



Home Office

# Workers and Temporary Workers: guidance for sponsors

## Sponsor an International Sportsperson

Version 04/24

This document forms part of the collection 'Workers and Temporary Workers: guidance for sponsors'. It provides information for employers in the sporting sector on how to sponsor a worker on the International Sportsperson immigration route.

This version of the guidance is valid from 4 April 2024.

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# About this guidance

This document provides information for employers in the sporting sector on how to sponsor a sportsperson or coach on the International Sportsperson immigration route.

The International Sportsperson route is for elite sportspersons or qualified sports coaches who are internationally established and can make a significant contribution to the development of their sport at its highest level in the UK.

This route replaced the following routes ('predecessor sports routes') from 11 October 2021:

- T2 Sportsperson
- the sporting provisions of the T5 (Temporary Worker) Creative or Sporting Worker route

## Other guidance you must read

To make sure you meet all of the relevant requirements and fulfil your sponsorship duties, you must read the following parts of the sponsor guidance, in addition to this document:

- [Part 1: Apply for a licence](#) – this contains detailed information on how to apply for a sponsor licence and how we assess applications
- [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#) – this contains detailed information on how to sponsor Workers and Temporary Workers, including how to request and assign Certificates of Sponsorship, immigration requirements, and conditions of stay
- [Part 3: Sponsor duties and compliance](#) – this contains detailed information about your duties as a licensed sponsor and the action we can take if you fail to meet these duties
- [Code of practice for sports governing bodies](#) – this contains information on the role of sports governing bodies on the International Sportsperson route
- any relevant annexes or appendices referred to in the above documents

You can access all of these documents, and other information on sponsorship, on the [Sponsorship: guidance for employers and educators](#) page on GOV.UK.

This guidance is subject to change. If you have printed or downloaded a copy of this guidance, check the version number and date on GOV.UK to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version.

## Glossary

There is a glossary of terms used throughout the sponsor guidance (including this document) at the beginning of [Part 1: Apply for a licence](#).

For a definition of 'occupation code', 'SOC 2020 occupation code' and 'SOC 2010 occupation code', see the glossary in [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#).

Terms used in this guidance:

## **International Sportsperson**

A person who has applied for, or been granted, entry clearance or permission to stay on the International Sportsperson route; or who you are sponsoring, or intend to sponsor, on that route.

## **International Sportsperson route**

The route in [Appendix International Sportsperson](#) to the Immigration Rules. Where the context requires it, it can also refer to the predecessor sports routes (see below).

## **Predecessor sports routes**

This means any of the following:

- the route in Appendix T2 Sportsperson to the Immigration Rules in force between 1 December 2020 and 10 October 2021 inclusive
- the sporting provisions of Appendix T5 (Temporary Worker) Creative or Sporting Worker in force between 1 December 2020 and 10 October 2021 inclusive
- the Tier 2 (Sportsperson) route in Part 6A of the Immigration Rules in force before 1 December 2020
- the sporting provisions of the Creative and Sporting sub-category of the Tier 5 (Temporary Worker) route in Part 6A of the Immigration Rules in force before 1 December 2020

For previous versions of the Rules, see the [Immigration Rules Archive](#) on GOV.UK.

## **Contacts**

If you think this guidance has factual errors or broken links, you can email the [Business Helpdesk](#).

If you have read this guidance, and the guidance referred to above, and you still have any queries, you can call us on 0300 123 4699 or email the [Business Helpdesk](#).

## **Version number and publication**

Below is information on the version number of this guidance and when it was published:

- version 04/24
- published on 4 April 2024

You can view [previous versions of this guidance](#) on the National Archives website.

