

Charity number: 1050767  
Company number: 3124177

**UNITED KINGDOM SPORTS ASSOCIATION FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITY**  
(Operating as Sport Excel UK)

**DIRECTORS' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

**UNITED KINGDOM SPORTS ASSOCIATION FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITY**  
(Operating as Sport Excel UK)  
**CONTENTS**

---

	<b>Page</b>
Legal and administrative information	<b>1</b>
Directors report	<b>2 - 8</b>
Statement of financial activities	<b>9</b>
Balance Sheet	<b>10 &amp; 11</b>
Notes to the financial statements	<b>12 - 14</b>

**UNITED KINGDOM SPORTS ASSOCIATION FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITY**  
(Operating as Sport Excel UK)  
**LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

---

**STATUS**

**Company number** 3124177

**Charity number** 1050767

**Registered office** 20-22 Wenlock Road  
London  
N1 7GU

**Bankers** HSBC  
16 King Street  
Covent Garden  
London  
WC2E 8JF

## **DIRECTORS REPORT**

---

The Directors present their Annual Report together with the financial statements of the Charity for the year ended 31 March 2025.

### **Structure and Governance**

Sport Excel UK (registered charity name: United Kingdom Sports Association for People with Learning Disability) is a company limited by guarantee without share capital, operating across the UK as the recognised body for high-performance sport for athletes with intellectual impairment. This includes athletes with intellectual disability, Down syndrome, and autism.

The Charity is governed by a Board of Directors, who are both Directors under company law and Trustees under charity law. Trustees serving during the period were:

- Genevieve Gordon Thomson (Chair)
- Fiona Reid
- Gavin McLeod
- Lynne Glen
- Andrew Heffer

The Chief Executive continued to be Tracey McCillen, supported by voluntary colleagues, interns, and technical experts across eligibility, safeguarding, and sport.

The Board maintains a commitment to strong governance, equality, diversity, and inclusion, reflecting the Charity's mission and the National Equality Standard. Governance is supported by a committee structure including:

- Sport & Selection Committees
- National Eligibility Committee
- Welfare Committee
- Management Committee

The Charity continues to operate virtually, enabling UK-wide engagement while remaining cost-effective and accessible.

Sport Excel UK remains the only recognised Great Britain member of Virtus, and the only organisation in the UK authorised to evaluate and submit eligibility and classification applications to Virtus for international consideration and the body evaluating and granting UK level eligibility and consideration across sports in the UK. We are a voting member of Paralympics GB and recognised by UK Sport, although it is currently unfunded.

An induction framework for new trustees remains in place, providing access to key documents, governance materials, and meetings with the CEO and Chair.

### **Objectives and Activities**

Established in 1979, the Charity exists to:

## **DIRECTORS REPORT**

---

1. Relieve people with learning disability by facilitating access to sport and physical recreation at national and international level, including competitive opportunities that support their integration into society.
2. Relieve poverty and advance education, training, social development, and life skills for people with learning disability.

Our vision is:

*A society that enables people with intellectual impairment, Down syndrome, and autism to excel and achieve their full potential in the sport of their choice.*

Our mission is:

*To promote, facilitate and support talented sports people with intellectual disability, Down syndrome and autism in the UK to train, compete and excel in national and international sport.*

We use the term ‘intellectual impairment’ in sport which includes all three classifications of intellectual disability (class I11), Down syndrome (class I12), and autism (class I13).

### **Strategic Priorities**

Sport Excel UK continues to deliver against five strategic pillars:

- Eligibility and Classification
- Supporting Athletes, Talent, and Performance
- Leadership and Communication
- Changing the Culture
- Governance and Infrastructure

Our work is delivered through collaboration with a wide network of partners, including Scottish Disability Sport, Disability Sport Wales, Down Syndrome Swimming GB, Virtus, Paralympics GB multiple National Governing Bodies at UK and Home Country level, and multiple organisations’ across sport, disability, academia, and the commercial sector.

### **Success Highlights: 2024–25**

#### **Overview**

This has been a year of rebuilding momentum, expanding pathways, and strengthening Sport Excel UK’s essential role as the national leader for athletes with intellectual impairment, Down syndrome, and autism. Demand for support and classification continues to grow year-on-year, reflecting both increased participation and the trusted role of Sport Excel UK within the performance system.

This impact has been delivered despite the organisation remaining unfunded within the national high-performance system, underlining both the efficiency and necessity of Sport Excel UK’s work. This is driven by strong partnerships, committed volunteers, and a clear focus on athlete experience and fairness.

## **DIRECTORS REPORT**

---

Below are highlights from the year.

### **1. Eligibility and Classification – A Year of High Demand**

Eligibility and Classification remain a core and complex function of the Charity.

