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# TOKYO 2020 OLYMPIC GAMES QUALIFICATION SYSTEM, WEIGHTLIFTING

## PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

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### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Due to the cancellation and/or postponement of 2021 qualification events, it is obvious that the current Tokyo 2020 Qualification System cannot be implemented.

This paper provides a workable and logical solution for athletes and Member Federations in order to conclude qualification.

With only two weeks until the first qualifying events this year and recognising the IWF has not yet published an updated Qualification System, the authors have taken the initiative by developing an updated Qualification System reflecting fairness, certainty, and opportunity for eligible athletes.

Key elements of this updated Qualification System are as follows:

- **Minimal changes from the Qualification System that was developed by the IWF Sport Commission published in May 2020;**
- **Strengthen approach to Anti-Doping measures and Athlete Whereabouts information;**
- **Provide additional possibilities for athletes eligible for qualification to compete and improve their result in period 3.B.**
- **Provide a possibility for Member Federations to register to the virtual (or other qualification) event only athletes they wish to endorse for the final qualification.**

To achieve the above, the following minor amendments are proposed:

1. Qualification period extension until 31 May 2021;
2. The minimum of athlete participation events is reduced from six (6) to five (5), including a minimum of one (1) participation during period 1, period 2 and period 3.B;
3. For athletes that demonstrated an intention to qualify in an Olympic category by already competing once in the category in period 1, 2, and 3.A, the minimum participation in the Olympic category is reduced from two (2) to one (1);

If zero (0) participation in an Olympic category was completed in period 1, 2, and 3.A; two (2) participations in the same Olympic category are still required in period 3.B.;

4. A Gold level qualification event shall be held before 31 May 2021 in Jeddah, KSA (on the occasion of the 2021 IWF Junior World Championships) for athletes eligible for qualification born in 2000 and other athletes eligible for qualification who otherwise did not compete in their 2021 Continental Championships.
5. The **virtual Gold level event will be held on 31 May 2021** and shall provide all eligible athletes, **subject to Anti-Doping whereabouts compliance for this virtual event**, an opportunity to record a **virtual result**. Whereabout information shall be submitted as of 01 April 2021 until 31 May 2021.
6. The **virtual result** shall be drawn as an average (in ROBI points) from the best results (in ROBI points – Total results only) from period 1 and period 2 **or** from period 1, period 2 and period 3.A – whichever result is higher;
7. Participation in the **virtual Gold level** event to be held on 31 May 2021 will be counted as an official competition participation in period 3.B. But the result drawn from the virtual event will not be taken into consideration as an Olympic category participation;
8. In fairness to all eligible athletes, the calculation of the published virtual result will be made at the start of period 3.B but will be only added (if applicable) to an athlete's overall Absolute Ranking Points on 31 May 2021;
9. At the end of the qualification period; an athlete's final Absolute Ranking Points; subject to participation as required in point 3. above will be drawn from four (4) results (ROBI points for Total results only), including the result from the virtual event as required.

In applying these changes, the overall framework of the Qualification System remains unaltered but at the same time, provides a reasonable solution and tangible pathway for all eligible athletes to compete in period 3.B under the appropriate conditions harmonised with Anti-Doping and Athlete Whereabouts measures.

This is achieved by the competition participation at the qualifying events (e.g., Continental Championships) or the participation at the virtual Gold level event on 31 May 2021 – both of which require **mandatory compliance** with Anti-Doping and Athlete Whereabouts measures.

In making these recommendations, the authors noted the following:

- While removing all results from period 3 or minimising the eligibility criteria for the same period may appear to be fair and reasonable noting three (3) qualification events have been cancelled/postponed – this is in fact a wrong and high-risk approach given as a consequence, eligible athletes will not have to submit whereabouts information for several months until quota places are eventually issued.
- Furthermore, this approach is not aligned to the notion in providing athletes as much opportunity as possible to return physically to the competition platform.
- Only using final entries data from the 2020 Continental Championships (and other postponed events) no longer is applicable (and as such is high-risk) given the following reasons:
  - o Final entries data from cancelled and/or postponed qualifying events in 2020 were not fully available and never published by the IWF and therefore, has not been accessible to athletes and Member Federations for the purpose of analysis and;
  - o Given the athlete entry procedure for the *rescheduled* 2020 European Championships was reopened, this overall approach can no longer be considered 'like for like'.

