

## SECTION 4: POLICIES



### 4.22 Neutral Athlete Policy

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#### 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Unless otherwise stated in the Entry Information, entry to Virtus events is strictly restricted to athletes and teams who are endorsed by Virtus Member Organisations. Such organisations will be in good standing with Virtus and will have observed all policies and procedures in respect of entry.
- 1.2 However there are circumstances where Virtus may consider receiving entries from athletes and teams who cannot meet this criteria due to extenuating circumstances. Such circumstances may include athletes from nations who are affected by war, poverty, unfair and inequitable selection of athletes (for example nations who discriminate against female athletes), where the member organisation is suspended, or where it is deemed that there is little or no opportunity to form a member organisation.
- 1.3 This policy provides an overview of the circumstances in which Virtus may permit an athlete or team of athletes to compete on a neutral basis where normal entry criteria cannot be fulfilled.
- 1.4 All decisions made under this policy will be made on a strictly case by case basis and a decision for one athlete does not set or form precedence for a subsequent athlete, even where the circumstances may appear similar.
- 1.5 All costs associated with an event entry made under this policy (including but not limited to athlete eligibility and assessment, kit and equipment, travel and event entry) will be met by the athlete or team concerned. Virtus and event organisers will not be liable for any costs arising from an event entry.
- 1.6 Virtus will waive the eligibility application/annual licence fee (as set out in the Fee Schedule) for athletes entering Virtus events under this policy.

#### 2 APPLYING FOR NEUTRAL ENTRY

- 2.1 Athletes and teams wishing to receive a Neutral Entry must submit their request using the attached form as early as possible and at least 3 months before the published Final Entry Deadline of the competition. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.
- 2.2 Applications must set out in detail:
  - a) The number of athletes, staff and other team members who comprise the entry
  - b) The disciplines in which the athletes propose to compete
  - c) The circumstances/justification for the neutral entry and reasons why the normal entry criteria cannot be fulfilled.
  - d) Who will manage the process of athlete eligibility
  - e) How entry, travel and team kit will be funded

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- f) How insurance and legal responsibility for the team will be managed
  - g) How visa and other requirements will be organised
  - h) The difference that Neutral Entry will make to the development of sport for athletes with an intellectual impairment
- 2.3 Circumstances in which a Neutral Entry will be considered include, but are not limited to:
- a) Nations affected by war/displacement of people
  - b) Nations affected by poverty
  - c) Nations where there is a clear administrative obstacle to participation

## 3 NEUTRAL ATHLETE RULES

- 3.1 Virtus may accept up to three Neutral Athletes in each medal event on condition that they are qualified according to the entry criteria. If more than three Neutral Athletes achieve the Entry Standard, the three who have achieved the best qualifying performance or ranking place will be accepted.
- 3.2 Virtus will confirm the participation of all Neutral Athletes in writing having first verified their qualification status. In confirming the participation of any Neutral Athlete, Virtus may impose such conditions on their participation as it sees fit, including but not limited to the signature of a Neutral Athlete Agreement.
- 3.3 Each Neutral Athlete must be accompanied by a least one person who is accredited for the period of the event and is legally and financially responsible for the athlete. Virtus may at its discretion require further information to be provided about any nominated person before it gives its approval.
- 3.4 Neutral Athletes shall participate in the uniform clothing approved by the Virtus. This will include plain sports clothing with either no emblem or the Virtus emblem. Kit is available from Virtus, however this is at the cost of the athlete.
- 3.5 Neutral Athletes shall be represented at the Opening Ceremony and in all materials, programme etc by the name 'Virtus Neutral Athletes'. Neutral athletes will compete under the Virtus flag.
- 3.6 Medals shall be presented to the first three placed athletes in each individual event which may include Neutral Athletes. If a Neutral Athlete is the first placed athlete in an event, the Virtus anthem shall be played instead of the anthem of the Neutral Athlete's country.
- 3.7 Neutral Athletes and their accompanying persons are expected at all times to demonstrate the highest standards of behaviour at the event both on and off the field of play.
- 3.8 No national colours, flag, name (in any language or format) national emblem or other national symbol of the country of the Neutral Athlete shall be displayed by the athlete or their accompanying personnel
- 3.9 All other Virtus Rules and Procedures remain in force for Neutral athletes.

## 4 APPROVAL PROCESS

- 4.1 Each application will be considered by an Virtus panel comprising at least 3 members of the Governing Board representing 3 Regions.

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- 4.2 Decisions must be unanimous.
- 4.3 All decisions are final and there is no appeal process.
- 4.4 Decisions will be made on a case by case basis and approval/rejection of an application will not imply or create any form precedence with regards to a future application.

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Appendix 1 – Application form for Neutral Entry to Virtus events

Name of applicant:

Position/Capacity:

Email Address:

Phone Number:

Organisation Name:

Organisation Address:

Organisation Email Address:

Organisation website:

Please tell us about the organisation including its legal structure, aims and objectives:

Event in which entry is sought:

Dates

Anticipated team size

Male athletes :

Female athletes:

Team staff:

1. How will the team be managed?
2. Who will be legally responsible for the team?
3. Do all athletes appear on the Virtus Master List and are they licensed for competition?
4. How will the entry be funded (consider entry and travel costs):
5. Why is a Neutral Entry needed? Please provide a full explanation and justification of the circumstances

Please attach evidence that the qualification times have been achieved (if relevant)