.

New athletes (those not enrolled in the full time program previously) will be required to complete the application and assessment process.

Returning athletes will be required to re-confirm their commitment to the program.

This process will be completed each spring; roughly May. These assessments are not part of the tiering process and should not be considered equivalent to “spring tryouts”, to use today’s vernacular. They are either to determine readiness for the program in the case of new athletes or to confirm if other athletes are returning to the program.

Further assessments for team formation will be conducted in the fall after a properly designed and managed off-season program.

Open

Today, there is a significant gap in the athlete development pathway between U19 and Ringette Canada’s high performance programs. Without this gap addressed, the majority of graduating U19 players, who are still on the upward trajectory in their development, exit the athlete pool prematurely.

Ringette Canada considers the National Ringette League (NRL) to be the primary provider of the daily training environment for high performance ringette players in Canada. Depending on where the athlete lives relative to NRL team locations and how long older athletes continue to play in the NRL, it can be quite difficult for a graduating U19 athlete to earn a roster spot in the NRL.

Post-secondary ringette programs could play a more meaningful and formal role in the athlete development pathway however it is not clear if these programs intend to operate within a pursuit of excellence space, as it is defined here.

To address this gap, the following options, delivered according to the applicable Pursuit of Excellence program standards, are encouraged:

1. National Ringette League

Existing NRL teams operate development teams and align with their closest Centre of Excellence.

2. Post-Secondary Ringette

Post-secondary ringette programs adhere to the applicable standards and align with their closest Centre of Excellence and formally engage with Ringette Canada to include their programs as part of the Ringette Canada’s athlete development pathway.

3. Individual Access

Where options 1 or 2 are not available, individual athletes should be provided access to Centre of Excellence services on a cost recovery basis. Access could take the form of joining training groups to address fitness, joining existing team practices where appropriate, or, if there are enough of these athletes, they have their own skills group.

The Centre of Excellence license holder may enter into agreements with NRL teams and post-secondary ringette teams to provide these services and develop programs suitable for access by individual athletes.

Section 7: Enrollment

While everyone is invited apply to the Pursuit of Excellence program, not every athlete will be accepted. Athletes must be at or above a defined threshold of readiness (standard) for the program.

For U16 and up, readiness will be assessed using the attributes in the Train to Train stage of the ringette Athlete Development Matrix as a guide.

For U14, a stage-appropriate assessment will be extrapolated from the U16 & up method.

What is being assessed and how the assessment is conducted will be standardized and adhering to it is required for a Centre of Excellence operator to maintain its license.

The design of the assessment will accommodate ease of use, time to complete, repeatability and reliability.

The enrollment process is currently being developed with the following considerations:

- Athlete agreement
- Athlete meets fitness standard to safely manage the training and competition load of the program
- Athlete meets minimum acceptable level of performance in individual skills, individual tactics and team tactics.
 - Where feasible, the assessment will seek to use objective assessments and, when not feasible, subjective assessments will be used but will be designed to provide, as much as possible, the same conditions for each athlete.
 - Assessments will also be designed to limit the influence of previous coaching, i.e., an athlete can't perform something they were never taught. The assessment will include opportunities for athletes to **listen** to the instruction, **process** the information and then **perform**.

As part of the transition plan ([Appendix D](#)), a process to design, test, refine and finalize the exact enrollment / assessment process is accounted for. For Alberta, this process is scheduled for implementation in the spring of 2022, however, should it be ready sooner and the infrastructure for delivery is ready, implementation can occur sooner. The decision to advance the timeline will be a factor of the readiness of the Centre of Excellence license holders.

Section 8: Tiering in Pursuit of Excellence

As stated previously, the Pursuit of Excellence is a program not a tier. Opportunities to tier within the program may exist and are largely dependant on the number of athletes enrolled.

Section 9: Implications for Team Formation and Scheduling

The following outcomes for team formation and scheduling are anticipated.

Independent Team Formation

Currently, team formation at other tiers must wait until AA team formation is complete. Upon full implementation of the Pursuit of Excellence program, enrollment numbers in Classic and Pursuit of Excellence will be known in May. This means team formation within the various programs may take place independently from one another in the fall.

Player Movement Reduced

Today, as AA teams are formed and players released, there is considerable movement of players from association to association. This will be mitigated with the enrollment standards in effect and one Centre of Excellence operating in each region.