## 2. KNOWN RISKS

A workable and logical solution for athletes and Member Federations is necessary, noting **it is impossible to implement the current Qualification System** due to the following reasons associated with COVID-19:

- a. Three (3) qualification events in period 3.B, including the Gold level 2020 Oceania Championships has been postponed/cancelled already;
- b. Health risks, international travel restrictions, and additional financial burdens (e.g., PCR tests and recommended single room accommodation) for athletes and Member Federations scheduled to compete in qualifying events;
- c. The known uncertainty surrounding whether qualifying events will actually be held despite the best endeavours of the host Member Federation and Organising Committee and;

- d. The possible limited / restricted participation of athletes and Member Federations in qualifying events due to other bona fide influences relating to coronavirus.

### 3. QUALIFICATION SYSTEM – MAY 2020

On 26 May 2020, the IOC approved the updated [qualification criteria](#) based on the *rescheduled* Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games (23 July to 8 August 2021). The updated Qualification System was endorsed by the IWF Executive Board on 15 April 2020 based solely on the recommendation of the IWF Sport Commission.

For completeness, the IWF Executive Board also proposed the following eligibility criteria to the IOC but this was rejected:

***‘In order to participate at the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020, all eligible athletes must participate in the/an IWF approved and hosted pre-Olympic Games camp’.***

### 4. OBJECTIVES AND OVERVIEW

It is recognised that any such recommendation does not provide nor cover all possible scenarios or situations and that no qualification procedure can be perfect in outcome, no matter how procedurally sound it may seem.

However, it is clear:

- a. The published Qualification System must be changed due to the postponement/cancellation of qualification events in period 3.B (including the Gold level Oceania Championships);
- b. Swift and decisive action is needed in the interest of athlete welfare;
- c. Athletes and Member Federations should be advised immediately if the participation status of the upcoming qualifying events is obligatory (in period 3.B) or optional;
- d. In order to demonstrate consistency for athletes and Member Federations, there must be as little change as possible to the Qualification System;

- e. The Qualification System must align as closely as possible to the original framework including its aims, ambitions, principles, and objectives;
- f. The allocation of quota places should reflect, where possible, the existing principles of the previous Qualification Systems as approved by the IOC Executive Board;
- g. IWF's Anti-Doping approach to protect the clean athlete should not be filtered or jeopardised in any way;
- h. Since the commencement of the Qualification System on 01 November 2018, athletes, coaches, and Member Federations have planned, in good faith, training regimes, competition programmes and projected high-performance outcomes aligned to this framework;
- i. There should be a best endeavour to ensure no eligible athlete is materially disadvantaged in the Qualification System by COVID-19 and its consequences;
- j. No change or amendment to the first period (01 November 2018 – 30 April 2019) or the second period (01 May 2019 – 31 October 2019) is necessary as these periods were not impacted by COVID-19;
- k. Since whereabouts information will be available for all eligible athletes until 31 May 2021, it is recommended the International Testing Agency conduct additional OOC testing until the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020;
- l. Any final modifications to the Qualification System must consider and address the possibility of future event cancellations and/or the restricted participation of athletes and Member Federations in qualifying events due to COVID-19 and;
- m. This paper endeavours to cover all possible future scenarios; e.g., in case no qualifying events are held until the end of the qualification period.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

In respecting the above but in particular the need to 'future proof' the Qualification System, the following is recommended to be adopted immediately:

- **Provide additional possibilities for athletes eligible for qualification to compete and improve their result in period 3.B.**

To achieve this, a **virtual result** from a **virtual event** shall be created.

The Gold level **virtual event** will be held on **31 May 2021** and shall provide all eligible athletes, subject to Anti-Doping whereabouts compliance for this virtual event, an opportunity to record a **virtual result**.

At the same time it also provides a possibility for Member Federations – as part of their internal selection – to register to the virtual (or other qualification) event only athletes they wish to endorse for the final qualification (in case there are multiple eligible athletes).

The **virtual result** shall be drawn as an average (in ROBI points) from the best results (in ROBI points – Total results only) from period 1 and period 2 or from period 1, period 2 and period 3.A – whichever result is higher.

In fairness to all eligible athletes, the calculation of the published virtual result will be drawn from available data at the start of period 3.B but will be only added (if applicable) to an athlete's overall Absolute Ranking Points on 31 May 2021.

In doing so, this provides a minimum guarantee of performance for all eligible athletes irrespective of possible event cancellations and/or restricted participation of athletes and Member Federations in qualifying events during period 3.B.

It also optimises the minimum of athlete participation events from six (6) to five (5), including a minimum of one (1) participation during period 1, period 2 and period 3.B.

**But, for completeness, recognising the result drawn from the virtual event will not be taken into consideration as an Olympic category participation.**

Following the objectives set out above, but in particular the need to make as little change as possible for eligible athletes, other recommendations are listed below.