## Changes to this guidance

This version replaces version 07/23 (published on 17 July 2023). The following changes have been made:

- SPT2.4: minor amendment to reflect that sponsors whose licence is due to expire on or after 6 April 2024 no longer need to apply to renew their licence
- SPT3.14: minor drafting amendment to align with the equivalent wording in Appendix Children to the Immigration Rules from 5 October 2023 (Statement of Changes HC 1780)
- SPT5.13 (8<sup>th</sup> bullet point): occupation codes for sports players and sports coaches have been updated following the transition from SOC 2010 occupation codes to SOC 2020 occupation codes for Certificates of Sponsorship assigned on or after 4 April 2024, as set out in [Statement of Changes HC 590](#) (published 14 March 2024)
- other minor housekeeping changes

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# SPT1. Sponsoring an International Sportsperson: overview

This section provides an overview of the International Sportsperson route, the sponsorship requirements you must meet, and other ways sportspeople can come to the UK.

## What is the International Sportsperson route?

- SPT1.1. The International Sportsperson route is for elite sportspeople or qualified sports coaches who are internationally established and can make a significant contribution to the development of their sport at its highest level in the UK.
- SPT1.2. A person applying on the International Sportsperson route must have an endorsement from the relevant governing body listed in [Appendix Sports Governing Bodies](#).
- SPT1.3. Applicants must be aged at least 16 to qualify on this route. If they are aged under 18 on the date of application, they must meet the [parental consent requirement](#).
- SPT1.4. Applicants applying to enter or remain in the UK for a period of more than 12 months must meet [an English language requirement](#). Those applying for a period of 12 months or less do not have to meet this requirement.
- SPT1.5. The route allows the worker to bring their dependants (partner and dependent children) with them if they meet the requirements for dependants.
- SPT1.6. International Sportspeople can apply for settlement (indefinite leave to remain) after 5 years' continuous residence in the UK on this (or another eligible) route.

## Who needs to be sponsored on this route?

- SPT1.7. You will need to sponsor any overseas national you wish to employ as a sportsperson or coach if they are not a 'settled worker' or do not otherwise have immigration permission to work for you in the UK. This includes most [EU, EEA](#) and Swiss nationals who arrived in the UK after 31 December 2020.
- SPT1.8. You do not have to sponsor certain categories of worker, including:
- Irish citizens (with very limited exceptions)
  - people who have been granted status under the [EU Settlement Scheme](#)

- people with indefinite leave to enter or remain in the UK (also known as 'settlement')

SPT1.9. This is not a complete list. For further information on who does, and does not, need sponsorship, see section S1 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#).

## What are the sponsorship requirements for the International Sportsperson route?

SPT1.10. If you wish to sponsor an International Sportsperson, you must:

- be endorsed by the [relevant governing body](#) for your sport
- hold a [valid sponsor licence](#) for the International Sportsperson route
- understand the general requirements for sponsoring a worker – see [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#)
- understand [what the International Sportsperson route](#) is and [who is eligible](#) for this route
- ensure the worker you wish to sponsor has a valid [sports governing body endorsement letter](#)
- assign a [valid Certificate of Sponsorship \(CoS\)](#) to the person you wish to sponsor and [pay the relevant CoS fee](#)
- if relevant, ensure you understand the circumstances in which a [sports player can move to another club on loan](#) and what you need to do if this happens
- keep records for each worker you sponsor – see [Appendix D](#) to the sponsor guidance
- have eligible Key Personnel in place to manage your licence and apply for CoS – see section L4 of [Part 1: Apply for a licence](#) for guidance on Key Personnel
- understand and comply with all of your sponsor duties – see [Part 3: Sponsor duties and compliance](#)

## Other ways sportspersons can come to the UK

SPT1.11. Sportspersons (and their personal and technical staff, if applicable) may be allowed to come to the UK as [Visitors](#), without needing to be sponsored, if they meet the relevant requirements. This could be as a:

- [Standard Visitor](#) (for up to 6 months) to undertake [permitted activities](#) in the sporting sector
- [Permitted Paid Engagement Visitor](#) (for up to one month) to carry out an activity directly relating to their profession if they've been invited by a sports organisation, agent or UK-based broadcaster

SPT1.12. You may therefore wish to consider whether these routes are more suitable for the worker than the International Sportsperson route. You should note that sports workers who enter as Visitors cannot receive payment from a UK source, except in the limited circumstances set out in paragraph V 4.6 of [Appendix V: Visitor](#).