Tiering Impact on Scheduling

Remembering that tier is simply a level of play and does not dictate the type of training program or competition schedule, some of the same tiers can and likely will exist in different programs. Teams of the same tier, regardless if they are in Classic or Excellence, may play one another.

League Play:

- Leagues will offer a schedule by division (age group) and level (tier) as they do today.
- For U14
 - league play will only accommodate Classic teams
 - leagues will be required to create windows in the U14 Classic schedule to accommodate U14 Intro to Excellence bio-banded competitions (see tournaments below)
- At U16 and up
 - league schedules may include Classic and Excellence teams of the same tier or equivalent
 - leagues are expected to move teams (re-tier and/or re-pool), as results dictate, regardless if the teams are from the Classic or Excellence program

Tournaments:

- At U14
 - Group Members are free to offer Classic-only U14 tournaments
 - Together with Centre of Excellence Operators, Ringette Alberta will facilitate bio-banded competitions for Intro to Excellence. Ringette Alberta may seek hosts for these events, or they may be integrated into existing tournaments where U14 Classic is not offered.
- At U16 and Up
 - Group Members may offer tournaments as: Excellence-exclusive, Classic-exclusive or by division (age group) and level (tier) regardless of program.

Section 10: I'm an athlete, what does my experience look like?

- You understand the difference between Classic Ringette and Excellence Ringette, and you have chosen the later based on that understanding.
- You will be in a program that expects every enrolled athlete to adopt an excellence mindset. You will be asked to complete a formal athlete agreement that outlines what is expected of you and what you can expect from the program. Expectations will be fair, reasonable and stage-appropriate. They will be aligned with helping you learn the athlete lifestyle, achieve your best, whatever that may be, and for some, to prepare you for entry to Ringette Canada's high-performance programs.
- When you hear "excellence" you understand that this means you are enrolling a program that is focused on excellent process in the day to day to achieve long term results. You understand this environment requires commitment over the long term and patience is part of the process.
- You will be entering a program that takes a multi-year view of your development; once you're in the program and continue to meet the commitments in the athlete agreement, your progress will be measured and appropriate adjustments to your individual development plan will be recommended to you.
- With the help of your coaches and other support personnel, you begin each year renewing your overall development objectives.
- Your coaches will be required to follow a yearly training plan for you and your team and make appropriate adjustments throughout the year.
- To support your development, your coaches and other support personnel will think beyond just technical / tactical objectives. They will understand how school and demands outside of ringette impact your ability to achieve your development objectives. They will account for participation in other sports and how their training and competition demands interact with ringette's.
- You will receive support from professionals in sport science and sport medicine. This is what we call the Integrated Support Team (IST)
 - To keep you healthy and able to train and compete, the IST will ensure appropriate fitness assessments and stage-appropriate fitness plans are in place.
 - If you get injured, there will be a single point of contact, who has links to every member of the IST, to help you access all the services and support you may need to recover.
- Some of your friends will be in the program and even on the same team. Some may not be. Some may be in the same program but on a different team. Some may choose not to enroll in the program at all.
- You may see more people in your off-ice training sessions beyond just your teammates, but they will all belong to your program and you will have a shared identity.
- You will see other athletes who may be a little behind or a little ahead of you in their development, but you will be placed on teams and in competition with athletes similar to you to create optimal training and meaningful competition.
- Team formation will be managed to ensure the very important social value of sport, especially that of ringette, is respected.
- Generally, you will see better alignment of programs across the province (and hopefully the country) and a commitment to achieve more meaningful competition.
- Steps will be taken to manage costs to ensure the best return on investment and that the program is financially accessible.

Section 11: Program Standards

In the [Ringette Canada Competition Review and Restructuring Report](#), recommendation #47 states, “Ringette Canada should establish formal standards based on the daily training environment for clubs to be recognized as a Pursuit of Excellence club”.

By June 2020, a Ringette Canada work group will determine the standards and timeline for implementation.

With the knowledge of all provincial ringette associations, representatives from Ringette Canada, Ringette Saskatchewan, Ringette BC and Ringette Alberta met October 2019 to prepare a first draft of the daily training environment and other standards. These are itemized in [Appendix C](#). Ringette Canada’s work group will use this first draft as a starting point for its work.

In addition to the proposed set of standards, Ringette Alberta surveyed attendees of the Ringette Alberta Pursuit of Excellence stakeholder meeting (November 2019) to gauge whether or not they support each standard becoming mandatory for program operators to meet. There was overwhelming support. Their specific responses are recorded in the far right column of the table in [Appendix C](#).

