



National Umpiring  
Development Pathway -  
Talent Identification  
2023



2023 V.1

The National Umpiring Development Pathway was established by the AFL in 2023 and is based on an athlete development framework developed by the Australian Institute of Sport.

The FTEM (Foundation, Talent, Elite & Mastery) framework is internationally recognised and utilised by many national sporting organisations in Australia and overseas.

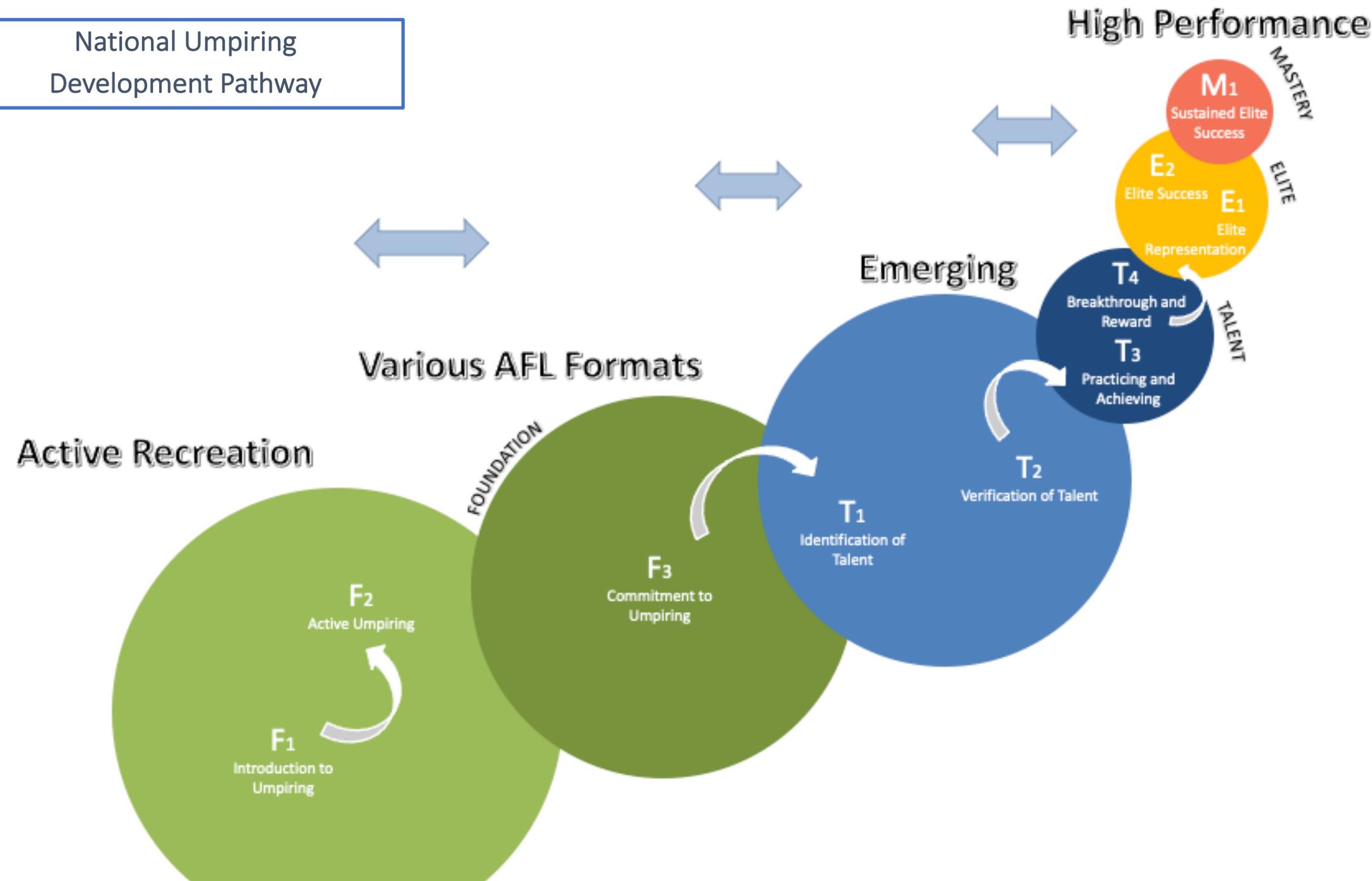
The National Umpiring Development Pathway aims to simplify a complex pathway, provide a common pathway and language, and facilitate open and regular communication between Umpires, Umpire coaches, and administrators.

A key feature of the framework is its flexibility, with Umpires able to move within the pathway according to their motivations and aims. Umpires therefore never drop out of the pathway but rather move to a competition that better suits their current requirements.

Find out more about FTEM – [link](#).



