

EXCELLENCE RINGETTE PROGRAM GUIDELINES

PURPOSE STATEMENT:

This sporting context 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 personal highest level of performance, and preparing them to represent their province at Canada Games, play in the National Ringette League (NRL) and represent Canada at the World Ringette Championships.

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1. Introduction

The Ringette Canada Competition Review introduced the “Pursuit of Excellence” as a sporting context that offers athletes a *“high quality daily training environment with sound technical leadership, quality coaching, and consistent access to sport science and sport medicine.”* Further detail is provided in the Competition Review on Pursuit of Excellence program fundamentals and requirements as a guide and as direction to the provincial sport bodies to update their own high-performance programs. The Excellence Ringette program fundamentals and related guidelines were subsequently created in cross-Canada consultation and collaboration, especially with Ringette Canada, Ringette Alberta and Ringette Saskatchewan.

Excellence Ringette will include the following key areas:

1. A daily training environment for athletes that seek access to a high-quality program and meet the standards for entry; and
2. Selection of both athletes and bench staff, training and management of Team BC for the Canada Ringette Championships (CRC) at the U16 and U19 division.
3. Management and oversight of a BC NRL (18+) team will will compete in the National Ringette League operated by Ringette Canada

Excellence Ringette provides participants with the daily training environment that will assist each athlete with attaining their personal success and individual goals. Excellence Ringette is a year-round commitment with training plans that are individually adapted to athletes and that align with a full season calendar for ringette. This includes periodization stages outlined clearly to the athlete, parent and coaches to ensure that athletes are reaching peak performance at the optimal time of the season but are also training effectively all season.

Athletes within the program are rostered full time to Zone U16 and U19 teams, or rostered of affiliated to an NRL team. Where there is no Zone team available for an athlete to participate on, the Program Director will work with that athlete and their local association(s) to determine the best fit to maintain an appropriate training environment.

The CRC teams for U16 and U19 will be selected from the athletes participating in the program. Program coaching staff (including for the CRC teams) will be selected through an application process to develop coaches alongside athletes. Zone athletes that are not selected to the CRC Team can continue to benefit from Excellence Ringette and the daily training environment including access to program training tools, sport medicine and other resources.

Athletes must commit to meeting program standards and expectations as outlined by Ringette BC. The Ringette BC Program Director will be primarily responsible for program organization and delivery.

1.1. Stages of Excellence Ringette

Excellence Ringette is designed for athletes in the U16, U19 and 18+ age divisions who are in the following stages of development:

- **Late Train to Train:** Athletes who are participating in structured competitive provincial leagues and participating in the Canadian Ringette Championships.
- **Train to Compete:** Athletes who are members of provincial team programs, part of the Team Canada – Junior Program, or who are in their first years of playing in the National Ringette League (NRL).
- **Train to Win:** Established participants playing in the NRL and participants vying for a position on Team Canada.

Excellence Ringette is for athletes that have entered these stages of development that are U16 and U19 aged, or rostered or affiliated to an NRL team. Athletes who are participating in these divisions as an under-age player are not eligible to enter the Excellence Ringette program.

For more information on the BC NRL team and it's operation, refer to the Excellence Ringette Program NRL Program Guidelines.

1.2. Strategic Initiatives

Excellence Ringette aligns with several strategic initiatives and is a key component of the Ringette BC 2019 – 2023 Strategic Plan. The excellence program will:

- increase retention of athletes in the high-performance pathway;
- enhance long-term development of athletes;
- contribute to a clearly defined and accessible athlete pathway;
- provide greater alignment with principles of long-term athlete development;
- facilitate increased engagement;
- provide athletes in the pathway with access to a daily training environment that is appropriate for the athletes age, caliber and abilities; and
- develop athletes, coaches, administrators and officials for long-term sport sustainability.

2. The Excellence Ringette Program

2.1. Program Principles

The Excellence Ringette Program will meet the standards and guiding best practices of safe sport initiatives, policies and practices. The program will embody the following principles:

- Athletes, Coaches and Administrators will be guided by the *True Sport Principles* and will be ambassadors of *True Sport* in Ringette;
- the program guidelines and policies will work to promote the principles of meaningful competition and the Guiding Principles of Competition;
- the program will be as financially accessible as possible; and
- the program will have a foundation in the Ringette Canada Corporate Values and the Values of Ringette BC.

The program will also contribute to a Coach Development Pathway, the development of Officials, and to Standards of Professionalism. Athletes, Parent/Guardians, and Coaches will all commit to the program through a written agreement outlining responsibilities.