During 2024-25 we:

- Processed another year of record number of applications, reflecting increased engagement across athletics, swimming, tennis, judo, equestrian, golf, hockey, karate, taekwondo, .
- Strengthened collaboration with NGBs as we begin a new Paralympic and Virtus Global Games cycle.
- Sustained and expanded athlete and parent sessions and conversations to improve understanding of requirements, timelines, and international standards.
- Ensured full compliance with Virtus rules as the UK's mandated body.
- Continued to implement quality control procedures led by our National Eligibility Officers, ensuring robust, fair, and transparent evaluations.

This work remains essential. Without Sport Excel UK, British athletes would not be able to access Virtus Championships, IPC pathway opportunities, many NGB performance programmes and many local, regional, and national competitions in the UK.

### **2. Great Britain Team Representation**

In this reporting year, multi-sport activity provided additional opportunities and some memorable results for British athletes.

Sport Excel UK supported Great Britain representation across multiple international competitions during the year, delivering both performance success and meaningful athlete experiences and development both on and off the field of play. We saw athletes grow in confidence, independence, and real life skills.

At the *2024 Virtus European Athletics Championships*, British athletes achieved an outstanding medal haul, including gold, silver and bronze medals, alongside numerous personal best performances. The team demonstrated strength in depth, with both experienced athletes and new entrants contributing to success.

At the *2024 Virtus World Tennis Championships*, Great Britain secured multiple gold medals and an overall medal tally exceeding ten podium finishes. This success reflects the strength of partnership working with the Lawn Tennis Association and the effectiveness of the pathway system.

Equestrian continued to demonstrate growth and consistency. Across three rounds of the *Virtus Dressage Video Championships*, British riders consistently achieved top five placings, with several athletes winning their classes outright. The pathway supported a blend of emerging, young, and experienced riders.

## **DIRECTORS REPORT**

---

At the *2024 Virtus Open Regional Dressage Championships* in Sparsholt, Great Britain achieved Team success taking the top gold spot, and crowned Champions, alongside individual podium finishes, further demonstrating progression within the sport.

While these competitions represent the pinnacle of performance, Sport Excel UK's work extends across the full pathway. The Charity supports athletes, families, and coaches from initial engagement where advice, guidance and a safe space for support is provided through to national and international competition, ensuring access, understanding, and opportunity across multiple sports.

### **3. Developing Pathways Across Sports**

Sport Excel UK continues to work collaboratively to strengthen and rebuild pathways across multiple sports and across the nations in the UK. This multi-sport footprint remains unique in the UK and reflects the Charity's commitment to enable athletes through participation to performance. It remains one of the strongest indicators of Sport Excel UK's public benefit and sector value.

Highlights include:

- Para-Equestrian: Growth in participation in video competitions and regional face to face Championships.
- Judo: Continued support to British Judo supporting international representation and domestic interest.
- Cricket: Ongoing collaboration with ECB recognising players with learning disability at international level and in developing the classification pathway.
- Tennis: Ongoing support and collaboration with the LTA enabling players to engage in activity and where appropriate excel to national and international levels.
- Table Tennis, Karate, Hockey, Equestrian, Swimming, Athletics, Golf, and others: Supporting athletes through eligibility, event preparation, and system navigation, providing advice and guidance.

### **4. Athlete, Parent, and Community Support**

The Charity continues to provide extensive support and guidance to athletes, families and coaches, responding to hundreds of enquiries and supporting complex welfare matters and family dynamics. This day-to-day support remains a central pillar of Sport Excel UK's work.

Highlights included:

- Responding to hundreds of enquiries from parents, athletes, and coaches.
- Supporting sensitive and complex welfare concerns through the Welfare Committee.
- Providing guidance to athletes who experienced exclusion, confusion, or barriers within the sports system.
- Continuing to strengthen trust with families and athletes, reflected in positive feedback and increased engagement.

## **DIRECTORS REPORT**

---

This personalised approach remains a defining strength, helping individuals navigate systems, the highs, and lows of getting involved in multiple sports and activities, all of which can often be complex and fragmented. Athlete experience is at the heart of what we do.

### **5. Influence, Leadership, and Representation**

The UK has continued to play a role internationally:

- UK representatives remained active across Virtus committees, sport directorates, eligibility leadership, and working groups.
- The Charity contributed to governance and policy discussions, advocating fairness, transparency, and strong integrity standards.
- Collaboration with key partners (including NGBs, disability organisations, and Paralympics GB) continued to position Sport Excel UK as a respected lead body in this field.

This influence ensures that British athletes' voices are heard and that the UK shapes global best practice.

