

APPENDIX A

Semi Structured Interview Guide

Demographic data: date of birth, gender, sport, months/years since retirement, education and employment status will be collected prior to commencing the interview.

1. Can you provide a brief overview of your sporting career?
 - Prompt: Tell me about the sport/s you have played, and how you got into your main competitive sport? What were the motivations for you engaging in that sport?
 - Prompt: What were a few of your highlight sporting achievements?
2. Can you tell me about the circumstances surrounding your retirement?
 - Prompt: What were the reasons for your retirement? Were you able to choose how and when you retired? What was your process of departing from sport?
 - Prompt: How did your sport/NSO manage the process? Were you satisfied with this process?
3. When did preparation for life after elite sport begin for you?
 - Prompt: When did you start (actively) thinking about your plans following retirement?
4. Can you tell me about what it was like for you when you retired?
 - Prompt: Some retired athletes explain retirement as a process of 'grief & loss'. Has this been part of your experience?
 - Prompt: How have you adapted to the changes in your identity?
5. Did you consider legacy planning or giving back to the sport?
 - Prompt: what were your motivation for your legacy plan?
6. In preparing for retirement or generally thinking ahead to life after elite sport, what things did you try or plans did you put in place? Who supported you and what services were available?
 - Prompt: education, employment, business opportunities, financial planning/financial literacy, where to live etc.
 - Prompt: What was your experience of these supports? Were they still available to you after retiring?
7. Do you think that retired elite athletes face the same challenges with finances and employment as the general population, or are they unique or different in some way?
8. Can you describe the timeline of your retirement transition?
 - Prompt: the period of time from planning for retirement, through to undertaking satisfying 'life after elite sport' activities/engagements?
 - Prompt: how long until you felt settled or accepting of post-retirement life?
9. In your opinion, what can be done to help athletes prepare for retirement and to increase the likelihood of a 'good outcome' or wellbeing in life after elite sport?
10. Some athletes have reported tension or conflict in their personal relationships after retirement because it can seem as though others don't understand what they are going through. Have you ever felt like this? What was that like?

11. Please describe how you have coped with changes in your body weight, physical appearance, or any other physical changes as a consequence of detraining?
12. How would you describe your current physical health? Does this impact on your current wellbeing, activities, relationships or quality of life?
 - Prompt: managing any ongoing injuries
13. What are your feelings about your achievements since retiring from sport? How do they compare to the achievements and sense of purpose you may have felt when you were training and competing?
14. How would you describe your current wellbeing? What strategies do you find useful to manage any challenging emotions or thoughts? If you wanted to improve your overall health and mental wellbeing, what do you think would help you to do so?
 - Prompt: social support, formal supports, physical activity, self-care strategies, pets, alcohol or drugs, avoidance etc
15. Can you describe any physical activity, exercise or sport that you currently take part in? How important is it to you? Has that remained fairly constant since you retired from elite sport or has it changed over the years?
16. Overall how satisfied are you with your current quality of life? Do you think that this is related to you having been an elite athlete?
17. What do you think about this process and the questions we have asked? Would you have any suggestions for improving this procedure?