EXISTING IWF QUALIFICATION SYSTEM	RECOMMENDATION
<p><b>C. ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY</b>  <b>2. Additional IF Eligibility Criteria</b></p> <p>c) For quota places attained via the IWF Absolute Ranking participation at Eligible Events during the Qualification period is required as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Participation at a minimum of six (6) Eligible Events</li> <li>ii. Participation at a minimum of one (1) Eligible Event at Period 1, Period 2 and Period 3.B: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Period 1: 01 November 2018 – 30 April 2019</li> <li>Period 2: 01 May 2019 – 31 October 2019</li> <li>Period 3 including Period 3.A and 3.B as below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.A: 01 November 2019 – 30 April 2020</li> <li>3.B: 01 October 2020 – 30 April 2021</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>iii. Participation at a minimum of one (1) Gold Level plus either one (1) Gold Level or one (1) Silver Level events</li> </ul>	<p><b>C. ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY</b>  <b>2. Additional IF Eligibility Criteria</b></p> <p>c) For quota places attained via the IWF Absolute Ranking participation at Eligible Events during the Qualification period is required as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Participation at a minimum of <b>five (5)</b> Eligible Events, <b>including the Virtual Event.</b></li> <li>ii. Participation at a minimum of one (1) Eligible Event at Period 1, Period 2 and Period 3.B: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Period 1: 01 November 2018 – 30 April 2019</li> <li>Period 2: 01 May 2019 – 31 October 2019</li> <li>Period 3 including Period 3.A and 3.B as below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.A: 01 November 2019 – 30 April 2020</li> <li>3.B: 01 October 2020 – <b>31 May 2021, including the Virtual Event and;</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>iii. Participation at a minimum of one (1) Gold Level plus either one (1) Gold Level or one (1) Silver Level events.</li> </ul>
<p><b>C. ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY</b>  <b>5. Eligible Events</b></p> <p>Period 3.B: 1 October 2020 – 30 April 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) All the cancelled, postponed qualification events from Period 3.A</li> <li>b) All like-for-like substitute competitions not organised in section 5. Period 3.B, a) above</li> </ul>	<p><b>C. ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY</b>  <b>5. Eligible Events</b></p> <p>Period 3.B: 1 October 2020 – <b>31 May 2021</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. All the cancelled, postponed qualification events from Period 3.A</li> <li>b. All like-for-like substitute competitions not organised in section 5. Period 3.B, a) above</li> <li>c. <b>A Gold level event held before 31 May 2021 in Jeddah, KSA (on the occasion of the 2021 IWF Junior World Championships) for athletes eligible for qualification born in 2000 and other athletes eligible for qualification who otherwise did not compete in their 2021 Continental Championships.</b></li> </ul>

	<p>d. Gold Level: Virtual Event – 31 May 2021 for athletes eligible for qualification that had a minimum of one (1) participation in period 1 and period 2.</p>
<p><b>E. QUALIFICATION REGULATIONS</b></p> <p>3. At the end of the qualification period; an athlete’s final Absolute Ranking Points; subject to participation in two (2) events in the same Olympic category will be drawn from four (4) results (ROBI points for Total results only):</p> <p>a) three (3) results, best one (1) from each period as per Paragraph C. 2. c) ii) (Period 1, Period 2 and Period 3) and;</p> <p>b) one (1) next best result.</p> <p>7. In the case an athlete has participated in more than one Olympic bodyweight category or a combination of both Olympic and non-Olympic categories during the qualification period, the same formula shall be applied in determining the athlete’s Absolute Ranking Points as detailed in paragraph E.2 and E.3</p> <p>(a) In the case of more than one Olympic bodyweight category, subject to the minimum participation of two (2) events in the same Olympic category during the qualification period, the NOC, in consultation with the Member Federation shall select the eligible</p>	<p><b>E. QUALIFICATION REGULATIONS</b></p> <p>3. At the end of the qualification period; an athlete’s <b>Final</b> Absolute Ranking Points will be drawn from four (4) results (ROBI points for Total results only), <b>including the result from the Virtual Event as required:</b></p> <p>a. three (3) results, best one (1) from each period as per Paragraph C. 2. c) ii) (Period 1, Period 2 and Period 3) and;</p> <p>b. one (1) next best result.</p> <p><b>A Final Absolute Ranking for an Olympic category is subject to:</b></p> <p>c. participation in one (1) event in an Olympic category during Period 1, 2, 3.A (1 November 2018 – 30 April 2020), or</p> <p>d. zero (0) participation in an Olympic category during Period 1, 2, 3.A (1 November 2018 – 30 April 2020) and two (2) participations in the same Olympic category during Period 3.B (1 October 2020 – 31 May 2021), <b>excluding the Virtual Event</b></p> <p>7. In the case an athlete has participated in more than one Olympic bodyweight category or a combination of both Olympic and non-Olympic categories during the qualification period, the same formula shall be applied in determining the athlete’s <b>Final</b> Absolute Ranking Points as detailed in paragraph E.2 and E.3</p> <p>(a) In the case of more than one Olympic bodyweight category, subject to the minimum participation <b>according to section E. 3. above</b> during the qualification period, the NOC, in consultation with the</p>

