

Field Hockey Governing Body Endorsement Requirements

This guidance is to be used for all International Sportsperson governing body endorsement requests made on or after the **9 August 2023**.

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](#).

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 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.

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.

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
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

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	for fewer than 3 years, it will be issued for the length of the contract.
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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.

Section 2: Requirements

This page explains Hockey Ireland requirements under the International Sportsperson route. These requirements are effective from 9 August 2023.

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

This criteria applies to Northern Ireland only.

Consultation

The following requirements have been agreed by the Home Office following consultation with Hockey Ireland.

Review

The requirements will be reviewed annually. The next review will be in May 2024.

Length of season

The season for field hockey in general runs from 1 September – 30 June, although activity can take place outside of these times.

Requirements

The National Governing Bodies (NGB) for hockey have agreed that no endorsements will be issued to players or coaches for clubs. Please contact the relevant NGB below for more information regarding this decision. This decision will be reviewed annually in light of the structure of non-international hockey in each country at that time.

Category	Requirement	
Sponsor	Governing body endorsements will only be issued to National Governing Bodies wishing to appoint Performance Directors or coaches to work with their senior international team.	
Migrant	Performance Director or Coach	Requests for endorsements will only be issued to Performance Directors or Coaches who meet all the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• have a minimum of 3 years international coaching experience at World Level (Hockey World Cup, Olympic or Commonwealth Games) and provide evidence of delivering finalists at World Level (Senior)• hold a GB Hockey Association top level performance or elite coaching qualification or an equivalent

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		<p>qualification, which also includes awareness of Health and Safety,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• have 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. <p>For further details of coach awards see https://www.englandhockey.co.uk/faqs/faqs-coaching</p>
<p>Injuries, Absences and Suspensions</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>		

Further information

This information is available on the following website: www.hockey.ie.

For any queries relating to the requirements or the endorsement process and/or to apply for an endorsement please contact:

The Chief Executive's Office
Hockey Ireland
Newstead
University College Dublin
Belfield
Dublin 4

Information on visas and immigration is available on the GOV.UK website.

Dispute handling procedures

Where an application for a Performance Director/ Coach covered by the requirements for a governing body endorsement as set out for International

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Sportsperson has been refused on the grounds that the Performance Director/ Coach fails to meet the published requirements, the sponsor may seek a review of the application. The sponsor will have 28 days to request such a review. In these cases, Hockey Ireland 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 panel available and the decision of the panel is final. Sponsors should therefore ensure that 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 player during the season unless his status changes and he meets the requirements whereby a new application can be submitted.

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 Hockey Ireland.

A review shall be commenced by the appellant lodging with the Hockey Ireland and Governance Director, a notice of appeal within 28 days of the decision appealed against. 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 £500. 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 Panel shall be comprised as detailed below.

b. The Panel

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

c. Power of the Panel

An endorsement request may be refused if the Performance Director/ Coach does not meet the relevant criteria set out in this document or fails to provide the mandatory documents. Hockey Ireland will notify a Performance Director/ Coach in writing of any endorsement request which is refused setting out the reasons for refusal.

A Performance Director/ Coach shall have 21 days from the date of the written refusal to submit an appeal in writing to Hockey Ireland. A Performance Director/ Coach may only appeal on the basis that Hockey Ireland have not applied the endorsement criteria correctly.

Hockey Ireland shall consider the appeal and any evidence submitted in support and shall, within 21 working days of the receipt of the appeal, notify the Performance Director/ Coach of its decision.

d. The Decision

The panel 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

How to apply for governing body endorsements for International Sportsperson applications

Sponsors need to apply to Hockey Ireland for a sponsor endorsement in order to apply to UKVI for a sponsor licence.

To apply for a migrant endorsement from Hockey Ireland, sponsors will need to complete and return an application provided by Hockey Ireland. They will either approve or not support the application for an endorsement.

Once approved, each sponsor will be provided with a unique number and written confirmation of their endorsement by Hockey Ireland to use when applying to the Home Office for registration as a sponsor.

For each migrant worker endorsed, the sponsor will receive a unique number in respect of the migrant worker and written confirmation, for the sponsor to use when applying to the Home Office for the registration of each worker.

Sponsors are required to keep copies of all paperwork relating to endorsements received from Hockey Ireland.