

U26 Squad Leader Job Description

The U26 Squad, one of the four Junior Squads organised by the EBU, comprises the most promising bridge players in England in the 21-25 year age group. The role of the Squad Leader is to manage their development as bridge players capable of representing England on the international stage. This development encompasses technical skills, temperament and the ability to contribute as part of a team. The Squad sits alongside the two younger age group squads and the U26 Women's squad. The U26 Squad Leader will need to collaborate with the U21 Squad Leader to manage players moving up, and with the U26W Squad Leader to manage women players eligible for both squads.

The aim is to nominate U26 teams who will play fairly and strongly for England, and to produce a cohort of strong players who will enjoy a lifetime of bridge, and bring enjoyment of the game to others.

Major Task List:

- Managing the entire group of U26 squad members - including usually being available to respond to communications outside regular working hours.
- Nominating selections for international events to the Selection Committee.
- Providing regular reports to the Selection Committee on squad activities and player development.
- Collaborating with the Selection Committee's Junior Liaison Officer, and with other Squad Leaders.
- Organising on-line training and face-to-face training days and weekends. The Squad Leader will need to develop contacts in the bridge-playing community so as to be able to recruit high-standard volunteers. Training will need to meet the needs of a range of abilities and learning styles, and should be enjoyable for all while challenging the most able players.
- Managing squad player contracts.
- Managing squad expenses, in so far as delegated by the Selection Committee.
- Managing squad national tournament entries, including arranging Premier League teams.
- Maintaining awareness of all junior results (national and international) and identifying new potential junior squad players.

Other possible tasks:

- Acting as non-playing captain to the team at international events. The Squad Leader need not be NPC at every event: the role can be undertaken by another captain nominated by the Selection Committee.
- Team coaching. The Squad Leader may conduct some coaching themselves, and should recruit high-level volunteers as needed.
- Figurehead for junior development. As a high-profile figure in the junior game, the Squad Leader should consider how best they can use their profile for the wider good of junior development at all levels.
- Assisting the development of wider junior programs.

The EBU is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all squad leaders and junior coaches to share this commitment. Although primarily working with adults, this position is subject to enhanced DBS disclosure due to the position of trust that the candidate is in when accompanying a range of junior squads to national and international events, and training weekends. The candidate should be willing to undertake relevant safeguarding training.

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