National Umpiring  
Development Pathway



The AFL National Umpiring Development Pathway includes an “Elite Umpiring Profile” – a list of 11 attributes that underpin sustained success for an Umpire.

The development and progression of these attributes have been defined at each phase of the Pre-Elite and Elite pathways.



		FTEM Stage	PRE-ELITE				ELITE
		FTEM Phase	Demonstration of Potential	Verification of talent	Practising and achieving	Break-through and reward	Elite Representation
			T <sub>1</sub>	T <sub>2</sub>	T <sub>3</sub>	T <sub>4</sub>	E <sub>1</sub>
ELITE UMPIRING PROFILE	Self-driven Learner	Basic Capability	Intermediate Capability	Advanced Capability	Expert Capability		
	Goals Focused						
	Well Balanced						
	Mentally Agile						
	Team Focused						
	Footy IQ						
	Smart Mover						
	Accurate Decision Maker						
	Technically Skilled						
	Game Manager						
Body Manager							

# National Umpiring Development Pathway (FTEM)

## Elite Umpiring Profile Capability Matrix

	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced	Expert
<b>Self-Driven Learner</b>	Is learning how to identify strengths and development areas.	Recognises some strengths and development areas independently but generally requires the feedback and intervention of their coach(es) to accurately identify all of these and to ensure they remain focused on their development plan.	Recognises their strengths and development areas with some assistance from their coach(es) and takes personal responsibility for their development plan and proactively identifies and seeks resources including coaches and subject matter experts to improve performance.	Recognises their strengths and development areas autonomously through honest self-reflection, takes personal responsibility for their development plan and proactively identifies and seeks resources including coaches and subject matter experts to improve performance.
<b>Goals Focused</b>	Is learning how to set goals and actions to improve performance.	Understands how to set goals and actions to improve performance and is developing the ability to assess what these should be as well as the ability to consistently complete the actions to achieve the goals.	Assesses development goals and actions with some assistance from their coach(es) and is motivated to achieve these by completing all actions committed to.	Regularly assesses development goals and actions autonomously and is highly motivated to achieve these by completing all actions committed to in a timely manner.
<b>Mentally Agile</b>	Is learning mental skills and strategies to remain resilient when faced with difficult challenges.	Understands and utilises some mental skills strategies and is developing their ability to be consistently resilient when faced with difficult challenges.	Utilises multiple mental skills strategies and consistently responds with resilience when faced with difficult challenges.	Consistently utilises performance psychology strategies and support services to ensure a resilient response when faced with difficult challenges and high-pressure stressful environments.
<b>Well Balanced</b>	Is learning how to manage time, establish routines and maintain a healthy life balance.	Understands the importance of and is developing the ability to manage their time and maintain a healthy balance of umpiring, work/study and family/friends.	Manages their time successfully and is fully engaged in multiple commitments including umpiring, work/study and family/friends maintaining a healthy balance between them.	Manages their time successfully remaining fully engaged in multiple commitments including umpiring/travel, work/study and family/friends and is maintaining a healthy balance between them despite increasing expectations in each.
<b>Team Focused</b>	Is learning the role they play within the team and how their behaviours may impact the group culture.	Understands how their behaviours may impact the group culture, is developing their role predictability to enhance team performance, and encourages their peers to be the best they can be.	Plays a predictable role within the team and contributes to a positive culture by committing to the group values and having genuine care for others.	Elevates team performance and culture by playing a predictable role within the team, providing constructive feedback and having genuine care for peers and coach(es) and role modelling the values of the group.
<b>Footy IQ</b>	Is learning how to recognise patterns of play to assist in with anticipation.	Developing the ability to read the play and anticipate what is most likely to happen next based on some experience and exposure to competitions and teams.	Uses preparation and their experience for understanding game context, player behaviour and team tendencies to successfully read the play and anticipate what is most likely to happen next.	Elevates team performance by using preparation and their extensive experience in multiple competitions for understanding game context, player behaviour and team tendencies to successfully read fast-paced play and anticipate what is most likely to happen next.
<b>Smart Mover</b>	Is learning movement and positioning skills to increase the likelihood of accurate decision making.	Developing their understanding and consistency of when and where to move to achieve optimal positioning to ensure accurate decision making	Understands when and where to move and generally achieves optimal positioning to ensure accurate decision making without relying on athleticism.	Understands when and where to move and consistently achieves optimal positioning in high-pressure fast paced games to ensure accurate decision making without relying on athleticism.
<b>Accurate Decision Maker</b>	Has a basic understanding of the laws of the game and is learning decision-making process.	Developing their decision-making accuracy (including non-decisions) and their ability to explain decision-making process concisely and accurately to others.	Delivers accurate decision making (including non-decisions) in most games and can explain the decision-making process concisely and accurately to others.	Elevates team performance by delivering highly accurate decision making (including non-decisions) in high pressure fast paced games and can explain decision-making process concisely and accurately to others.
<b>Technically Skilled</b>	Has a basic level of discipline-specific skills and is learning how to improve them in training and matches.	Developing their discipline-specific skills and their consistency in executing them in games.	Executes discipline-specific skills at a high level consistently.	Elevates team performance by executing discipline-specific skills consistently in high-pressure fast paced games to an elite level.
<b>Game Manager</b>	Is learning how to manage games and the processes that their role is responsible for.	Developing their game management skills and their consistency in executing the processes their role is responsible for.	Manages games and the processes their role is responsible for with composure, common sense and appropriate interactions.	Elevates team performance by managing high-pressure fast paced games and the processes their role is responsible for with composure, common sense and appropriate interactions.
<b>Body Manager</b>	Is learning how to manage their body and the required behaviours that help prevent injury and/or manage injury appropriately.	Understands the basics of managing their body for performance and is developing the consistent behaviours that help prevent injury and/or manage injury appropriately.	Prioritises sleep, hydration and nutrition to aid performance and demonstrates consistent behaviours that help prevent injury and/or manage injury appropriately.	Prioritises sleep, hydration and nutrition to aid performance despite multiple commitments and increasing expectations and demonstrates elite behaviours that help prevent injury and/or manage injury appropriately.

