

**The Southern Sports Academy (SSA)** is a non-profit organisation that assists young athletes from the region to achieve sporting excellence. SSA supports athlete development in a holistic manner and recognises the value of education. SSA expects athletes to be attending school or tertiary education, meaningfully employed, or undertaking other educational or training opportunities.

The SSA Para-Sports program is designed to remove barriers for para-athletes in regional areas and provide support to pre-elite youth para-athletes in any sport. Programs are designed to complement and elevate an athlete's current training program. Athletes can expect support relevant to their sport in a manner relative to their para-athlete classification.

## Who can nominate for the SSA 2024 Para-Sports athlete program?

- Athletes must be turning 13-18 years of age in 2024. *Special consideration may be given to some athletes falling outside of this age limit due to the nature of para-sport. This remains subject to the approval of SSA in consultation with Paralympics Australia.*  
Have an eligible physical, vision, and/or intellectual impairment for Para-sport, based on previous national or provisional classification. [https://www.paralympic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/PA\\_Para-Sport\\_WhatImpairments\\_A4\\_new\\_May23.pdf](https://www.paralympic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/PA_Para-Sport_WhatImpairments_A4_new_May23.pdf)
- Be representing at a state or national level in one or more of the 28 para-sports and events competed in at the Paralympic Games. <https://www.paralympic.org.au/play-para-sport/>
- Be representing at a state or national level within their Para-sport or show appropriate talent potential as determined by the NSO for their sport and Paralympic Australia.
- Must be living or attending a school within the SSA catchment area.

## How are selections made?

- Athletes wishing to be considered for a Para-Sports athlete program must complete the SSA nomination form before the closing date/time.
- Being an athlete in a previous SSA program does not guarantee selection.
- Each applicant is assessed on their application. SSA may contact relevant sports associations to verify sporting results.
- A list of selected athletes is placed on the SSA website and athletes are advised by email.
- Offers must be accepted by the due date or the offer may be withdrawn.

## What is included in the program?

- **STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING** - The main component of the Para-Sports program is support with Strength and Conditioning sessions in the athlete's hometown. SSA will organise/support weekly gym sessions for athletes in our programs
- **ATHLETE EDUCATION** – education sessions that cover topics including sports psychology, nutrition, load management and recovery practices will be conducted throughout the year at events (orientation/camps) and/or online via zoom
- **PARTICIPATION IN SSA EVENTS** – this includes major events with the SSA Para-Sports squad such as camps and education sessions as well as inclusion in academy wide events such as Orientation and the Awards night.

## What is expected of an athlete?

- Para-Sports athletes are expected to attend SSA orientation (Date to be confirmed), WRAS presentation evening (Date to be confirmed) and events as negotiated with SSA.
- SSA athletes are expected to adhere to the SSA Code of Behaviour policy, participate to the best of their ability, display exemplary behaviour, show enthusiasm, and maintain high dress standards.
- SSA athletes are expected to commit to improving their physical profile and should be aware that this includes undertaking physical activities and testing. Athletes are also expected to undertake a strength and conditioning training program.

## What does the Para-Sports athlete program cost?

Compulsory uniform – SSA polo shirt, training singlet, training shorts, white socks and hoodie. Cost is approximately \$200