

## The Vision:

The vision of this leaflet is to guide elite netball players through the transitioning process of retirement. Ultimately, informing athletes of...

- ◆ The advice which will support a more successful transition
- ◆ The importance of pre-retirement planning & preparation
- ◆ The resources available

## What is Athletic Retirement?

Athletic retirement is an inevitable process that marks the beginning of a transitioning period for athletes, following associated adjustments in behaviour it is common to experience changes in personal beliefs about oneself.

The commitment, routine and discipline created during an athlete's career can result in a strong athletic identity. Which often means athletes neglect prominent safeguards such as; education, family, peers and romantic relationships.

Exploring new personal objectives and priorities prior to retirement can reduce the negative and challenging experiences for an athlete during the transitioning process.

## Would you Like Support?

It can be a difficult decision to retire from netball, but preparation and prior planning are key to facilitating a positive transition.

To find out more about looking after your wellbeing and accessing organisations and support for your personal development contact your players association.

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# GUIDE TO RETIREMENT



## FOR ELITE NETBALL PLAYERS

Kirsty Watson

## the potential challenges?

The process of athletic retirement is often complicated and influenced by multiple factors.

The circumstances in which retirement transpires are commonly arranged into two categories:

1. **VOLUNTARY**- the degree of control an athlete has over their decision to retire. Generally, athletes who retire on their own terms encounter fewer challenges, which will allow for a more successful transition. For example, following a successful transition athletes' often experience a sense of alleviation and freedom.
2. **INVOLUNTARY**- this process is generally unanticipated, and the athlete has limited to no control over the decision process. This process commonly occurs following deselection or injury and, approximately 1 in 5 athletes have reported distressful experiences. For example, athletes may be more susceptible to psychological and emotional difficulties.

With what can be a personally challenging experience, you should begin to communicate and discuss concerns with your support system and begin to develop pre-retirement planning strategies.



# 1 in 5

For many athletes re organising personal and social objectives whilst progressively disengaging from netball may prove a more difficult experience for some.

**“I No longer feel a part of the team”** - losing social and emotional connections that athletes have developed over their time competing is common and can often be a source of distress.

**“It was out of my control”** -it is not uncommon to feel negative emotions following involuntary retirement, often impacting an athletes self-worth.

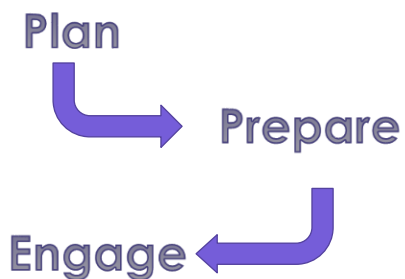
**“Netball was who I was...”** - acceptance in adjustments in self identity to that of previously being an athlete is often the most difficult challenge an athlete will face.

Acknowledging and discussing your personal feelings with your current support network may help.

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**Remember YOU are more than just a Netball Player**

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Engaging in Preparation and planning prior to retirement is fundamental to facilitating a positive transitioning experience, whilst enhancing an athletes health and wellbeing.

## Life After Sport:

### Positive Aspects of Retirement

Generally, athletes view retirement as a negative process, and many are under the impression that it may be a distraction from their current sporting goals and performance. However, retirement can be a positive experience and lead to multiple benefits, for example:

- > Allows for more time to be spent with family, friends and romantic relationships
- >More time to peruse opportunities and interests that were put on hold
- >More time to focus on personal and social objectives

As an athlete you already possess a large skill set beyond your chosen sport, therefore it is important that you understand how these skills can be transferred and positively impact your life following retirement.