- SPT1.13. The worker will need entry clearance (a visa) if they are a national of a country or territory listed in [Appendix Visitor: Visa national list](#).
- SPT1.14. For detailed information on the requirements, see the [Visit guidance](#) on GOV.UK.
- SPT1.15. There are different immigration arrangements if a sports visitor enters the UK via Ireland. Further information on this can be found in the [Common Travel Area guidance](#) on GOV.UK.

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# SPT2. How to get an International Sportsperson sponsor licence

This section tells you about the requirements you must meet to be eligible for an International Sportsperson sponsor licence.

## General requirements

- SPT2.1. If you wish to sponsor an International Sportsperson, you must hold a valid sponsor licence for the International Sportsperson route. If you do not already hold such a licence, you must apply for one by completing the [online application form](#), paying the relevant [application fee](#), and submitting the supporting evidence specified in [Appendix A](#) to the sponsor guidance.
- SPT2.2. Before applying for your licence, you should read:
- [Part 1: Apply for a licence](#) for detailed information on the general requirements and the application process
  - this section for guidance [specific to the International Sportsperson route](#)
- SPT2.3. If you already hold a valid licence to sponsor workers, but it does not include the International Sportsperson route, you can apply to add this route to your existing licence. You may have to pay an additional fee for this. For further information on adding routes to your licence, see section L10 of [Part 1: Apply for a licence](#).
- SPT2.4. If your licence is due to expire before 6 April 2024, you should apply now to renew it. You do not need to apply to renew your licence if it expires on or after 6 April 2024. See section C5 of [Part 3: Sponsor duties and compliance](#) for further information.

## Specific requirements for an International Sportsperson sponsor licence

- SPT2.5. In addition to the general requirements for a sponsor licence set out in [Part 1: Apply for a licence](#), your organisation must be a UK-based sporting body, sports club, events organiser or other organiser operating, or intending to operate, in the sporting sector. You must also be endorsed by the relevant, Home Office-approved, [sports governing body](#).
- SPT2.6. You are not eligible to apply for an International Sportsperson sponsor licence if you are either:
- an overseas-based sports club or organisation
  - an agent

## Sports governing body endorsement

- SPT2.7. Before applying for a licence, you must make sure your organisation has an endorsement from the sports governing body approved by the Home Office for your specific sport (or sports). The list of approved bodies is set out in [Appendix Sports Governing Bodies](#) to the Immigration Rules.
- SPT2.8. Through its endorsement, the sports governing body confirms to us that you are a genuine club or other eligible organisation, and that you have a legitimate need to bring overseas nationals to the UK as sportspersons. For further information on the role of the sports governing body, see the [Code of practice for sports governing bodies](#).
- SPT2.9. When you apply for your licence, you must send us all the relevant documents listed in [Appendix A](#) of the sponsor guidance, including your sports governing body endorsement (referred to as a 'sporting body endorsement' in the online sponsor licence application form).

## If there is no approved sports governing body

- SPT2.10. If your sport does not have a Home Office-approved sports governing body, you should email the [Points Based System and Economic Migration Policy team](#).
- SPT2.11. For a sports governing body to be approved by the Home Office and added to [Appendix Sports Governing Bodies](#), the sports governing body must:
- be recognised by the relevant Home Country Sports Council ([Sport England](#), [Sport Wales / Chwaraeon Cymru](#), [sportscotland / spòrsalba](#), or [Sport Northern Ireland](#)) – if this requirement cannot be met, see paragraph SPT2.13 below
  - confirm they will comply with the [Code of practice for sports governing bodies](#)
  - formulate governing body endorsement criteria in consultation with the Home Office
- SPT2.12. Once we approve a sports governing body and we agree they can endorse applications, you must apply to that body for an endorsement before you apply for a sponsor licence.
- SPT2.13. If your sport does not have a sports governing body recognised by the relevant Home Country Sports Council, you should email the [Points Based System and Economic Migration Policy team](#). We will liaise with the relevant Sports Council and, where we consider it appropriate, we may ask the [Department for Culture, Media and Sport](#), and/ or the [Sport and Recreation Alliance \(SRA\)](#), to assist in identifying if there is a suitable body who could act as the Home Office-approved sports governing body.