2.2. Program Standards

Program standards are required to ensure that the program is delivered consistently and to ensure a quality experience for all participants. Ringette BC will establish and deliver the program standards as the operator of Excellence Ringette.

Standards will:

- Establish a clear distinction between Excellence Ringette and other ringette sport contexts to best manage expectations and behaviors of all participants;
- Provide a foundation for quality assurance and equity; and
- Align with other provincial ringette authorities and Ringette Canada around athlete preparation, resource allocation and competition design.

2.3. Athlete Eligibility

The program is for Athletes aged U16, U19 and 18+. To be eligible for the Excellence Ringette program athletes will need to meet the screening criteria published in the program standards, and as outlined in the information package distributed by Ringette BC each season

Athletes must be a resident of BC and in good standing with Ringette BC and their local Association to register. All athletes are required to sign an athlete agreement as part of the Excellence Ringette program and will be required to continue to maintain program standards in order for continued participation.

2.4. Expression of Interest and Athlete Selection

Ringette BC will host orientation sessions for players and parents each Spring. These orientation sessions will inform eligible athletes of the Excellence Ringette program parameters. Players interested in the Excellence Ringette program must express their interest by May 1st of each playing season. Screening sessions and initial assessments will take place in May.

Athletes will be selected to the Excellence Ringette Program based on:

- On and Off Ice Assessments
- Athlete Application Interview

While all interested players can apply, only players that meet the standards and confirm understanding of the commitment will be invited to participate. Standards will be released to all athletes and parents prior to requests for expressions of interest to give athletes time to train and prepare. Standards will include both on and off-ice testing.

Athletes must meet fitness standard to safely manage the training and competition load of the program. Athletes must also meet minimum acceptable performance levels of individual skills, individual tactics and team tactics. Ringette BC recognizes that not every athlete is at the same stage of development. However, access to certain programs, competitions, and developmental opportunities require athletes to be at a certain stage in their development to ensure that the athlete is able to have a positive and meaningful experience and the program is able to serve their individual needs.

Where feasible, athlete assessment will seek to use objective measures and, when not feasible, subjective measures will be used but will be designed to provide, as much as possible, the same conditions for each athlete. Assessments are also be designed to limit the influence of previous coaching (i.e. an athlete can't perform something they were not taught). Athlete assessment will include opportunities for athletes to listen to the instruction, process the information, and then perform. All Excellence athletes must participate on a Zone team¹ to participate in Excellence Ringette. In addition, any player interested in competing at the Canadian Ringette Championships must participate in Excellence Ringette. The CRC Team will be selected from this pool of athletes.

Athletes who are screened into the program will be given their training schedules in May and June. Schedules will have some similarities but will differ depending on what the individual needs to improve on and to recognize the individuality of athletes.

¹ If an athlete is screened into Excellence and is not successful in securing a position on their Zone team, they are eligible to apply for a transfer to another Zone team under the Ringette BC transfer policy. If there is no Zone team available to the athlete in their region, the athlete may request an exemption from Ringette BC to participate in a regional ringette program.

2.5. Season Calendar

The Excellence Ringette season calendar is outlined below:

March / April	Excellence Ringette Program Orientations
May / June	Expressions of Interest, Screening & Intake
July	Excellence Training Camp 1
August	Excellence Training Camp 2
December	Excellence Training Camp 3

2.6. Excellence Ringette Program Costs

Cost for program delivery will vary depending on each athlete’s participation level and whether they are named to a CRC Team.

Program costs will cover athlete accommodation, sport science, facility rentals and other operational costs required to administer the program. Excellence training events will be facilitated in different geographical locations throughout the province subject to access for athletes, costs and venues.

2.7. Participation Group Size

The size of the Excellence Program cohort will be dependent on the number of athletes that complete the assessments, and meet the standards to qualify for Excellence Ringette.

The Team BC CRC roster size will be dependent on the registration numbers within a division and the skill of athletes available for coach selection. The maximum roster must meet the Ringette Canada Technical Rules for Canadian Ringette Championships. The minimum roster will be fifteen (15) players.

The Team BC CRC teams can name up to a total of four affiliates including three skaters and one goalie. Affiliates will be rostered members of a Zone team and will be expected to train and participate with the Team BC CRC team. The affiliate players will make their Zone team the priority in the event of a scheduling conflict.