Section 12: Centre of Excellence Operations Criteria

In Alberta, Program Operators will be licensed to operate Ringette Centres of Excellence using a thorough evaluation process and formal agreement. The evaluation process and agreement are currently being developed. More information on the timeline for this to be implemented is outlined in [Appendix D](#).

Each Centre of Excellence must meet the program standards defined in [Appendix C](#) and ensure the functions described in [Appendix F](#) are performed.

Section 13: The Role of Parents / Guardians

Agreement

As part of the enrollment process for minor athletes, parents/guardians will be required to complete a parent/guardian agreement. No minor athlete will be accepted into or may continue in the program without this agreement in place.

Support and Education

Because parents/guardians play such a critical role in the success of their young athletes, a parallel education program will be implemented to provide parents / guardians with the knowledge to help expand the daily training environment into the home – where healthy choices to eat and sleep and recover appropriately can be fostered consistently – and to reinforce the decisions of the coaches, instructors and the Integrated Support Team.

Section 14: Coaches / Instructors

Agreement and Acceptance

Coaches and instructors will also be subject to a standardized intake process that includes a formal agreement, assessment of qualifications and suitability, etc.

Support and Education

Recognizing the limitations of the core National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) requirements, supplemental education will be developed and delivered to support those who are supporting the athletes.

Ringette Alberta's goal is to provide practical, "bite size" learning opportunities and have the Coaching Association of Canada award coaches professional development points towards the maintenance of their certification.

Section 15: Integrated Support Team (IST)

Qualifications for those who make up the Integrated Support Team, such as strength and conditioning coaches, sport nutritionists, mental performance coaches, and others, will be established by Ringette Alberta. For the safety of the athletes and maintaining an optimal environment, only approved service providers may be used.

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Glossary

Athlete-Centred:

Sport programming in which the athlete's needs are the top priority when making decisions and planning events. This means creating programs which allow athletes to have their needs and wants heard and allows them to answer questions such as "what works for you?" and "what do you want out of the season?" Stakeholders should recognize this means "athlete-centered" and not "ringette player centered"; there are many more dimensions to a good athlete than being a strong player on the ice.

Ringette Alberta Athlete Advisory Committee

See also the coach-centric vs. athlete-centric table in [Appendix F](#)

Financially Accessible:

The average cost to participate in the Pursuit of Excellence Program is no more than 20% above the average cost of Classic Ringette in the same region; the impact of championship play and fundraising excluded.

High Performance:

In the ringette context, high performance refers only to the National Teams, the National Ringette League and Canada Games. U14, U16 and U19 teams are not high performance. These programs may be part of the Pursuit of Excellence pathway but are not specifically high performance.

Appendix B Talent ID vs Talent Development Illustration

U16 Category	Talent ID Model	Talent Development Model
Number & Tier of Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization decides, in advance, to make 1 AA team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization does not pre-determine how many teams it will form or what tier those teams will be
Number of athletes assessed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60
Assessment criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unknown. Unique to each organization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criteria derived from the Train to Train stage in the Athlete Development Matrix. Used by all recognised programs
Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45 athletes are deemed to have met the minimum threshold for enrollment.
Exclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45 Unknown data given to excluded athletes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 are told they are not ready <u>yet</u>, and are given specific feedback so they know what the gaps are
Team Tiering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team is designated AA regardless of how it compares to other teams in the province and across Canada Meaningful competition is questionable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Of the 45 that are deemed ready, again using the ADM as reference... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 are deemed to be at late-Train to Train. 30 are deemed to be at early-Train to Train. Example: For purposes of establishing meaningful competition, late-Train to Train is considered AA. Early-Train to Train is considered A. Similar teams are grouped for competition increasing likelihood of meaningful competition.