## How soon you can sponsor workers if we've had to approve a sports governing body

- SPT2.14. If we've had to approve a governing body for your specific sport, and we then approve your licence application, you may not be able to sponsor workers immediately. This is because your governing body must be listed in [Appendix Sports Governing Bodies](#) before we can grant entry clearance or permission to stay to any sportspersons in connection with that sport. The Immigration Rules are usually updated twice a year (typically in the Spring and Autumn). We will advise you of the date that your governing body will be added to the Immigration Rules.
- SPT2.15. You can start to assign [Certificates of Sponsorship \(CoS\)](#) as soon as your licence application has been approved but you must be careful with the timing because:
- once you assign a CoS to a worker, they must use it in an application for entry clearance or permission to stay within 3 months, otherwise it will expire and we are likely to reject their application
  - if we decide an application for entry clearance or permission to stay before your governing body has been added to Appendix Sports Governing Bodies, we will refuse that application, as explained in the example below:

### Example

We grant your sponsor licence in November and allocate CoS to your SMS account. Your governing body will be added to Appendix Sports Governing Bodies on 6 April the following year.

You assign a CoS to a worker on 2 December and they apply for entry clearance on 2 March (the last day they can use the CoS before it expires). We decide the application on 2 April.

In this scenario, the worker's application will be refused because, on 2 April, your governing body will not be listed in Appendix Sports Governing Bodies to the Immigration Rules.

## Sponsoring a worker in more than one sport

- SPT2.16. When you complete the online sponsor application form, you can only choose one sport from the list provided in the 'Sporting body endorsement' section. If you want to sponsor workers in more than one sport, you must choose one from the list provided and then, when giving your reasons for the number of CoS needed, you can list the other sports you want covered by your licence. You must have a separate governing body endorsement and unique reference number for each sport in which you wish to sponsor workers.
- SPT2.17. If a sport does not appear on the list on the online application form, you

can email the [Business Helpdesk](#) for advice.

## How to keep your licence

SPT2.18. If you are granted a licence, you must comply with all of your sponsor duties. If you do not, we may take action against you, including:

- downgrading your licence
- suspending your licence
- revoking your licence
- reporting you to the police or other relevant authorities

SPT2.19. For details, see [Part 3: Sponsor duties and compliance](#).

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# SPT3. Immigration requirements for International Sportspersons

This section tells you about the immigration requirements applicants must meet to qualify as an International Sportsperson and where you can find further information.

## Overview

- SPT3.1. People who wish to come to the UK as an International Sportsperson must meet the requirements of [Appendix International Sportsperson](#) to the Immigration Rules. These include that the applicant:
- meets the [points requirement](#)
  - meets the [genuineness requirement](#)
  - if aged under 18, meets [the parental consent requirement](#)
  - if they were previously [an officially-sponsored student](#), has the written consent of the relevant international scholarship agency
- SPT3.2. You and the applicant must also ensure you are aware of the Rules for [entry to the UK](#), [extension of permission](#), [‘switching’](#), and [how long a worker can be granted](#).
- SPT3.3. This is not a full list of requirements – you must refer to the relevant [Immigration Rules](#) for these.

## Points requirement

- SPT3.4. All applicants must meet the ‘points’ requirement. The number of points required depends on whether the applicant is applying for:
- [no more than 12 months](#)
  - [more than 12 months](#)
- SPT3.5. In both cases, the role you are sponsoring the worker for must comply with the National Minimum Wage Regulations 2015 and the Working Time Regulations 1998. We will refuse any application for entry clearance or permission where we have reasonable grounds to believe it does not. We will also consider revoking your sponsor licence if we find you are breaching these Regulations.
- SPT3.6. For further information, see ‘Compliance with National Minimum Wage and the Working Time Regulations’ in section S4 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#).