3. GOVERNANCE

Excellence Ringette will follow a governance model whereby Ringette BC, as the Provincial Sports Organization, will be the program license holder in BC. Ringette BC will be responsible for delivering the Excellence Ringette program to its Members.

3.1. The Program Director

The Ringette BC Program Director will be responsible for day-to-day program coordination of the Excellence Ringette Program, and will oversee the team staff for Team BC.

Program guidelines and expectations will be produced annually by Ringette BC in collaboration with the Leagues and Club Associations (as necessary). The Program Director will be responsible for ensuring that guidelines and program expectations are timely and relevant, and that they are followed by participants.

The Program Director will:

- Ensure program standards are established and maintained;
- Coordinate athlete evaluations;
- Participate in the Coach selection process as per the Coach and Team Staff Selection policy;
- Enforce athlete agreements and Codes of Conduct for coaches, athletes, and officials; and
- Develop and implement training and development initiatives for coaches.

3.2. The Role of Leagues and Associations

Leagues will be responsible for ensuring that all Excellence Ringette program athletes are participating on a Zone team and have registered with a Club Association as per the Ringette BC Player and Team Registration Policy. Leagues will also be responsible for management of transfers between Zones and will administrate all Zone transfer requests prior to final submission to Ringette BC. Transfer requests must adhere to the Ringette BC Transfer Policy. If an athlete transfer is approved under the policy, the athlete is to be evaluated to the same measure as any other member evaluating from that Zone.

The Leagues will be responsible for ensuring that league play for the Zone teams is facilitated as per the technical requirements of ringette (i.e. the Ringette Canada rules), and to ensure that teams are participating in meaningful competition and adhering to the True Sport Principles.

3.3. Excellence Participation Boundaries

Excellence Ringette is open to players throughout the province that qualify to participate. Training centres will be focused in the southern part of the province as this is where the access to resources is greatest.

Participants from the North and the Okanagan will have access to resources through Regional Alliance Centers including Engage Sport North and Pacific Sport Okanagan. There will be coaches available to help support, lead and train athletes in those locations.

4. COACHING AND TEAM STAFF

There will be various opportunities for coaches to participate in the excellence program, including through Training Camps, the athlete selection process, and as the Coach or Team Staff of Team BC. Team BC CRC Coaches will be selected from the pool of Coaches that are screened into the program.

The excellence program will encourage and support the development of elite and high-performance coaches by ensuring that there are targets, action plans and training opportunities within Excellence, while fostering opportunities for Excellence coaches to give back to their League and Club Associations.

Once coaches are selected into the program, they will be provided roles to ensure that they are able to participate based on their individual goals, availability and skills. All Coaches will report to the Program Director and will be expected to adhere to the Excellence Ringette program guidelines. Coaches will receive training, development, leadership support, and mentorship as part of their participation in Excellence Ringette.

4.1. Team Staff Selection

The coaching application process will open in April and will conclude by May 31st. The Coach Selection Committee for the excellence program will be comprised of individuals who have demonstrated knowledge and expertise in coaching, high performance sport, or sport organization governance. Where possible, Ringette BC will strive to achieve diversity amongst the panel members. Excellence and Team BC Staff selection will otherwise follow Ringette BC's established process for Coach Selection.

Coaches wishing to be considered for Team BC will declare this on their Excellence Application, or via written expression to the Program Director by the Excellence Ringette Program Coach Application deadline. The Head Coach of Team BC U16 and U19 will be selected by August 1st each season. The Head Coach can then recommend Team Staff from the remaining pool of Excellence Ringette Program coaches for review and approval and by the Selection Committee.

4.2. Certification

Team staff is defined as all coaching staff including the Coach-in-Training, Team Manager, Trainers and Sport Science personnel. Team staff that are able to access 'field of play' are defined in competition technical packages.

The minimum certification requirements for a U16 and U19 CRC teams are as below:

Position	Coaching Level Required	Concussion Training	Respect in Sport or Equivalent	Comp Dev Module
Head Coach	CI Certified	Required	Required	1 required
Assistant Coach	CI Certified	Required	Required	1 required
Coach-in-Training	CI Trained	Required	Required	n/a

All team staff must have completed a criminal record check and participated in a screening process as per Ringette BC Policy.

5. Canadian Ringette Championships Teams – Team BC

5.1. U16 and U19 Team BC CRC Teams

The CRC Teams for U16 and U19 will be named by September 15th of each playing season. Athletes will have an opportunity to express their intent to evaluate for the Team BC CRC teams during the excellence program registration and screening process. The U16 and U19 Teams representing BC at CRCs will be made up of athletes from around the province.