Appendix C Standards: Daily Training Environment & Other

- Access to a high-quality daily training environment (DTE) is the central principle of Excellence Ringette programs.
- These standards serve to ensure that athletes are receiving developmentally appropriate training opportunities and support.
- DTE standards are based on the Train to Train, Train to Compete and Train to Win stages of development as part of Ringette Canada’s Long-Term Athlete Development Framework (2009) and Athlete Development Matrix (pending).
- In October 2019, representatives from Ringette Canada, Ringette Saskatchewan, Ringette BC and Ringette Alberta met to prepare a first draft of the DTE and other standards (to give to the Ringette Canada work group as a starting point). These standards are described below.
- In November 2019, Ringette Alberta conducted a stakeholder meeting and asked attendees to indicate their support for the various standards. Their responses are recorded in the far right column and show overwhelming support.
- By June 2020, a Ringette Canada work group is scheduled to set the standards and timeline for implementation

Standards: Daily Training Environment

Focus	Standard	Rationale / Supplemental Info	Support / Resources to Program Operator	Results of Survey of Nov 17 Stakeholder Meeting attendees
Integrated Support Team (IST) of Sport Science and Sport Medicine Experts	Each Program Operator will establish a relationship with local sport science and sport medicine providers.	<p>To ensure athletes receive timely access to support services and that the provider is familiar with the specific needs of ringette athletes.</p> <p>Athletes must be referred to sport medicine specialists in the event of injury and for ongoing monitoring of their recovery from injury and health.</p> <p>Athletes receive expert advice on things like nutrition, mental training, strength and conditioning, etc.</p>	Program Operators will be provided a document outlining the qualifications of services providers and the key elements to include in an agreement between the Program Operator and the IST.	Agree = 34 Disagree = 2

IST Hub	Each Program Operator must designate no less than one individual to coordinate the athletes' access to the IST ensuring service providers are well informed of athlete needs and that athletes are referred to appropriate service providers in a timely fashion.	Typically, the IST can designate one individual to perform this function.	A job description can be provided to the Program Operator to establish expectations and consistency.	Agree = 29 Disagree = 7
Yearly Plan	Program Operators follow a stage appropriate yearly training plan which aligns with the competition calendar.	Athletes benefit from an appropriate YTP.	Program Operators will be supported by sport performance specialists to develop and modify the YTP.	Agree = 35 Disagree = 1
Training to Competition Days ratio	Program Operators must ensure programs maintain the following training sessions to competition days* ratio: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train to Train 60/40 • Train to Compete 40/60 • Train to Win 25/75 <p>*Multiple games on the same day within a tournament count as one day</p>	Much of the training to competition ratio thinking will be completed as part of the yearly training plan.	Sport Performance experts will assist coaches with the YTP	Agree = 30 Disagree = 6
Off Season Contact	Program Operators must ensure stage-appropriate off-season contact with athletes to ensure appropriate training and competition during the off season, i.e., not too much, not too little.	Enrolled athletes are expected to be year-round athletes. This does not mean year-round ringette. This means that athletes are mindful of their program 365 days per year and their programs deliberately include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transition phase from the 	Provided by IST	Agree = 23 Disagree = 13

		<p>competition season</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rest and recovery • fitness maintenance • <u>voluntary</u> participation in formal ringette specific sessions; touch points focused on individual development • preparation phase for the start of the new season <p>In-season and off-season programming must also accommodate employment or schooling, vacation, other sports / activities, etc., to ensure a well-rounded individual. A healthy, responsible and effective program is not all ringette all the time.</p> <p>It is highly recommended that athletes share their ringette program activities with coaches of other sports and vice versa to ensure appropriate (not too much, not too little) training.</p>		
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Mental Training	Program Operators will ensure that the mental training programming follows a standardized curriculum that is aligned with the YTP and the stage of athletes.	The mental, social and emotional development of athletes is as important as their physical, technical and tactical preparation.	Program Operators will be provided a curriculum that ensures all required elements are covered as an athlete progresses from stage to stage while also reducing the duplication of content.	Agree = 35 Disagree = 1
	All Program Operators will also ensure that athletes have access, at the athlete's expense, to a mental performance coach (MPC) to aid in the athlete's preparation.	Some athletes may wish to access support beyond the core provisions of the Program Operator's program. The service provider must be aware of the ringette program and ensure their coaching is aligned.		Agree = 28 Disagree = 8
	Coaches must demonstrate a standard of awareness / education of mental performance.	Coaches are expected to support mental performance of their athletes and not rely solely on external providers.	A review of available mental performance education for coaches will be conducted and a standard will follow ensuring appropriate transition timeline.	Agree = 36 Disagree = 0
Injury Prevention Warm-Up	Program Operators will be expected to implement an injury prevention warm-up as part of their training program. A protocol will be provided by Ringette Canada	An effective warm-up not only serves to raise the body's temperature, but over time, can help athletes improve their fundamental movement skills leading to improvements in overall fitness, athlete confidence and durability while reducing the risk of injury.		Agree = 35 Disagree = 1

