

ACADEMY 2026: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q1 - How old do you need to be to participate in the SA Athletics Academy?

Athletes must be between the ages of 9 to 18 years (as of the 31st of December 2026). Therefore, athletes may be 8 years old when they begin the Academy.

Q2 - Do you have to be good at athletics to join, or is the Academy available to anyone?

The Academy is open to ANY athlete that has a desire to improve their athletic ability. It does not matter if you have never participated in athletics before or if you have been competing for a number of years, the Academy caters for all varying skill levels and abilities.

Q3 - What are the different squads in the Academy?

Academy Squad Eligibility Criteria

There are two squads within the Academy: **Emerging Squad** and **Elite Squad**. Eligibility is based on age as of **31st December 2026**, as well as other criteria for the Elite Squad.

Emerging Squad

- Open to all athletes who are **9 years old or older by 31st December 2026**.
- This means athletes born **on or before 31st December 2017** are eligible.

Elite Squad

- To qualify, athletes must:
 1. Have competed/qualified at the **2026 State Individual Championships, and**
 2. Be **12 years old or older by 31st December 2026**.
- This means athletes must be born **on or before 31st December 2014**

Q4 - How much will each squad cost for the Academy?

The Emerging Squad is \$230.00 (inc. GST), whilst the Elite Squad is \$260.00 (inc. GST). *Pricing/Inclusions listed are for the full 6-session program; see Q16 for partial program information.*

Q5 - When does the Academy start, and how long does it go for?

The first Academy session commences on Sunday 21st June 2026. There is a total of **6 program sessions** conducted over a total of 8 weeks. The Academy will operate during the Little Athletics SA off-season, in the lead up to the 2026/2027 Summer Track and Field season.

Program 1	Sunday June 21
Program 2	Sunday June 28
Program 3	Sunday July 5
2 Week Break	
Program 4	Sunday July 26
Program 5	Sunday August 2
Program 6	Sunday August 9

Q6 - When do I need to register for the Academy by?

The last date to register for the Academy will be Thursday 18th June 2026.

Q7 - Do I get to choose what events I wish to have coaching in?

For each Academy program date for the Emerging Squads, athletes will have the opportunity to choose two events for 2 x 1-hour practical sessions that they would like to participate in. When you register, athletes can select the two athletic events they would like to participate in for each Academy session for the duration of the program.

When you register, Elite Squads athletes will be required to nominate 1 set event for all 6 weeks of the program and 1 varying event for each session resulting in 2 x 1-hour practical sessions. The reason for this is to ensure the most effective development of athletes in a specified event.

Events include*:

- Sprints
- Distance Running
- Hurdles
- Long Jump
- Triple Jump
- High Jump
- Discus
- Shot Put
- Javelin

*Event Availability per session may depend on availability of coach

Q8 – Are athletes able to repeat the same event sessions over the weeks?

Yes, athletes are able to choose the same event sessions over the weeks. This is for both the practical sessions in the emerging squad and the 1 varying event in the elite squad. For example, an athlete can select Shot Put and Sprints in week 1, 2, 3, etc. **Athletes cannot select the same event twice on the same Academy Day.**

Q9- What are the starting/durations for the Academy program sessions.

Below are the following start and finish times for each squad. We recommend arriving 10-15 minutes prior to your start time to ensure you are ready to go.

Squad	Start Time	Finish Time
Emerging	10:00 am	12:00 pm
Elite	12:15 pm	2:15 pm

- Please note, there will be a session this year for both the Emerging and Elite that will go for 3 hours due to a theory session from a professional industry leader.

Q10 - Are training T-shirts available for the Academy?

All registered Academy athletes will receive an Academy training shirt as part as their registration. The training t-shirt is included within the registration fee. All athletes will be expected to wear their Academy training t-shirts as well as appropriate active wear (*example: running shoes, running shorts or leggings*).

Q11 - Does my child have to remain in the Emerging Squad if they do not meet the qualification standards as they get older?

In order to qualify for the Elite Squad, the athlete must qualify for the State Individual Championships or be turning 11 as of the 31st of December 2026. It is our hope that the skills and techniques learned by the athletes through the Emerging Squad will help transition them into the Elite Squad in the future.

Q12 - What theory sessions are being provided this year?

Both Emerging and Elite Academy athletes will have the opportunity to listen and learn from a sport industry leader to help develop their skills and knowledge. This is yet to be decided and will be communicated closer to the date.

Q13 - Is my personal coach allowed to be involved?

Of course, they are! Personal coaches are more than welcome to watch their athletes doing the Academy practical sessions. We do kindly ask all Personal coaches to remain on the outside of the track, but we do encourage Personal coaches to communicate with their athletes and the Academy Coaches after the session is finished.

Q14 What do I receive for participating in the Emerging or Elite Squad?

All participants in both the **Emerging** and **Elite** Squads will receive:

- **6 x 2-hour practical coaching sessions** (2 x 1 hour event blocks) delivered by experienced and accredited athletics coaches.
- **1 x 1-hour theory session** presented by a professional in the sport industry.
- An **Academy training shirt** to wear at sessions.
- Access to high-quality facilities at **SA Athletics Stadium**.
- A valuable opportunity to develop skills, improve technique, and enhance athletics knowledge in a structured, off-season environment.
- *Pricing/Inclusions listed are for the full 6-session program; see Q16 for partial program information.*

Q15 - Does the Academy dates clash with the Little Athletics SA Cross Country program?

Yes it does. Due to both programs running on a Sunday, date clashes are unavoidable. All Academy sessions this year will clash with the Cross Country Calendar - <https://salaa.org.au/winter-competitions/>. Any athletes that would like the opportunity to participate in both programs, please contact Little Athletics SA on the details below as arrangements can be made.

Q16 – Am I able to purchase a partial Academy program?

Yes, athletes have the option to register for a half-program (3 sessions) rather than the full 6-session Academy program. This option is available at a reduced fee for both the Emerging and Elite squads.

To register for the partial program and obtain the specific pricing details, please contact Little Athletics SA at programs@salaa.org.au.

Emerging and Elite Squads

Little Athletics SA – phone 08 8352 8133 / email programs@salaa.org.au

