



## England Netball Governing Body Endorsement Guidance and Criteria

This guidance is to be used for all International Sportsperson England Netball Governing Body Endorsement requests, in accordance with the Home Office Points Based Immigration System, made on or after 27 August 2025.

England Netball currently consider that the Governing body eligibility for an International Sportsperson Visa endorsement is required for:

- Overseas players, coaches, performance/netball director roles in the Netball Super League
- Overseas coaches, performance/netball director roles in the England Roses national team
- Overseas coaches and performance/netball director roles in the NSL clubs and clubs licenced to deliver the U23 pathway competition.

### 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 Immigration Rules for the International Sportsperson route can be found at [Appendix International Sportsperson](#).

1.1 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.

1.2 **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 relevant **sports 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 relevant **approved sports governing body** for their sport before you assign the certificate of sponsorship.

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

Sports 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.

1.4 **Length of endorsement**

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

Type of application	Length of endorsement
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<b>Sponsor</b>	Endorsements for sponsors will not have an end date. They will be valid for as long as the sponsor continues to hold a valid sponsor licence.
<b>Migrant</b>	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.

### 1.5 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.

If permitted by the league or competition sports players can move on loan to another sports club, provided they will return to their original club at the end of the loan period. If your player is moving on loan, you must report this to us using your sponsorship management system (SMS) account within 10 working days of the move, full information on sponsor responsibilities can be found on the government website [here](#).

### 1.6 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.

### 1.7 Supplementary employment

International Sportsperson migrants are eligible to undertake supplementary employment under the Home Office supplementary employment regulations. The 'Taking a second job' section <https://www.gov.uk/sportsperson-visa/taking-a-second-job> has more information on this.

### 1.8 Compliance with the Code of Practice for Sports Governing Bodies

In reviewing this criteria, England 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 England Netball requirements under the International Sportsperson route for the 2025 to 2026 season. These requirements are effective from 27 August 2025.

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

These requirements are applicable to England.

### 2.1 Consultation

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

Prior to contacting the Home Office during the annual review of this criteria, England 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 the UK.

### 2.2 Review

The requirements will be reviewed annually in May, prior to the start of the Netball Super League season.

### 2.3 Length of season

The netball season for international and domestic competitions run throughout the year. The dates for the NSL seasons are defined in the NSL regulations each year.

### 2.4 Requirements

The table below shows the endorsement requirements for sponsors and migrants

Type of Endorsement	Type of Role	Requirements
Sponsor		Governing body endorsements for a sponsor license will only be issued for the following bodies: -England Netball -Netball Super League Clubs including clubs licenced fulfil the delivery of the EN Pathway including U23 Competition

Migrant	Player (excluding U23 competition)	<p>A player will be granted a governing body endorsement if they meet one of the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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 three years preceding the date of the application of endorsement.</li> </ol> <p>Competitive games comprise games played in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commonwealth Games</li> <li>• World Championships</li> <li>• Games within any qualifying tournament for the above, and</li> <li>• World Ranking Points matches</li> </ul> <p>The top 12 international teams are shown in the World Netball Rankings and can be accessed at the <a href="#">World Netball</a> website. Or</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. A player must have been a member of an SSN/ANZ franchise squad (in Australia – part of the squad &amp; named training partners or equivalent and in New Zealand – part of the squad &amp; named training partners or equivalent) during the 2023, 2024 or 2025 season. It agrees to do this on the basis that the standard of SSN &amp; ANZ netball is, in a number of cases, higher than that played by some countries in the world top 12; or</li> </ol> <p>An endorsement can be awarded to a returning player who played (taken to court) 75% of games in the England Netball Super League during the 2025 season whilst in the UK as an International Sportsperson as defined in the Introduction of the Immigration Rules.</p>
	NSL / National Performance Director (Limit 1)  This role must	A Performance Director is required to have experience as a senior leader responsible for high-performance netball for the high performance coaching philosophy & /or senior performance analysis in netball. A governing body endorsement will be granted for an international sportsperson visa if the individual has held at least one of the following