Fitness Assessment and Program Prescription	<p>Program Operators must ensure at least two fitness testing sessions per year are conducted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prior to first on ice session ○ Mid Season 	<p>The purpose of fitness assessments is to determine an athlete’s current state relative to what is necessary to perform optimally and inform any adjustments that need to be made in training, rest and recovery, etc.</p>	<p>The Program Operator will be provided the standard fitness testing protocol</p> <p>The Program Operator will be provided a standard fitness program (aligned with the yearly training plan) by stage that can be use as the basis for group and individual training.</p>	<p>Agree = 35 Disagree = 1</p>
	<p>Results of these assessments must be recorded in the central database.</p>			<p>Agree = 25 Disagree = 11</p>
	<p>Program Operators must provide a periodized strength and conditioning program in alignment with the yearly training plan goals and objectives for ringette KPIs but individualized to address the specific needs of each athlete in accordance with their pre-hab/rehab requirements.</p> <p>These programs should be designed by credentialed strength and conditioning coaches (standards for hiring to be provided).</p>	<p>Quality sport programs should be tailored to meet individual athlete’s needs - not all athletes are the same therefore their fitness programs should be unique to them.</p>		<p>Agree = 32 Disagree = 4</p>

Standards: Other

Focus	Standard	Rationale / Supplemental Info	Support / Resources to Program Operator	Results of Survey of Nov 17 Stakeholder Meeting attendees
Data Management	Program Operators are required to complete periodic individualized assessments and record each athlete's progress in the common data base and make that data available to the athletes.	Ringette Canada will provide the stage appropriate assessment parameters, based on the Ringette Athlete Development Matrix. At the <u>athlete's discretion</u> , their data can be shared with Program personnel, PSOs and Ringette Canada High Performance staff.	Investigation to date suggests that PersonalSportRecord.com is the most robust system for this purpose. It is in use in Alberta currently and being investigated by Ringette BC and Ringette Ontario.	Agree = 25 Disagree = 9
	Program Operators are required to conduct formal meetings with each athlete (and parent) a minimum of 2 times per year to discuss individual progress relative to ADM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-season • Post season 			Agree = 29 Disagree = 7
Financial Accessibility – Cost Control	Program Operators will not mandate or facilitate the purchase of apparel and other branded equipment (e.g., equipment bags, footwear) beyond the standard apparel 'kit'	Anecdotally, current programming is becoming cost prohibitive for many athletes to the point where many are choosing to leave the Excellence Ringette	A document recommending a standard apparel 'kit' will be provided to Program Operators.	Agree = 32 Disagree = 4

		environment for financial reasons.		
	Program Operators will establish budgets in line with the appropriate Yearly Training Plan and ensure they are followed.	Some of the costs are not vital to the athletes meeting their development goals.		Agree = 33 Disagree = 3
Athlete Eligibility	<p>Program Operators must accommodate <u>all</u> athletes at or above the entry threshold which is outlined in the Train to Train stage of the Athlete Development Matrix.</p> <p>This does not mean all athletes must be placed on the same teams. Tiering of teams is acceptable within Excellence Ringette.</p>	<p>Entry to Excellence Ringette programs is not a try out for limited roster spots.</p> <p>Arbitrary roster sizes may not eliminate athletes from enrolling in the program.</p> <p>Athletes must be at a minimum of the Train to Train stage of development to gain entry. A standard assessment must be used to determine this.</p>	A standard assessment methodology will be developed and provided to all Program Operators.	Agree = 30 Disagree = 6
Information session	Conduct a minimum of 1 formal session (e.g., open house) for interested athletes (and parents) per calendar year	Consistent information to all athletes.	An outline of content to cover will be provided to all Program Operators.	Agree = 35 Disagree = 1
Provincial Ringette Association Registration	Athletes must be registered participants in good standing of their Provincial Ringette Association to enroll in a recognized Excellence Ringette program.	Just as with other ringette contexts, participants must belong to their respective provincial ringette association.	Details will be included in an athlete agreement and license agreement.	Agree = 34 Disagree = 2