### **6. International Partnership: Golf Ireland and European Disability Golf Association (EDGA)**

The partnership established in 23/24 with Golf Ireland and EDGA has continued to develop positively. Sport Excel UK has delivered eligibility and classification services for Irish players, enabling access to additional opportunities, including internationally through EDGA.

Sport Excel UK continues to fill an Irish national governance gap and enables access to Virtus eligibility and the WR4GD world ranking pathway for the first time. Through the Memorandum of Understanding the relationship is evolving into broader strategic discussions, demonstrating growing international recognition of Sport Excel UK's expertise, and creating opportunities for further collaboration.

The continued expansion of our multi-sport footprint into golf, demonstrates the exportability of our model to support nations without a Virtus member body, and further reinforces Sport Excel UK's influence and leadership across Europe.

### **Operations and Income Generation**

Sport Excel UK continues to operate through a voluntary workforce, led by the CEO and supported by trustees, volunteer sport leads, psychologists, welfare advisors, interns, and administrative support.

Partnerships with Red Ink Creative, Tactic Connect, Stewart Hindley & Co., Kemlyn Associates and others continue to provide vital pro-bono or low cost professional support.

Income generation remains challenging within a sports system focused on Paralympic funding and funding through National Governing Bodies of Sport in that system. The Charity continues to explore partnerships, membership models, and commercial opportunities, all of which are challenging to develop given the current limitations of a volunteer-run structure.

The Charity reported no serious incidents during this period.

## **DIRECTORS REPORT**

---

### **Public Benefit**

Sport Excel UK delivers significant public benefit by promoting equality, providing access to sport and physical activity, supporting wellbeing and mental health, and challenging structural inequalities impacting some of the most vulnerable people in our society and often from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

It creates opportunities for individuals with intellectual disability, Down syndrome and autism to achieve, belong and be recognised for something they can do well, rather than what they cannot do. It helps to reduce loneliness, isolation amongst disabled individuals and their families who far too often have to 'fight' the system and are bereft of a safe space to share their stories, frustrations and receive support.

Sport Excel UK's public benefit can be highlighted as:

- Advocating equality and fairness in sport for people with intellectual disability, Down syndrome, and autism.
- Providing essential classification, support, and pathways that would not otherwise exist.
- Promoting wellbeing, confidence, life skills, and social inclusion through sport.
- Challenging structural inequalities in UK sport by giving athletes a platform to excel.
- Challenging misconceptions around athletes with intellectual disability, down syndrome and autism and providing space or their voices to be heard.
- Contributing to safer, more inclusive practices within NGBs and the wider system.
- Supporting families, creating a sense of community, and belonging.

### **Reserves Policy**

The Charity seeks to build reserves equivalent to at least three months of operating costs. Progress remains gradual due to ongoing income constraints, but efforts continue to strengthen the Charity's financial resilience.

### **Risk Management**

The Directors review strategic, operational, and financial risks on a regular basis. Systems are in place to identify risks early and take mitigating action through the Charity's governance processes. Key risks include sustainable funding, volunteer capacity, and increased demand for services.

### **Acknowledgements**

The Board extends sincere thanks to:

- All athletes and families who engage with Sport Excel UK
- The voluntary CEO, Tracey McCillen
- Members of the National Eligibility Committee, especially Dr Sophie Doswell and Dr Jason Lines and other sub-committee members.
- Our volunteer colleagues, interns, and placement students
- Red Ink Creative, Tactic Connect, Stewart Hindley & Co., Kemlyn, and all pro-bono supporters
- National Governing Bodies, Other Organisations and Virtus partners across the UK and globally
- Our dedicated staff and volunteers who support GB Teams and athletes every day

**DIRECTORS REPORT**

---

Most importantly, we again congratulate the many athletes across the UK who achieved personal milestones, represented Great Britain either with Sport Excel UK, through their National Governing Body or via Paralympics GB as they compete in Virtus, IPC or Federation events, or simply rediscovered confidence in sport this year. Their achievements continue to inspire us, drive us, and re-affirm the need and purpose of Sport Excel UK to enable talented athletes from grassroots to performance level to participate, compete and excel in sport.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD



Genevieve Gordon Thomson  
Chair of the Board  
Sport Excel UK

**UNITED KINGDOM SPORTS ASSOCIATION FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITY**  
 (Operating as Sport Excel UK)  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
<b>Income</b>			
Grants, donations and other income	2	35,472	80,686
Investment income	3	24	20
<b>Total income</b>		<u>35,496</u>	<u>80,706</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
GB Team Programme		21,221	85,608
Office costs		538	481
Printing, postage & stationery		0	453
Telephone & internet		132	125
Information technology costs		252	0
Subscriptions, membership & service fee		2,817	3033
Storage & Archives		6,381	7,991
Bank charges		66	360
Insurance and other expenses		1,625	986
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<u>33,032</u>	<u>99,037</u>
<b>Net surplus / (deficit) for the year</b>		2,464	(18,331)
Total funds brought forward		2,377	3,651
Advance income received			17,057
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<u><u>4,841</u></u>	<u><u>2,377</u></u>