	<p>Include overall responsibility for high performance coaching within the sponsor club/organisation but may also include overall responsibility for performance pathways/ Sports Science &amp; Medicine delivery.</p>	<p>roles; Performance Director, Head Coach, Head of Pathways, Head of Performance Support or Head of Coaching.</p> <p>This means having held one of the above roles for a cumulative period of 12 months in the last 3 years in one of the following environments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• nation in the top 12 of the World Netball Rankings during their tenure.</li> <li>• team competing in the SSN/ANZ netball league.</li> <li>• team competing in the Netball Super League</li> </ul> <p>Relevant degree or Level 3 Coach qualification or equivalent. Relevant degree would include Sports &amp; Exercise Science, Sports Management, or Sports Coaching</p> <p>Must enrol on relevant CPD courses once in the country</p>
	<p>NSL/National Head Coach</p>	<p>A Coach is required to have proven 12 months cumulative experience of coaching as a Head Coach for in the last 3 years, or have 2 years cumulative experience coaching as an Assistant Coach in the last 3 years.</p> <p>The coaching experience must have been for a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• top 12 of the World Netball Rankings during their tenure;</li> <li>• SSN/ANZ netball league;</li> <li>• Netball Super League</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <p>A coach has had significant experience playing elite netball before becoming a coach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum of 4 years playing experience in SSN/ANZ/ Super League and played for the top 12 ranking nations and been part of a major competition. (Commonwealth Games or Netball World Cup)</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They have a minimum of 1-year cumulative coaching experience in the last 2 years as an Assistant Coach within one or more of the following performance pathway environments:</li> <li>• SSN / ANZ/ NSL /Next Gen</li> <li>• Top 12 international teams</li> </ul> <p>In addition, must hold a EN Level 2 coaching qualification or equivalent Have an Overseas / UK DBS check</p> <p>Once in the UK: Must enrol on relevant CPD courses</p> <p>Completion of a Safeguarding and Protecting Children and UK Anti-Doping Clean Sport course is required to practice</p> <p>Both individual and club agree fully engage in the EN coach development support to accelerate learning</p>
	NSL / National Assistant Coach/Technical Coach	<p>A Coach is required to have proven 12 months cumulative experience of coaching as an Assistant Coach or Technical coach for in the last 3 years. This means having coached a team from the below</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• top 12 of the World Netball Rankings during their tenure;</li> <li>• SSN/ANZ netball league;</li> <li>• Netball Super League.</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <p>A coach has had significant experience playing elite netball before becoming a coach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum of 4 years playing experience in SSN/ANZ/ Super League and played for the top 12 ranking nations and been part of a major competition. (Commonwealth Games or Netball World Cup)</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They have a minimum of 1 years cumulative coaching experience in the last 2 years within one or more of the following performance pathway environments:</li> <li>• SSN / ANZ/ NSL /Next Gen</li> <li>• Top 12 international teams</li> </ul> <p>In addition, must hold a EN Level 2 coaching qualification or equivalent Have an Overseas / UK DBS check</p> <p>Once in the UK: Must enrol on relevant CPD courses</p> <p>Completion of a Safeguarding and Protecting Children and UK Anti-Doping Clean Sport course is required to practice</p> <p>Both individual and club agree fully engage in the EN coach development support to accelerate learning</p>
	Player /Coach	Required to meet the Player and at least the NSL/National Assistant Coach/ Technical coach criteria
<b>Injuries, Absences and Suspensions</b> <p>Events for which the individual was unavailable for selection are to be excluded when calculating the individual's appearance percentage. Unavailable for selection means the individual 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 individual's National Association or club doctor to England Netball for consideration.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>		



## 2.5 Further information

This information is available on the England Netball website [here](#)

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](#) website

## **2.6 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. The sponsor will have 28 days to request a review. In these cases, **EN** will refer the sponsor's evidence to an independent panel as set out below.

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.

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

#### **a. The Review**

The request for a review may only be made by the sponsor for whom the governing body endorsement has been initially rejected by **EN**.

A review shall be commenced by the sponsor submitting a notice of appeal within 28 days of the initial decision to the **EN** and Governance Manager. 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 **£125**. 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 Governance 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.

**EN** will notify the sponsor and the migrant in writing of any endorsement request which is refused at review stage, setting out the reasons for refusal.

#### d. Final Appeal

The migrant shall have 7 days from the date of the written refusal at review stage to submit a final appeal in writing to EN.

PLEASE NOTE: The migrant may only submit a Final Appeal on the basis that EN have not applied the endorsement criteria correctly. EN shall consider the final appeal and any evidence submitted in support and shall, within 7 working days of the receipt of the final appeal, notify the migrant of its decision.

#### e. The Decision

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

### Section 3: Process for applying for an endorsement

#### 3.1 How to apply for governing body endorsements for International Sportsperson sponsor applications

Organisations eligible for International Sportsperson sponsor licence governing body endorsement should use the online [Sponsor Licence Governing Body Endorsement Application Form](#) which can also be found on the England Netball Website here ( insert hyperlink once the form is approved and linked to the website)

All potential sponsors should note that the purpose of an endorsement for a prospective sponsor is to confirm to the Home Office officials processing sponsor applications that the application is from a bona fide sports club or equivalent that has a legitimate requirement to bring migrants to the UK as sportspeople. The Home Office has additional criteria for sponsors that must be met in order for an organisation to be granted a sponsor license. It is not England Netball who will grant a sponsor license.

#### 3.2 How to apply for governing body endorsements for International Sportsperson migrant applications

Once an organisation has obtained its sponsor licence from the Home Office, the sponsor will be able to apply for Certificates of Sponsorship, which it will allocate to migrants coming here to work for it. Each migrant that an organisation wishes to employ needs to be assigned a

Certificate of Sponsorship. However, before an organisation can assign a Certificate of Sponsorship to a sportsperson, they will also have to obtain an endorsement from England Netball for all applications made for individual sportspeople and coaches.

Organisations that have obtained International Sportsperson migrant governing body endorsement should use the online [Individual Migrant Governing Body Endorsement Application](#), ( New form Link <https://forms.office.com/e/jQhb3Xmk5T>

which can also be found on the England Netball Website [here](#)

### **3.3 Administration Fee**

An administration fee of £80 is payable for each governing body endorsement for migrant applications. An invoice will be sent to the sponsor by England Netball and must be paid within 30 days upon receipt.