bodyweight category for such athlete by 12 May 2021. In the case the NOC does not select the bodyweight category by 12 May 2021, section E. 7. (b) shall be applied.

(b) In the case of more than one Olympic bodyweight category and in case the NOC does not select the bodyweight category according to section E. 7. a), the quota place shall be allocated to the category from which the athlete has attained the highest ranking in Total (kg); subject to the minimum participation of two (2) events in the same Olympic category during the qualification period'

(c) In the case of a combination of both Olympic and non-Olympic categories and in case the NOC does not select the bodyweight category according to section E. 7. a), the quota place shall be allocated to the Olympic bodyweight category from which the athlete has attained the highest ranking in Total (kg); subject to the minimum participation of two (2) events in the same Olympic category during the qualification period.

Member Federation shall select the eligible bodyweight category for such athlete by 12 May 2021. In the case the NOC does not select the bodyweight category by 12 May 2021, section E. 7. (b) shall be applied.

(b) In the case of more than one Olympic bodyweight category and in case the NOC does not select the bodyweight category according to section E. 7. a), the quota place shall be allocated to the category from which the athlete has attained the highest ranking in Total (kg); subject to the minimum participation according to section E. 3. above during the qualification period'

(c) In the case of a combination of both Olympic and non-Olympic categories and in case the NOC does not select the bodyweight category according to section E. 7. a), the quota place shall be allocated to the Olympic bodyweight category from which the athlete has attained the highest ranking in Total (kg); subject to the minimum participation according to section E. 3. above during the qualification period.

## 6. REFERENCE DOCUMENT

The marked-up version of the Qualification System prepared by the authors can be found enclosed.

Timelines, references (highlighted in yellow) and the Application Process shall be updated upon approval.

## 7. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Developed by the IWF Sport Programme Commission and ratified by the IWF Executive Board, the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games Qualification System for Weightlifting was approved by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Executive Board in April 2018.

[Praised by IOC President Thomas Bach](#), the first ever 'individual athlete' framework streamlines a qualification and Games-time delivery model that protects and promotes clean sport.

Since the commencement of the qualifying period in November 2018, the Qualification System has enabled the IWF to strengthen, expand and refresh the calendar of events to ensure and to mandate the participation of more prospective athletes to compete in recognised events where 'World and/or Continental Points' will be attained.

## 8. ANTI-DOPING AND CLEAN SPORT

It is recognised and accepted all eligible NOCs have the right to gain quota places for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. But doing so, it is also recognised the IWF has the responsibility to provide **additional opportunities** and benefits to MFs/NOCs who have demonstrated an ethos to pure performance, i.e. clean doping history over the last decade.

This approach advocates the values, integrity, and ideals of the 'clean' athlete but at the same time is also consistent with the IOC directive whereby the quota reduction from past Olympic Games should be targeted at those NOCs with the highest number of historical Anti-Doping Rule Violations.

Subject to the IWF Anti-Doping Rules, all NOCs shall be eligible to qualify one (1) male and one (1) female athlete.

In the case a MF has recorded ten (10) but less than twenty (20) ADRVs from the start of the Beijing 2008 period to the end of the Qualification Period, this MF shall be eligible to qualify one (1) additional male and one (1) additional female athlete. That is, a total of two (2) male and two (2) female athletes.

In the case a MF has recorded less than ten (10) ADRVs from the start of the Beijing 2008 period to the end of the Qualification Period shall be eligible to qualify three (3) additional male and three (3) additional female athletes. That is, a total of four (4) male and four (4) female athletes.

[On 20 July 2018, IOC President Thomas Bach stated this approach as being a 'very effective method and a very intelligent method'.](#)

## 9. AUTHORS

As the creators of the original Qualification System and as members of the IWF Sport Programme Commission (2017 – 2019) and then the IWF Sport Commission (2019 – 2020), this paper has been prepared by:

- **Tom Goegebuer**

Former IWF Athletes Commission Deputy Chair & Belgian National Federation President

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Former IWF Sport Commission Chair & British Weightlifting Executive Board Member

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