The Talent (Pre-Elite) stage of the National Umpiring Development Pathway consist of Umpires that are appointed to matches in the WAFL and Talent Competitions.

The primary purpose of the State League (WAFL) program is to identify Umpires who demonstrate potential (according to the Elite Umpiring Profile) and support their commitment to developing and refining their craft.

	TALENT (PRE-ELITE) WAFL & TALENT COMPETITIONS		
	Development Squad	Talent Academy	High Performance Team
An Umpire is:	Demonstrating early potential	Developing and verifying potential	Committed to developing and refining their craft
Regular Training Environment:	Specific group learning and competition exposure	Specific group learning and competition exposure	Individually focussed learning and increased competition exposure
Capabilities Required:	Demonstration of early talent indicators at a basic level or higher	Consistent demonstration at an intermediate level or higher of the elite umpiring profile	Consistent demonstration at an Advanced level or higher of the elite umpiring profile
Capabilities Assessed:	Training environment and match observations	Training environment and match observations	Training environment and match observations

## Talent (Pre-Elite) Squads

### Development Squads - Selection Criteria

To be considered for selection to the WAFL Development Squads, Umpires should meet the following criteria:

- Be 15 years of age or older;
- Hold the appropriate level of Umpire accreditation, or working towards it;
- Have been assessed as displaying or progressing to the Basic attributes of the Elite Umpiring Profile.

### Talent Academies - Selection Criteria

To be considered for selection to the WAFL Talent Academies, Umpires should meet the following criteria:

- Hold the appropriate level of Umpire accreditation, or working towards it;
- Be a Development Squad Umpire or being umpiring in senior age competitions; and
- Have been assessed as displaying or progressing to the Intermediate attributes of the Elite Umpiring Profile.





PRE-ELITE  
TALENT ID  
ATTRIBUTES



**ELITE  
UMPIRING  
PROFILE**

## ON-FIELD

### **Smart Mover**

- F: generally attempts to be side on with appropriate distance from the contest.
- B: generally attempts to be positioned at the appropriate distance from play.
- G: understands when to be online, under flight or behind the ball.

### **Accurate Decision Maker**

- F: demonstrates a basic understanding of key Laws; such as general play, holding the ball and marking contests.
- B: demonstrates a basic understanding of the Laws relating to when the football is out of play.
- G: demonstrates a basic understanding of all aspects relating to Law 16 – Scoring.

### **Technically Skilled**

- F: demonstrates a basic understanding of umpiring skills, such as using a loud sharp whistle and clear indications.
- B: demonstrates a basic understanding of umpiring skills, such as using a loud sharp whistle, clear indications and the throw-in technique.
- G: demonstrates a basic understanding of umpiring skills, such as using clear signals and maintaining focus.

### **Team Focused**

- F: operates effectively with other match umpires, including demonstrating a basic understanding of the two/three umpire system.
- B: operates effectively with other match umpires, including demonstrating a basic understanding of the two/three umpire system.
- G: operates effectively with other match umpires, including demonstrating a basic understanding of teamwork.

## OFF-FIELD

### **Coachable**

Responds positively to constructive feedback by actively listening and striving to implement feedback.

### **Aspirational**

Demonstrates a clear desire to progress their umpiring through their actions and words.

### **Honest**

Has authentic coaching conversations and is genuine in their desire to learn and develop their umpiring.