## Applicant applying for no more than 12 months

- SPT3.7. If the applicant is applying for entry clearance or permission to stay for a period of 12 months or less, they must score a total of 70 points from

Table A in paragraph ISP 4.2 of the Immigration Rules, as set out below:

Points type	Description	Points available
Governing body endorsement	The applicant must have an <a href="#">endorsement from the relevant Sports Governing Body</a> .	50
Certificate of Sponsorship	The applicant must have a <a href="#">valid Certificate of Sponsorship</a> from an <a href="#">approved sponsor</a> for the role they wish to undertake.	10
Financial requirement	See <a href="#">Financial requirement</a> below.	10

## Applicant applying for more than 12 months

SPT3.8. If the applicant is applying for entry clearance or permission to stay for a period of longer than 12 months, they must score a total of 80 points as follows:

- 70 points from Table A in paragraph ISP 4.2 of the Immigration Rules, as set out in the [table above](#); and
- an additional 10 points from Table B in paragraph ISP 4.2 of the Immigration Rules for [English language skills in speaking and listening](#) at level A1 or above on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

SPT3.9. If the applicant does not meet the relevant points requirement, we will refuse their application for entry clearance or permission to stay.

## Financial requirement

SPT3.10. If the applicant is applying for entry clearance from outside the UK or has been in the UK for less than one year at the date of application, they must show they have enough funds to support themselves and any family members in the UK.

SPT3.11. If you are an A-rated sponsor, you can certify this requirement is met when you assign a Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) to them (also known as ‘certifying maintenance’). If you have not certified this requirement, the applicant must provide evidence of funds as specified in [Appendix Finance](#) to the Immigration Rules.

SPT3.12. For further information, see ‘Financial requirement’ in section S7 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#).

## Genuineness requirement

SPT3.13. All applicants on the International Sportsperson route must:

- genuinely intend and be able to undertake the role for which they are being sponsored; and
- not intend to undertake employment other than in the role for which they are being sponsored, or as otherwise permitted by their conditions of stay – see section S8 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#) for further information on conditions of stay

## Parental consent requirement

SPT3.14. Applicants must be at least 16 years of age on the date of application to be able to make a valid application on the International Sportsperson route. Where the applicant is aged under 18 on the date of application, they must have written consent from:

- both of their parents
- one of their parents, if that parent has sole responsibility for the applicant; or
- their legal guardian

SPT3.15. The written consent must confirm support for all of the following:

- the application for entry clearance or permission to stay
- the applicant's living and care arrangements in the UK
- if the application is for entry clearance, the applicant's travel to, and reception arrangements in, the UK

SPT3.16. If you are sponsoring a worker who is aged under 18, you must have regard to your duty to safeguard children – see 'Safeguarding children' in section L2 of [Part 1: Apply for a licence](#) for further information.

## Entry requirement

SPT3.17. If the person you wish to sponsor is outside the UK, they must apply for entry clearance (a visa) on the International Sportsperson route before they come to the UK. If they arrive in the UK without the relevant visa, they will be refused entry, even if they otherwise meet the requirements.

## Extension of permission

SPT3.18. Workers already in the UK with permission as an International Sportsperson (including on the [predecessor sports routes](#)) can apply to extend their stay if they meet the requirements. This could be to continue in the same employment or change employer or employment. See section S9 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#) for further information on extension and change of employment applications.

SPT3.19. There is no limit on the number of times an International Sportsperson can be granted permission, provided they continue to meet the relevant requirements.



## ‘Switching’ to the International Sportsperson route

SPT3.20. People in the UK on another immigration route can ‘switch’ (change route) to the International Sportsperson route if they meet all of the relevant immigration requirements and were not last granted entry clearance or permission to enter or stay:

- as a Visitor (unless the [switching exception for visitors](#) below applies)
- as a Student, unless they meet the additional rules for people [switching from the Student route](#) (as set out below)
- as a Short-term Student
- as a Parent of a Child Student
- as a Seasonal Worker
- as a Domestic Worker in a Private Household
- outside the Immigration Rules

SPT3.21. If a person you wish to sponsor on the International Sportsperson route is in the UK on any of the above routes, they must leave the UK and apply for entry clearance as an International Sportsperson.

