

This guidance is to be used for all International Sportsperson governing body endorsement requests made on or after the **12 November 2024**.

Section 1: Overview of governing body endorsements for the International Sportsperson route of the points-based system

This page provides a brief explanation of what endorsement requirements apply in respect of the International Sportsperson route of the points-based system.

The International Sportsperson route is for elite sportspeople and coaches who:

- are internationally established and whose employment will make a significant contribution to the development of their sport at the highest level in the UK
- who will base themselves in the UK
- will be filling a post that cannot be filled by a suitable British citizen or person who has a right to enter or stay in the UK without restriction.

The application process explained: migrants applying to come to the UK under the International Sportsperson route need to be sponsored by an organisation that has an International Sportsperson sponsor licence.

If you wish to sponsor such migrants, you must have a sponsor licence. Before you apply to the Home Office for a licence you must be endorsed by the **approved governing body** for your sport. This endorsement confirms to the Home Office that the application for a licence is from a genuine sports club (or equivalent) that has a legitimate requirement to bring migrants to the UK as sportspeople. Once licensed, you can assign certificates of sponsorship to a sportsperson or coach with a job offer that allows them to apply for entry clearance or permission to stay in the UK. Each individual must also have a personal endorsement from the **approved governing body** for their sport before you assign the certificate of sponsorship.

An **approved governing body** is one specified in [Appendix SGB](#) of the Immigration Rules. Such a governing body must be recognised by one of the home country sports councils such as Sport Wales, and will have been approved by the Home Office before being included in [Appendix SGB](#) of the Immigration Rules.

Approved governing bodies will work within the Home Office's '[Code of practice for sports governing bodies](#)' and must comply with any immigration regulations, UK legislation and the principles of the points-based system as detailed on the [GOV.UK](#) website.

Length of endorsement

Governing body endorsements should be issued for a period appropriate to the period of approval for sponsorship, that is:

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Type of application	Length of endorsement
Sponsor	4 years from date of issue.
Migrant	For an initial maximum period of 3 years, with a further extension of a maximum period of 3 years. If the contract is for fewer than 3 years, it will be issued for the length of the contract.

Change of employment

If a migrant is intending to change employer, their new employer must request a new governing body endorsement. The endorsement can be issued for the length of the contract or to the maximum period permitted within the route, whichever is the shorter. The new employer must assign a new certificate of sponsorship to the migrant to allow them to apply to the Home Office for new permission to stay. Permission to stay must be granted before the migrant can start work with the new employer.

Salary

The salary should be agreed as part of the contract between the migrant and the sponsor. This and the other conditions of employment should be at least equal to those normally given to a resident worker for the type of work undertaken.

Supplementary employment

International Sportsperson migrants are eligible to undertake supplementary employment under the Home Office supplementary employment regulations. The 'Supplementary employment' section [Workers and Temporary Workers: guidance for sponsors - Sponsor an International Sportsperson guidance](#) has more information on this.

Compliance with the Code of Practice for Sports Governing Bodies

In reviewing this criteria, Wales Netball confirm we have reread the Code and agree to our roles and responsibilities as set out within. We confirm we have acted in full compliance with the principles of the Code during this annual review.

Section 2: Requirements

This page explains the Wales Netball requirements under the International Sportsperson route. The requirements are effective from 12 November 2024.

Only the roles listed as part of this criteria are eligible for endorsement.

Consultation

The following requirements have been agreed by the Home Office following consultation between the Wales Netball and the national governing bodies (NGBs) of England, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

Prior to contacting the Home Office during the annual review of this criteria, Wales Netball confirm that full consultation has been carried out, this includes any organisation that could be interpreted as an interested party, such as clubs, bodies, or player associations related to netball in Wales.

Review

The requirements will be reviewed annually, the next review will be in October 2025.

Length of season

The season for netball runs from 1 September to 31 July.

Requirements

The table below shows the endorsement requirements for sponsors and migrants.

Category	Requirement	
Sponsor	Only the Wales Netball and Franchises competing in the Super League are eligible for a sponsor endorsement.	
Migrant	Player	1. A player must have played in at least one competitive game for one of the current top 12 international teams in the world during the two years preceding the date of the application of endorsement. Competitive games comprise games played in: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commonwealth Games• World Championships• Games within any qualifying tournament for the above, and• World Ranking Points matches