The notes on pages 12 to 14 form an integral part of these financial statements

**UNITED KINGDOM SPORTS ASSOCIATION FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITY**  
 (Operating as Sport Excel UK)  
**BALANCE SHEET**  
**AS AT 31 MARCH 2025**

	Notes	£	2025 £	£	2024 £
<b>Fixed Assets</b>					
Tangible assets	5		1		1
<b>Current Assets</b>					
Cash at bank and in hand		6,290		3,891	
Debtors and prepayments		<u>250</u>		<u>385</u>	
		6,540		4,276	
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	6	<u>1,700</u>		<u>1,900</u>	
<b>Net Current Assets</b>			4,840		2,376
			<u>4,841</u>		<u>2,377</u>
			<u><u>4,841</u></u>		<u><u>2,377</u></u>
<b>Funds</b>					
Unrestricted funds			4,841		2,377
Restricted funds			0		0
			<u>4,841</u>		<u>2,377</u>
			<u><u>4,841</u></u>		<u><u>2,377</u></u>

The notes on pages 12 to 14 form an integral part of these financial statements

**UNITED KINGDOM SPORTS ASSOCIATION FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITY**  
**(Operating as Sport Excel UK)**  
**BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)**  
**AS AT 31 MARCH 2025**

---

Audit Exemption Statement

For the year ended 31 March 2025 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

the members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the period in question in accordance with section 476.

the directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

these accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board on 30th March 2026



.....  
Genevieve Gordon Thomson  
**Director**

**The notes on pages 12 to 14 form an integral part of these financial statements**

---

**UNITED KINGDOM SPORTS ASSOCIATION FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITY**  
**(Operating as Sport Excel UK)**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

---

## **1 Accounting policies**

### **1.1 Accounting convention**

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention and follow the recommendations in "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice" issued in October 2000.

The charity has taken advantage of the exemption in FRS1 from the requirement to produce a cash flow statement because it is a small charity.

### **1.2 Income**

Voluntary income is received by way of donations and gifts and is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable. Gifts donated for resale are included as income when they are sold. Donated assets are included at the value to the charity where this can be quantified and a third party is bearing the cost. The value of services provided by volunteers has not been included.

Income from investments is included in the year in which it is receivable.

### **1.3 Expenditure**

Expenditure is recognised in the year in which it is incurred.

Fundraising costs are those incurred in seeking voluntary contributions and do not include the costs of disseminating information in support of the charitable activities.

Support costs are those costs incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity and include project management.

Management and administration costs are those incurred in connection with the administration of the charity and compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements.

### **1.4 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation**

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost less estimated residual value of each asset over its expected useful life, as follows:

Fixtures, fittings and equipment	25% straight line
----------------------------------	-------------------

**UNITED KINGDOM SPORTS ASSOCIATION FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITY**  
 (Operating as Sport Excel UK)  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>2. Grants, donations &amp; other income</b>		
Fund raising & donations	1,296	264
Classification	6,474	2,726
UK squad competitions	24,950	68,735
Other income	2,753	8,961
	<u>35,472</u>	<u>80,686</u>
	<u><u>35,472</u></u>	<u><u>80,686</u></u>
<b>3. Investment Income</b>		
Deposit interest	<u>24</u>	<u>20</u>
	<u><u>24</u></u>	<u><u>20</u></u>
<b>4. Operating surplus / (deficit)</b>		
The operating surplus / deficit is stated after charging:		
Depreciation and other amounts written off tangible assets	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	<u><u>0</u></u>	<u><u>0</u></u>
<b>5. Tangible fixed assets</b>	<b>Furniture and computer equipment</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Cost</b>		
At 1 April 2024	3,711	3,711
Additions	0	0
At 31 March 2025	<u>3,711</u>	<u>3,711</u>
<b>Depreciation</b>		
At 1 April 2024	3,710	3,710
Charge for the year	0	0
At 31 March 2025	<u>3,710</u>	<u>3,710</u>
<b>Net book value</b>		
At 31 March 2025	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

**UNITED KINGDOM SPORTS ASSOCIATION FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITY**  
**(Operating as Sport Excel U K)**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

---

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>6. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>		
Creditors and accruals	1,700	1,900
	<u>1,700</u>	<u>1,900</u>
	<u><u>1,700</u></u>	<u><u>1,900</u></u>