	Program Operators must be members in good standing of their provincial ringette association or Ringette Canada.			Agree = 35 Disagree = 1
Program Director (title to be confirmed – See Appendix E)	Each Program Operator must ensure one representative (Program Director?) participates in an annual meeting with Ringette Canada High Performance staff and other experts. This <i>may</i> include travel, accommodation and meal expenses.	A two-way transfer of knowledge around Excellence Ringette programming is necessary to proactively adjust program content and delivery and identify support that Program Operators require to fulfill their mandate.		Agree = 34 Disagree = 2

Appendix D Transition Timeline

	May 2020 – April 2021	May 2021 – April 2022	May 2022 – April 2023
Key Changes	2020-21 season: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final season for U14AA at status quo U16 & U19 access status quo “AA” teams may be retreated to A based on performance Centre of Excellence Application Minimal POE program standards in effect <ul style="list-style-type: none"> YTP including monitoring training to competition ratio Standardized fitness assessments Athlete off season (summer 2021) plan 	2021-22 season: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st year U14s - Intro to Excellence 2nd Year U14s – remain full time U16 & U19 access is status quo Centres of Excellence begin preparations for 2022-23 operations POE program standards increase 	2022-23 season: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All U14s– Intro to Excellence U16 & U19 threshold criteria in effect Centres of Excellence Operations begin All POE program standards in effect Alberta specific: Only teams from a recognized Centre of Excellence eligible for the Canadian Ringette Championship Eligibility for WCRC to be determined (conversations with other western provinces)
	REGISTRATION FOR 2020-21 SEASON	REGISTRATION FOR 2021-22 SEASON	REGISTRATION FOR 2022-23 SEASON
May	Clarify Advance / Retreat policy so that “AA” teams understand they will be retreated to “A” if warranted, i.e., “AA” is a tier and is not guaranteed.	Open house: program info sessions commence	Open house program info session continues
		Second Test Drive of the Threshold Criteria & Assessment Process (see section 7)	Threshold Criteria & Assessment Process in Effect (see section 7)
		Player, Parent & Team Staff Agreements in effect via registration process	Player, Parent & Team Staff Agreements in effect via registration process continues
		RAMP begins individual registration by program	RAMP registration continues
June	Ringette Canada work group target date to finalize Pursuit of Excellence program standards and implementation timeline		
	Group Member application modified to require programs to be identified for 2020-21 season.	Inaugural Athlete Development Meeting Mandatory Program Director Attendance Recommended Team Staff Attendance	Athlete Development Meeting #2 Mandatory Program Director Attendance Recommended Team Staff Attendance
	Finalize Centre of Excellence mandatory job descriptions Finalize Centre of Excellence application, selection criteria & selection process		
July		Target date for Mental Performance Curriculum to be built in partnership with Ringette Canada	
Aug	Start of season fitness assessment Results recorded in PSR	Start of season fitness assessment Results recorded in PSR	Start of season fitness assessment Results recorded in PSR
	Yearly Training Plans <u>reviewed</u> by Sport Performance Consultant	Yearly Training Plans <u>approved</u> by Sport Performance Consultant	Yearly Training Plans <u>approved</u> by Sport Performance Consultant
September	Sept 1 – Centre of Excellence Operations Application Deadline		
	Sept 30 – Centre of Excellence Operators selected. Begin preparations for May 2022.		
	Training to competition ratio <u>tracked</u> this season. Produce report mid season.	Training to competition ratio <u>met</u> this season	Training to competition ratio <u>met</u> this season
	Notify Group Members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group Member application includes selecting programs and agreeing to standards will be in effect for 2021-22 Individual registration must be managed by program for 2021-22 		

Oct.	Final draft of POE Threshold Criteria & Assessment Process (coordinating with Ringette BC)		
Nov.	Approved apparel / equipment kit finalized		
Dec.	First Test Drive of the Threshold Criteria & Assessment Process (see section 7)	Mid season fitness assessment Results recorded in PSR Make necessary adjustments	Mid season fitness assessment Results recorded in PSR Make necessary adjustments
	Mid-season YTP check in with Sport Performance Consultant	Mid-season YTP check in with Sport Performance Consultant	Mid-season YTP check in with Sport Performance Consultant
January	RAMP prepared to accommodate program specific registration for 2021-22 season starting spring 2021	Teams not meeting training to competition ratio consequence TBA	
	Teams assigned a tier for post season play	Teams assigned a tier for post season	Teams assigned a tier for post season play
	Player, Parent, Team Staff Agreement finalized. Built into registration system for use May 2021.		
Feb.	Remind Group Members of Group Membership and individual registration, by program, will commence for spring 2021 for 2021-22 season.		
Mar.			
Apr.	Post season review with each athlete and provide each with off season plan	Post season review with each athlete and provide each with off season plan	Post season review with each athlete and provide each with off season plan