### Switching exception for visitors

SPT3.22. A person who has, or was last granted, permission as a Visitor can switch to the International Sportsperson route if:

- they were here as a Standard Visitor and undertaking permitted activities in the sports sector, as set out in paragraphs PA 15.1. and PA 15.2. of [Appendix Visitor: Permitted Activities](#); or
- they were here as a Permitted Paid Engagement Visitor and undertaking an activity directly relating to their profession as a professional sports person, as set out in paragraph V 13.3(f) of [Appendix V: Visitor](#)

SPT3.23. A person who was last granted permission as a Visitor but does not meet the above requirements cannot switch.

### Switching from the Student route

SPT3.24. If the person you wish to sponsor will be applying for permission to stay (from within the UK) and they have, or last had, permission as a Student (including as a Tier 4 (General) Migrant), they must meet one of the following conditions on the date they make their application to be allowed to switch to the International Sportsperson route:

- they must have completed the course of study for which they were being sponsored as a Student
- they must be studying a full-time course of study at degree level or above with a higher education provider which has a track record of compliance, and the start date on their CoS must be no earlier than the course completion date

- they must be studying a full-time course of study leading to the award of a PhD with a higher education provider which has a track record of compliance, and the start date on their CoS must be no earlier than 24 months after the start date of their PhD

SPT3.25. A 'higher education provider with a track record of compliance' will be shown on the [Register of student sponsors](#) with the type 'Higher Education Institution (HEI)' and with the status 'Student Sponsor – Track Record'.

SPT3.26. If you wish to sponsor a worker who has, or last had, permission as a Student, you must carefully check they can meet one of the above conditions before you assign a CoS to them. If they do not meet one of these conditions, they will not be permitted to switch.

## Period of grant for an International Sportsperson

SPT3.27. If the applicant makes a successful application for entry clearance or permission to stay as an International Sportsperson, and they are applying for no more than 12 months, they will be granted for whichever is the shorter of:

- up to 14 days after the period of employment stated on their CoS
- 12 months

SPT3.28. If the applicant makes a successful application for entry clearance or permission to stay as an International Sportsperson, and they are applying for more than 12 months, they will be granted for whichever is the shorter of:

- up to 14 days after the period of employment stated on their CoS
- 3 years

## Settlement

SPT3.29. An International Sportsperson can apply for settlement (indefinite leave to remain) if they've lived in the UK for a continuous period of 5 years as an International Sportsperson (or on another eligible route). To be eligible, they must (among other requirements):

- have had, during the 5-year qualifying period, at least one grant of permission as an International Sportsperson in excess of 12 months
- be earning a minimum of £35,800 per year (there are rules on how this is calculated)
- be still required for the job in which they were last sponsored
- show English language ability in speaking and listening to at least level B1 on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, as set out in [Appendix English Language](#)
- meet the [Knowledge of Life in the UK](#) requirement

- SPT3.30. For full details, see paragraphs ISP 12.1 to ISP 19.2 of [Appendix International Sportsperson](#).
- SPT3.31. Once a person has been granted settlement, they no longer require sponsorship.

### **Further information about immigration requirements**

- SPT3.32. You can find more information about the requirements on the [International Sportsperson visa](#) page on the GOV.UK website
- SPT3.33. You should also refer to sections S7 to S9 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#) for further information on immigration requirements, conditions of stay, extensions and change of employment applications.

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## SPT4. Sports governing body endorsement letter

This section tells you about the requirement for an International Sportsperson to have an endorsement from the relevant sports governing body.