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		<p>The top 12 international teams are shown in the World Netball World Rankings and can be accessed at the World Netball website https://netball.sport/events-and-results/world-rankings-hub/current-world-rankings</p> <p>2. Wales Netball will consider supporting applications from <u>individual players</u> who have not played international netball</p> <p>but who have been members of an ANZ or SSN franchise squad (in Australia – part of the 11-person roster and named training partners and in New Zealand – part of the 10-person roster and named training partners) during the 2022, 2023 or 2024 season. It agrees to do this on the basis that the standard of SSN and ANZ netball is, in a number of cases, higher than that played by some countries in the world top 12.</p> <p>3. An endorsement can be awarded to a returning player in the England Netball Super League who met the qualifying criteria for a governing body migrant endorsement for the 2023/2024 season and was in the UK as an International Sportsperson as defined in the Introduction of the Immigration Rules, before the season was cancelled due to Covid19 restrictions.</p>
	Coach	<p>A coach is required to have proven experience of coaching as a Head or Assistant Coach for one full season. This means having coached a team from the below within the last 5 years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top 12 of the World Netball World Rankings during their tenure, • ANZ/SSN netball league, • Australian Netball League (ANL) or • New Zealand Netball League (Beko) <p>A coach is required to have gained a UKCC Level 2 qualification level or above or an</p>

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		equivalent qualification, which also includes awareness of Health & Safety, a First Aid qualification, an awareness of child welfare issues and a relevant police check from their country of origin. Attendance at a Safeguarding and Protecting Children course is required to practice once in the UK.
	Player/Coach	A player coach must meet the playing criteria (as above) and is required to have gained a UKCC Level 2 qualification or above or an equivalent qualification, which also includes Health & Safety, First Aid qualifications, an awareness of child welfare issues and a relevant police check from their country of origin.

Injuries, Absences and Suspensions

Where relevant, games for which the applicant was unavailable for selection are to be excluded when calculating the applicant appearance percentage. Unavailable for selection means the applicant was not available to participate due to injury or suspension and written evidence supporting this, setting out the games missed and the reason(s), must be provided by the applicant's National Association or club doctor to Wales Netball for consideration.

Consideration will be given to the following when applying the criteria: injury; a period of maternity or paternity leave; serious illness or any legitimate medical reasons; suspension; international duty; bereavement; or family crisis.

In order to obtain the governing body endorsement, the individual must not be subject to a provisional suspension or any unexpired period of ineligibility from playing and/ or coaching activities in any jurisdiction as a result of being charged with or found guilty of a corruption offence and/ or a doping offence and/ or another misconduct offence.

Further information

This information is available on the Wales netball website at:

<https://walesnetball.com>

For any queries relating to the requirements or the endorsement process please contact:

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Information on visas and immigration is available on the [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) website.

Dispute Handling Procedures

Where an application for a migrant covered by the requirements for a governing body endorsement as set out for International Sportsperson has been refused on the grounds that the migrant fails to meet the published requirements, the sponsor may seek a review of the application.

Please note: Only the sponsor concerned may seek a review of the application on the basis that Wales Netball has not applied the endorsement criteria correctly.

The sponsor will have 28 days to request a review. The Review Panel will then review any evidence submitted in support and shall, as far as practicably possible, notify the sponsor of its decision within 7 working days of the receipt of the appeal.

Wales Netball will refer the sponsor's evidence to an independent panel as set out below.

For the avoidance of doubt, only a sponsor can seek a review of the application.

Where possible the sponsor's supporting evidence will be sent to the panel in advance for their consideration in order to allow an informed decision.

Sponsors should note that, in respect of any application, there will only be one review panel available and the decision of the Review Panel is final (subject to final appeal). Sponsors should therefore ensure all evidence it wishes to present in support of its application is presented to the panel. If the sponsor has previously made an application that was unsuccessful at panel a further panel cannot be requested for the same migrant during the season unless their status changes and they meet the requirements whereby a new application can be submitted.

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If the initial review is refused, the migrant may request a final appeal as set out at point **d**.

a. The Review

As above, the request for a review may only be made by the sponsor for whom the governing body endorsement has been initially refused by **Wales Netball**.

A review shall be commenced by the sponsor submitting a notice of appeal within 28 days of the initial decision to **Wales Netball** and Governance Director. The notice of appeal shall:

- i. set out details of the decision appealed against and, if the whole of the decision is not appealed against, identify that part of it which is appealed against;
- ii. set out in full the grounds of appeal and an appellant shall not be entitled to rely in any ground of appeal not set out in the notice of appeal; and
- iii. be accompanied by a deposit of £100. The panel shall have discretion as to whether the deposit is returned.

The procedure for appeal will be in accordance with the Disciplinary Regulations and the Review Panel shall be comprised as detailed below.

b. The Review Panel

The Review Panel will be appointed by the Disciplinary Hearings Manager. The appointed Review Panel shall consist of: an independent chairman, one representative of the migrant (who has not been involved in the initial decision), and one representative of named further representatives.

c. Refusal at Review

An endorsement request at review may be refused if the migrant does not meet the relevant criteria set out in this document or fails to provide the mandatory documents.

Wales Netball will notify the sponsor in writing of any endorsement request which is refused at review stage, setting out the reasons for refusal.

d. The Decision

Wales Netball will make a decision using the above criteria which shall be final and binding. There are no other grounds of appeal.