Appendix E Key Personnel Functions

Program Director

- Alignment
 - Attends (physical / virtual) annual evaluation and planning meeting(s) with Ringette Canada
 - Defines and monitors the overarching program to ensure compliance with standards, sound athlete development principles and practices, and Ringette Canada's High-Performance Programs
 - Ensures yearly training and competition plans allow for access to external development / high performance programs, e.g., La Relève, Provincial Team (CWG), Team Canada, etc.,
- Athlete Development Planning
 - Working with the Sport Performance Consultant and Team Staff, ensures each athlete has an annual development plan
 - Ensures coaches are contributing input to the annual planning process and providing the requested feedback throughout the season
 - Works with Position #3 to ensure a mid-season check in with the athletes is complete
- Manages Coach Intake
 - Calls for applications
 - Communicates and verifies required qualifications
 - Coordinates coach selection process
- Coordinates Coach Education
 - Works with provincial association to support ongoing coach education and mentorship, e.g., NCCP, supplemental coach education opportunities, mentorship
- Coach Assessment, Performance Management
 - Establishes ongoing assessments and refers coach to appropriate coach education
 - Maintains coach performance records
 - Conducts year end assessment
- Advocacy
 - Acts as sounding board for coaches – problem solving
 - Acts as an advocate for coaches during player / parent discussions
- Reporting
 - Provides license holder reports as requested
- Oversee trainers
 - Manage intake process for trainers
 - Ensure trainers have and maintain requisite qualifications
 - Conduct assessments and performance management

Integrated Support Team Liaison

- Liaison with the Integrated Support Team (IST: the group of sport science / sport medicine professionals)
 - Ensures each athlete has an appropriate fitness program that respects all phases of the annual cycle
 - Act as the conduit through which athletes will access IST services aligned with the Program Operator's program.
 - Facilitate good communication among the IST to ensure the best care of the athlete possible
- Athlete Intake
 - Works with the Position #3 on matters of athlete health and fitness during the initial athlete intake process and annual renewal
 - Conducts initial / annual health conference with athlete (and parents)
 - Questionnaire
 - Meeting
 - Coordinates fitness assessments
- Monitor athlete health / feedback
 - work with coaches to ensure appropriate programming (YTP, burn out, training intensity / frequency / duration, etc.)
- Return to Performance
 - In the case of injury or illness, ensure the long-term health of the athlete takes priority over short term objectives
 - Work with service providers to ensure the athlete is clear to return to activity, training and ultimately competition

Key Position #3 – Title TBD

- Manages athlete intake process
 - Coordinates Information Sessions for interested athletes
 - Ensure requisite application forms and related data is collected
 - Following the lead of Position #1 and with the support of program coaches, coordinates the threshold assessment
- Athlete Development Plan and Athlete Records
 - Working with the Position #1 and Position #2, maintain record of each athlete's annual development plan
 - Encourage athletes to contribute to their personal sport record
- Athlete Development Plan
 - Working with Position #1 and Position #2, contributes to the development, monitoring and adjustments to each athlete's annual development plan accounting for factors such as:
 - Athlete health
 - Growth and development
 - Participates in athlete check ins
- Transition out of program
 - When an athlete chooses to no longer be a participant in the Excellence Ringette environment, meet with the athlete to conduct an exit interview and direct them to other opportunities in ringette (coaching, officiating, administration, other playing opportunities).
- Parent liaison
 - Act as the liaison

Appendix F Coach-Centred vs. Athlete-Centred

Coach-centred coach	Athlete-centred coach
Instructs - tells athletes what to do	Asks questions and helps athletes to find their own solutions
Determines the direction and goals for the team	Facilitates athletes and team to set their own goals
Focuses on winning and the achievement of results	Focuses on development and the achievement of athlete and team goals
Expects athletes to comply with their instructions during games	Develops athletes that are self-aware, capable of making decisions and able to correct themselves
Has a 'win at all costs' attitude	Tries to develop the whole athlete: technically, physically, mentally and socially
Views athletes as a collective with the same needs	Views athletes as a collection of individuals with individual needs

Source: <https://coachgrowth.wordpress.com/2013/11/29/athlete-centred-coaching/>