- SPT4.1. Before you assign a [Certificate of Sponsorship \(CoS\)](#) to an International Sportsperson, you must ensure the worker has a current endorsement letter issued by the relevant governing body for their sport, as specified in [Appendix Sports Governing Bodies](#).
- SPT4.2. This endorsement confirms that the worker meets the governing body's requirements, as agreed between the governing body and the Home Office. You cannot assign a valid CoS, and the worker will not be able to make a successful application, without this endorsement letter.
- SPT4.3. The governing body endorsement letter must confirm all of the following:
- that the worker is internationally established at the highest level
  - that the worker will make a significant contribution to the development of their sport at the highest level in the UK
  - the unique endorsement number issued to the worker by the governing body
- SPT4.4. When you assign a CoS to an International Sportsperson, you must enter the governing body endorsement reference number in the appropriate field.
- SPT4.5. You can only assign a CoS for the period covered by the governing body endorsement. Some governing bodies may only give an endorsement for 12 months at a time, regardless of the length of the worker's contract. If this is the case, and you wish to sponsor the worker beyond this 12-month period, you must get a new endorsement for the worker, and assign them a new CoS, before their permission expires. The worker must then apply for further permission as an International Sportsperson.
- SPT4.6. In all cases, you must ensure that the worker has a copy of the endorsement letter to include with their application for entry clearance or permission to stay. We will not grant their application without this.
- SPT4.7. You must never assign a CoS to a sportsperson who does not have a current endorsement from the relevant sports governing body. If you do, we will [revoke your sponsor licence](#).
- SPT4.8. For more information on governing body endorsement letters, see the [Code of practice for sports governing bodies](#).

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# SPT5. Certificate of Sponsorship for International Sportspersons

This section provides information on how to assign a valid Certificate of Sponsorship to an International Sportsperson.

## Overview

- SPT5.1. If you have followed all the rules in this guidance and you wish to sponsor an International Sportsperson, you must assign them a valid Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS), using your [sponsorship management system \(SMS\)](#) account.
- SPT5.2. Before assigning a CoS, you should satisfy yourself that the worker can meet the relevant [immigration requirements](#). This includes the requirement for the worker to have a valid [sports governing body endorsement letter](#).
- SPT5.3. You cannot assign a CoS if you're a B-rated sponsor, unless you sponsored the application which led to the worker's last grant of permission and you're continuing to sponsor them. In all other cases, you must have an A-rating. For information on sponsor ratings, see section L8 of [Part 1: Apply for a licence](#).
- SPT5.4. For detailed information on what a CoS is, and how many you can assign, see section S2 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#).
- SPT5.5. You can find detailed technical guidance on how to assign a CoS on GOV.UK: [User manuals: sponsorship management system \(SMS\)](#) – see in particular manuals 8 and 11.

## Fees

- SPT5.6. You must pay a fee for each CoS you assign. The amount you have to pay will depend on how long you are sponsoring the worker for – see the [UK visa fees](#) page on GOV.UK for information on current fee levels.

## Use of the CoS

- SPT5.7. Once you have assigned a CoS, the worker must use it within 3 months to apply for either:
- entry clearance (a visa) if they are outside the UK
  - permission to stay if they are in the UK and are eligible to extend their stay on, or switch to, the International Sportsperson route
- SPT5.8. If the CoS was assigned more than 3 months before the date of application, we may reject the worker's application and not consider it.

SPT5.9. The worker must not apply for entry clearance or permission to stay more than 3 months before the start date recorded on their CoS. If they do, we will refuse their application.

SPT5.10. We will also refuse the application if the CoS:

- has been withdrawn by you or cancelled by the Home Office – see section S6 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#) for information on when a CoS can be withdrawn or cancelled
- was used in a previous application that was refused

## What the CoS must confirm

SPT5.11. For a CoS to be valid, it must meet the requirements of paragraphs ISP 5.2 to ISP 5.5 of [Appendix International Sportsperson](#).

SPT5.12. By assigning a CoS to an International Sportsperson, you guarantee that:

- the worker is qualified to do the role for which they are being sponsored
- the worker intends to be based in the UK
- the job the worker is being sponsored for complies with both the National Minimum Wage Regulations and the Working Time Regulations – section S4 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#) for further information
- the worker will comply with the conditions of their entry clearance or permission to stay – see section S8 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#) for further information

SPT5.13. The CoS must confirm all of the following:

- that you are sponsoring the worker on the International Sportsperson route
- whether you are sponsoring the worker for up to 12 months or for longer than 12 months (select the appropriate option)
- the worker's personal information (such as name, date of birth, nationality), passport details and contact details
- [the start and end date of their employment](#)
- where the worker will carry out their employment – this should include their main work address and any other regular work addresses, if relevant
- whether you used an agent (such as a recruitment agency, employment business or other intermediary) to find the worker and, if so, details of that agent
- the job title
- the relevant SOC 2020 occupation code (select from the drop-down list under 'Job type') – this will be either:

- 3431: Sports players
- 3432: Sports coaches, instructors and officials
- the main duties of the role for which the worker is being sponsored
- the worker's gross salary (including any guaranteed allowances and bonuses)
- that the worker has been issued with an endorsement by the relevant [sports governing body](#) – you must provide the unique endorsement number on the CoS and give a copy of the letter to the worker so they can include it with their application for entry clearance or permission to stay
- whether you wish to [certify maintenance](#) for the worker (and, if relevant, their dependants) – you can only do this if you're an A-rated sponsor

## How long you can assign a CoS to an International Sportsperson

SPT5.14. You must enter a valid start date and end date on the CoS.

SPT5.15. The start date must be either:

- the date you expect the worker to start working for you if their application is successful; or
- the day after their current permission expires (if they are applying for permission to stay and you are sponsoring them to continue working for you)

SPT5.16. The end date must be whichever is the earliest of:

- the date you expect the worker to finish working for you
- the end date on the worker's [sports governing body endorsement letter](#)
- 12 months after the start date, if you selected the option 'International Sportsperson – up to 12 months'
- 3 years after the start date, if you selected the option 'International Sportsperson – more than 12 months'

SPT5.17. Remember that:

- the end date must never exceed the period on the sports governing body endorsement letter
- if the worker will be applying to enter or stay in the UK for a period of longer than 12 months, they will need to meet the [English language requirement](#)

SPT5.18. See section S3 of [Part 2: sponsor a worker](#) for more information on start and end dates.

## Reporting duties and record keeping

- SPT5.19. Once you have assigned a CoS to a worker, you must tell us if they fail to start their employment, are absent without permission, or there are any significant changes to the nature of their work or salary, or to your organisation. For full details of your reporting and other duties, see: [Part 3: Sponsor duties and compliance](#).
- SPT5.20. You must also keep records for each worker you sponsor as specified in [Appendix D](#) to the sponsor guidance.
- SPT5.21. If you fail to meet these duties, we may revoke your sponsor licence.

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## SPT6. Sports players moving on loan

This section tells you about the circumstances in which an International Sportsperson can move to another sports club on loan.

- SPT6.1. People granted permission on the Worker and Temporary Work routes are generally prohibited from changing their employer, unless they have been assigned a new [Certificate of Sponsorship \(CoS\)](#) and successfully make a new application for entry clearance or permission to stay (known as a 'change of employment application').
- SPT6.2. There are limited exceptions to this, including where a sports player on the International Sportsperson route moves on loan to another sports club.
- SPT6.3. If the relevant sports governing body permits it, 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.
- SPT6.4. During the loan period, you continue to be responsible for the player and must make arrangements with the loan club so that you can continue to meet your [sponsorship duties](#). The loan club does not need to make an application for a sports governing body endorsement or have a sponsor licence. When the player returns to you at the end of the loan period, you must report this to us, using your SMS account, within 10 working days of the player's return.
- SPT6.5. If your player is permanently transferred to another UK club, you must use your SMS account to tell us you are no longer sponsoring them. The new club must be a licensed sponsor and make an application for a sports governing body endorsement for the player. The player must then make a new application for entry clearance or permission to stay. The player must have been granted entry clearance or permission to stay before they can start playing for their new club .
- SPT6.6. Players on loan from an overseas club to a UK club must meet all of the requirements to be granted entry clearance or permission to stay on the International Sportsperson route – this includes the requirement to have [a sports governing body endorsement](#).
- SPT6.7. For further information on conditions of stay, see section S8 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#). For information on when an International Sportsperson has to make a change of employment application, see section S9 of Part 2: Sponsor a worker.

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