The CRC athletes will participate on Zone Teams during the season starting in September. All Zone athletes are required to register and play with a Zone team in addition to participating with their CRC teams. The Zone team acts as the athletes additional training ground.

Athletes will be eligible to participate in the Zone Provincial Championships. However, athletes playing on CRC teams are not eligible to go to Western Canadian Ringette Championships. If a CRC athlete is unable to commit to both a Zone team and the Team BC CRC team the athlete will need to submit a detailed exemption request in writing to the Program Director.

5.2. Team BC CRC Team Season Calendar

Team BC CRC athletes will train following a similar model to the Canada Winter Games team training model. The members of the team will regularly participate on a Zone team and the athletes will participate in training weekends and tournaments with their Team BC Coaches and teammates.

Team Staff, in consultation with the Ringette BC Program Director, will confirm the training schedule by August of each playing season to ensure that any athlete that is selected clearly understands the season schedule.

The schedule may shift to adapt to yearly changes in competition schedules, athlete needs, and other conflicts that may arise each season. Additional training camps may be added if the Team Staff feel it is necessary for CRC preparation and aligns with LTAD principles. Athletes and families will be informed of changes well in advance.

All Team BC CRC athletes will attend the Excellence training camps in addition to their team only training camps to maximize training opportunities.

A **tentative** calendar for CRC athletes would be as follows:

March / April	Excellence Ringette Program Orientations
May	Registration & Intake
July	Excellence Training Camp 1
August	Excellence Training Camp 2
	Team BC Orientations
September	Team BC Selected
October	CRC Team Training Camp 1
November	CRC Team Tournament 1
December	CRC Team Training Camp 2
	Excellence Training Camp 3
January	CRC Team Tournament 2
February	CRC Team Tournament 3
March	CRC Team Training Camp 4
April	Canadian Ringette Championships

5.3. Team Finances

Excellence Ringette program costs and finances will be separate from the Team BC CRC teams. One of the guiding principles of Excellence Ringette is to ensure the program is as economical and accessible as possible. A comprehensive budget will be provided prior to the August Excellence Camp that will include the season schedule and estimated costs of the program. Teams are encouraged to fundraise and locate sponsorship to help offset costs of the program.

The program budget will be set by Ringette BC and the Ringette BC Program Director will oversee the program finances. Participants will be made aware of any changes to the program budget and will receive a final year end statement following Canadian Ringette Championships.

A Team Budget will include athlete and coach travel, tournament fees, operational costs (ice, gym, referees, coaches travel), administration, uniforms and walk-out wear, training camps and sport science (psychology, athletic therapy, fitness trainer).

5.4. Training

The Team BC CRC teams for the U16 and U19 divisions will train on the same event weekends to ensure that access to facilities and/or sport science personnel is maximized. NRL athletes that are participating in Excellence Ringette will be invited to attend team training weekends and Excellence Ringette training weekends. These athletes will need to ensure they provide commitments well in advance of scheduling.

The teams will meet in designated locations. The locations will be determined based on the proportionality of the team where feasible, in as well as availability facilities and resources.

6. Canada Winter Games

For the 2022/2023 season, athletes named to Team BC for the 2023 Canada Winter games will be required to participate in the Excellence Ringette Program. These athletes will not be eligible to participate on Zone Teams for the current season. For more information on the 2023 Canada Winter Games Program, refer to the 2023 Canada Winter Games Program Guidelines.

7. Appendix 1 – Program Responsibilities

The general responsibilities and/or leadership for specific areas of responsibility are as in the table below:

	Ringette BC	Leagues	Clubs	Head Coach	Team Staff
Program Guidelines	X				
Program Calendar	X				
Excellence Coach Selection	X				
Team BC Staff Selection	X				
Team BC Staff Approval	X				
Player Registration	X				
Excellence Athlete Intake	X				
Team BC Player Evaluations				X	X
Team BC Formation				X	X
Team BC Roster				X	X
Team BC Budget	X			X	
Tournament Registration	X				
Ice and Facility Booking	X			X	X
Ice Allocation				X	X
Training Camp Logistics	X			X	X
Discipline (Staff/ Players/Parents)	X				
Referee Development	X				
Referee Payment	X				
Coach Development	X				

8. Appendix 2 – Program Governance and Operations

The general responsibilities and/or leadership for specific areas of responsibility are as in the table below:

