Home Office

International Sportsperson: guidance for caseworkers

Version 9.0

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About this guidance

This guidance tells you how to consider applications to enter, remain or settle in the UK on the International Sportsperson route. ‘You’ in this guidance means a caseworker.

This guidance is designed to be used alongside Appendix International Sportsperson of the Immigration Rules. The rules explain the requirements an applicant must meet and this guidance provides additional information on how to consider their application. Paragraph references refer to Appendix International Sportsperson unless otherwise stated.

You may also need to refer to the following sections of the rules, where relevant:

- Part Suitability
- Appendix ATAS
- Appendix English Language
- Appendix KOL UK
- Appendix Finance
- Appendix Continuous Residence

Paragraph references in this guidance refer to paragraphs in the Immigration Rules unless otherwise stated.

Contacts

If you have any questions about the guidance and your line manager or senior caseworker cannot help you or you think that the guidance has factual errors, then your line manager or locally embedded expert can email the Economic Migration Policy team.

If you notice any formatting errors in this guidance (broken links, spelling mistakes and so on) or have any comments about the layout or navigability of the guidance then your line manager or locally embedded expert can email the Guidance Rules and Forms team.

Publication

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

- version **9.0**
- published for Home Office staff on **23 October 2026**

Changes from last version of this guidance

This guidance has been updated in line with the August 2026 Suitability Rules changes relating to immigration bail and the Exceptions for Overstayers provisions.

‘Case – worker’ changed to ‘caseworker’ throughout for consistency across guidance products.

Related content
Contents

Introduction to the International Sportsperson route

This route is for an elite sportsperson or qualified sports coach who is both internationally established and able to make a significant contribution to the development of their chosen sport at the highest level in the UK.

This route replaces both the T2 Sportsperson route and the sporting element from the T5 (Temporary Worker) Creative or Sporting Worker route.

It is intended to be more straightforward for applicants and sponsors whilst still seeking to attract the same high level of sportsperson as the previous routes.

It is points-based and requires applicants who are seeking permission for a period of more than 12 months to demonstrate they meet the English language requirement.

Dependent partners and children can apply on this route, as set out in the dependents guidance.

The route can lead to settlement in the UK.

Requirements

The requirements applicants must meet are split into 3 parts:

- **validity requirements** - these outline the minimum criteria that must be met for the application to be fully considered - they ensure for example - the correct form has been used and the applicant has supplied their identity documents - applications which do not meet these requirements are invalid and may be rejected
- **suitability requirements** - these check the suitability of the applicant to be granted any form of permission, not specifically whether they qualify as an International Sportsperson - applicants must not fall for refusal on general grounds or be in breach of immigration laws - applications which do not meet these requirements should be refused
- **eligibility requirements** - these are the main criteria specific to the International Sportsperson route - applications which do not meet these requirements should be refused

Application	Validity	Suitability	Eligibility
Main applicants – entry clearance and permission to stay	ISP 1.1- ISP 1.6.	ISP 2.1 - ISP 2.2.	ISP 3.1 – ISP 9.2.
Main applicants – settlement	ISP 12.1 – ISP 12.4.	ISP 13.1 – ISP 13.2.	ISP 14.1 – ISP 18.3.
Dependants – entry clearance and permission to stay	ISP 20.1- ISP 20.5.	ISP 21.1 – ISP 21.2.	ISP 22.1 – ISP 27.5.

Application	Validity	Suitability	Eligibility
Dependants – settlement	ISP 30.1 – ISP 30.3.	ISP 31.1 – ISP 31.2.	ISP 32.1 – ISP 38.1.

Representatives

If an applicant has a UK-based representative, you must check that the representative is permitted to provide immigration advice or immigration services. They must be one of the following:

- registered with the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC)
- authorised by one of the following designated professional bodies or designated qualifying regulators:
- the Law Society
- the Law Society of Scotland
- the Law Society of Northern Ireland
- the General Council of the Bar
- the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives
- the Faculty of Advocates
- the General Council of the Bar of Northern Ireland
- otherwise exempt from the requirement to be registered or authorised - for example – the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (Part 5 Exemption: Licensed Sponsors) Order 2022 exempts licensed sponsors from the requirement to be registered or authorised, provided any immigration advice or immigration services are given:
  - free of charge
  - in relation to an individual they are sponsoring
  - where relevant, their eligible family members)
  - in connection with an application by that individual for entry clearance or permission on a sponsored work or study route (or an application for entry clearance or permission by that individual's eligible family members that is dependent on that individual's application)

For further information on what the Order permits, see section S6 of Part 2 of the sponsor guidance.

If the representative does not have the necessary permission to provide immigration advice or immigration services, you must direct all communications to the applicant instead.

Requesting more information

If you need more information, or clarification of certain details to be able to consider granting an application, you should try to identify all areas where further information is required, so it can be requested at the same time.

Applicants should provide all the evidence on which they rely to support their application at the outset of the process. However, it is recognised that if an applicant makes an error or omission with the supporting evidence they provide, it may be

appropriate for you to contact the applicant and invite them to provide additional evidence.

Verifying documents

You must conduct verification checks if you have any doubts about whether the supporting documents an applicant has submitted are genuine. If the application falls for refusal on other grounds, you do need to carry out verification checks, but you must explain in your decision that you reserve the right to carry out further checks in any reconsideration.

Translating documents

If the documents provided are not in English or Welsh, the applicant must provide a fully certified translation from a professional translator or translation company that can be independently verified by the Home Office. The translation must include all of the following information:

- confirmation it is an accurate translation of the document
- the date of translation
- the full name and signature of the translator or an official from the translation company
- the translator or translation company's contact details

If no translation is supplied, you should request one. If the applicant still does not provide a translation or if you are unable to verify the translation, the document will not be accepted. You must continue to process the application as if the applicant had not provided the document.

Translation of Welsh documents

Birth, marriage, civil partnership and death certificates issued in Wales are issued either in English only or bilingually (that is, with both Welsh and English printed on the same document). Such documents will therefore not require translation.

If you receive any supporting documentation in Welsh only (for example, an employer's covering letter) and you and your colleagues are unable to understand Welsh, you must arrange for the document to be translated into English.

Under the Home Office Welsh language scheme, customers living in Wales are entitled to correspond with the Home Office in Welsh. If an applicant writes to you in Welsh, they must receive a reply in Welsh.

The Home Office has a framework agreement with the Big Word translation company to translate material to and from Welsh. The cost of any translation must be met by your unit or directorate.

For guidance on handling correspondence in Welsh and how to procure Welsh translation services, see the ‘How the Welsh language scheme affects you’ page on the Intranet Hub.

Related content
Contents

Validity for entry clearance and permission to stay applications

This section tells you about the validity requirements an applicant must meet when they apply for entry clearance or permission to stay as an International Sportsperson.

Before considering suitability and eligibility, you must check the application is valid by referring to paragraphs ISP1.1. to ISP 1.6.

If you are not satisfied the application meets all the validity requirements, you should consider whether to request more information, reject the application or proceed to consider the application.

The application

An application for entry clearance or permission to stay as an International Sportsperson must meet all the following requirements:

- any fee and Immigration Health Charge must have been paid
- the applicant must have provided any required biometrics
- the applicant must have provided a passport or other travel document which satisfactorily establishes their identity and nationality
- the applicant must have a Certificate of Sponsorship that was issued to them no more than 3 months before the date of application

Application fees and Immigration Health Charge

The applicant must have paid the relevant application fees and any Immigration Health Charge (sometimes called the Immigration Health Surcharge or IHS). If these haven't been paid, you should write to the applicant and request these. See further guidance on the Immigration Health Charge.

If you require further information regarding refunding applications, see further guidance on the immigration and nationality refunds policy.

Biometrics and identity documents

You must be satisfied, where the applicant has provided their biometrics, these are verified against a valid passport or other travel document they have supplied.

Official – sensitive: start of section

The information on this page has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use.

Official – sensitive: end of section

Certificate of sponsorship

The applicant must have a certificate of sponsorship (CoS). This is a virtual document (like a database record) which is assigned by the sponsor. Sponsors use a secure IT system called the sponsorship management system (SMS) to assign a CoS.

The reference number for the CoS should be provided in the application. If the applicant has not supplied the reference number, they must provide an explanation.

If you are not satisfied the sponsor has assigned a CoS to the applicant, you may reject the application. If the reason the sponsor has not yet assigned a CoS is because of delays by UKVI (for example, a delay in processing a sponsor licence application) you may exceptionally place the case on hold pending the outcome.

You must check the CoS was assigned to the applicant no more than 3 months before the date of application. If it was assigned too early, the application may be rejected.

For information on how to check the CoS information, refer to the Certificate of Sponsorship checking system (the CoS will also need to be viewed when assessing the eligibility requirements.)

Minimum age

All applicants must be aged 16 or over on the date of application. If the applicant is too young, the application must be rejected.

Government or international scholarship agency awards

Where an applicant has received an award covering fees and living costs from a government or international scholarship agency in the 12 months before the date of application, the government or agency must provide written consent to the application. The letter of consent must be on the official letter-headed paper or stationery of the organisation or organisations, bearing the official stamp of that organisation and issued by an authorised official of that organisation. The documents must confirm the organisation gives the applicant consent to remain in or re-enter the UK.

Application form

A person applying for entry clearance or permission to stay as an International Sportsperson must apply online on the gov.uk website on the specified form as follows:

Applicant	Specified form
European Economic Area (EEA) national with a chipped passport	Either:

Applicant	Specified form
	• International Sportsperson using the UK Immigration: ID check app • the forms listed below for applicants outside or inside the UK (as relevant)
Applicants outside the UK	International Sportsperson visa
Applicants inside the UK	International Sportsperson

Switching

Individuals in the UK on another immigration route can 'switch' (change route) to the International Sportsperson route if they meet all the relevant immigration requirements and were not last granted permission:

- as a Visitor - except where the applicant has been in the UK undertaking permitted activities as a sports person
- 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

An applicant who is applying for permission to stay and has, or last had, permission as a Student must have completed the course of study for which the Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies was assigned (or a course to which paragraph ST 27.3 of Appendix Student applies), or the course must have finished before the start date on their CoS. Alternatively, if the course was leading to a PhD award they must have completed at least 24 months of that course.

You can normally determine whether the applicant has completed their course by checking the end date on the Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS). However, the applicant may have completed their studies and therefore met the requirement of the Rules, in advance of the end date on the CAS. If the end date on the CAS indicates they have not yet completed their studies, you should consider whether the course may have been completed by looking at any information provided with the application (for example, a results transcript) and any notifications made by the Student Sponsor. You should also check if the course stated on the CAS was at PhD level and if so, use the course start date to assess whether they have completed at least 24 months.

If required, you should write to the applicant using the Validity reminder template, advising them that they have not shown that they have completed their studies and giving them an opportunity to do so before rejecting the application as invalid.

Irish citizens

Most Irish citizens do not need permission to live and work in the UK and therefore are not eligible to apply for permission under the Immigration Rules. You must reject

any application for a visa from an Irish citizen as invalid, except where they are subject to:

- a deportation order made under section 5(1) of the Immigration Act 1971
- an exclusion decision, or an exclusion order made under regulation 23(5) of the Immigration (European Economic Area) Regulations 2016
- a travel ban implemented under section 8B of the Immigration Act 1971

If an Irish citizen falls within one of the above categories, you should consider their application in line with the rules in the same way as any other applicant.

If further information is required, contact the Common Travel Area (CTA) Policy Team.

eVisas

As evidence of their permission, applicants will receive an eVisa (a digital record of their immigration status).

Related content
Contents

Suitability for entry clearance and permission to stay applications

This section tells you about the suitability requirements an applicant must meet when they apply for entry clearance or permission to stay as an International Sportsperson.

You must check the application meets the suitability requirements by referring to:

- the suitability requirements for International Sportsperson, set out in paragraphs ISP 2.1. to ISP 2.2
- the suitability requirements, contained in Part Suitability

Applications which do not meet the suitability requirements should be refused.

Overstaying

You must check the applicant is not in breach of immigration laws, except where permitted by the Immigration Rules in respect of periods of overstaying. Refer to the full guidance on overstaying.

Immigration bail

Any applicant who is in the UK on immigration bail does not hold permission to be in the UK and is not suitable for the International Sportsperson route, except where permitted by the Immigration Rules in respect of periods of overstaying.

Related content
Contents

Eligibility for entry clearance and permission to stay applications

This section summarises the eligibility requirements an applicant must meet to be granted either entry clearance or permission to stay as an International Sportsperson.

The requirements for granting entry clearance or permission to stay can be found in the eligibility requirements contained in Appendix International Sportsperson.

If the caseworker is not satisfied that the application meets all the eligibility requirements for an International Sportsperson as specified in paragraphs ISP 3.1 to ISP 9.2, they must refuse the application.

Entry requirement

A person seeking to come to the UK as an International Sportsperson must apply for and obtain entry clearance as an International Sportsperson before they arrive in the UK.

Tuberculosis Certificates (TB)

An applicant must provide a valid TB certificate with their application, if they have been residing within a country listed in Appendix Tuberculosis (TB) of the Immigration Rules for more than 6 months immediately preceding the application. If an applicant has not supplied a valid TB test certificate when they are required to, you should refuse the application under paragraph ISP 3.2. There is information on GOV. UK: Tuberculosis tests for visa applicants regarding which applicants are required to obtain a TB certificate before applying and the valid test centres.

Points requirement

This section explains how points are scored for an International Sportsperson.

Granting permission for a period of 12 months or less

To be eligible for a grant of 12 months or less on the International Sportsperson route, applicants must score a minimum of 70 points against 3 requirements.

The applicant must score:

- 50 points for a valid Sports Governing Body Endorsement
- 10 points for meeting the Certificate of Sponsorship requirement
- 10 points for meeting the financial requirement

All points are mandatory. If an applicant scores fewer than 70 points, you must refuse their application and explain where they have not been awarded points.

Table A

This table sets out the requirements, the points available and the corresponding rule:

Points required (mandatory)	Relevant rules	Points available
Governing Body Endorsement	ISP 5.1.	50
Certificate of Sponsorship	ISP 5.2. and ISP 5.3.	10
Financial requirements	ISP 7.1. to ISP 7.3.	10

Granting permission for a period of time exceeding 12 months

To be eligible for a grant exceeding 12 months on the International Sportsperson route, applicants must score a minimum of 80 points.

The applicant must score (from Table A):

- 50 points for a valid Sports Governing Body Endorsement
- 10 points for meeting the Certificate of Sponsorship requirement
- 10 points for meeting the financial requirement

An applicant must also score (from Table B):

- 10 points for meeting the English language requirement

All points are mandatory. If an applicant scores fewer than 80 points, you must refuse their application and explain where they have not been awarded points.

Table B

Points required (mandatory) where the period of permission applied for exceeds 12 months	Relevant rules	Points available
English Language at level A1	ISP 8.1. and ISP 8.2.	10

Tables A and B set out the requirements, the points available and the corresponding rule.

Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) and Sports Governing Body Endorsement requirements

This section tells you how to assess the Governing Body Endorsement requirement and the CoS requirement for an International Sportsperson and also how to check

that a CoS is valid using the CoS checking system and how to record it on the system.

These requirements are met by having a valid CoS and an endorsement from the relevant Sports Governing Body.

You must award 10 points if the applicant has a valid CoS and 50 points if the applicant has an endorsement from the relevant Sports Governing Body.

Sport's Governing Body Endorsement

Only a Sports Governing Body approved by the Home Office can give an endorsement.

The Governing Body Endorsement that goes with the CoS confirms that the applicant:

- is elite
- is internationally established as a player or coach at the highest level
- will make a significant contribution to the development of their sport at the highest level in the UK

These details must be confirmed in a letter from the relevant Sports Governing Body.

Both this letter and the CoS must also contain a unique endorsement number. The reference number will begin with an abbreviated form of the governing body (for example RUGU for rugby union). You must cross-reference the unique endorsement number on the CoS against the number detailed in the letter.

The Certificate of Sponsorship must confirm:

- the applicant's name, that they are being sponsored as an International Sportsperson and details of the job and salary offered to the applicant
- that the applicant is qualified to do the job for which they are being sponsored
- the unique endorsement number that has been issued by the appropriate Sports Governing Body
- that the applicant intends to be based in the UK

Checking the validity of a CoS

A valid CoS must:

- have been issued by a licensed sponsor that holds a valid International Sportsperson sponsor licence
- have been issued by an A-rated sponsor, unless it is an extension application to continue working for the same sponsor as in the applicant's last permission
- have a reference number that links to a CoS checking service entry that names the applicant as a sponsored worker

- confirm that the sponsor is sponsoring the applicant on the International Sportsperson route on which the applicant has applied
- have the same personal details as on the bio-data page of the applicant's passport or travel document
- have been assigned no more than 3 months before the date of application
- have a start date no more than 3 months after the date of application
- not have been used in a previous application which was either granted or refused (but can have been used in a previous application which was rejected as invalid, made void or withdrawn)
- not have been withdrawn by the sponsor or cancelled by the Home Office since it was assigned

How to search the CoS checking system

To access the CoS checking system, you must use their username and password. To access the search function, you should click 'CoS check'. The CoS checker times out every 30 minutes, so you may need to log in again after this time.

You can search the system using the:

- CoS number, by entering it into the relevant screen
- applicant's details
- sponsor's details

Searching using the applicant's details

If you select this option, you can search by:

- passport or travel document number
- family name
- given name
- nationality
- date of birth
- gender

The more information that is provided, the narrower the search will be.

Searching using the sponsor's details

If you select this option, you can search by:

- sponsor licence number
- sponsor name
- sponsor address
- postcode

When you check the CoS, you must:

- find it on the CoS checking system

- check the case type given on the caseworking system matches the type of CoS issued - this can be found on the top of the CoS
- record it as used in all approval and refusal cases
- not mark it as ‘used’ if you are rejecting the application as invalid, withdrawing or voiding the application, or the applicant is varying it to another route, because the International Sportsperson decision has not been made and you (the caseworker) could use it again

Licensed sponsor

If, while an application on the International Sportsperson route is under consideration, the applicant’s sponsor loses its licence, you **must** inform the applicant of this promptly.

You must only inform the applicant their sponsor no longer has a licence, not the reasons why. The only exception is if the licence was revoked for reasons directly linked to that application and those reasons therefore have relevance to the refusal.

If the sponsor has lost their licence, you should discuss how to proceed with your manager.

Check the current status of the CoS

Status of CoS on the checking system:	**What you must do:**
Assigned	Continue to assess the application.
Suspended	• not decide the case • keep it on hold • contact the sponsor licensing unit (SLU) to find out if you will be re-instating the sponsor or if it will be suspended indefinitely and what information can be shared with the applicant If you do not issue a new CoS, you must refuse the application.
Withdrawn	Refuse the application if the sponsor does not issue another CoS because it is no longer valid.
Used	Check to see if a new CoS has been issued. If not, you must refuse the application because there is no valid CoS.

Length of the CoS

The length of the CoS will depend on whether the applicant is applying for entry clearance or permission to stay. See the following links for further details:

- entry clearance
- permission to stay

Compliance with specified employment regulations

You must not award points for sponsorship if you have reasonable grounds to believe the job the applicant is being sponsored to do does not comply with either the National Minimum Wage Regulations or the Working Time Regulations.

For detailed guidance, see:

- Calculating the national minimum wage
- Minimum wage for different types of work
- National Minimum Wage and Living Wage: accommodation
- National Minimum Wage (HMRC manual)

The most well-known aspect of the Working Time Regulations is the maximum weekly working hours. If a sponsor states the worker has opted out, you should ask for evidence of this. The regulations also cover other important protections, outlined at the links below. If a sponsor claims an exemption applies to any of these protections, you can ask for an explanation and refuse the application if you are not satisfied:

- Holiday entitlement
- Rest breaks at work
- Night working hours

The guidance linked to above may help you in assessing cases against both sets of regulations. Warning signs to be aware of include:

- long shifts without the daily or weekly rest breaks which workers would normally be entitled to
- claims that work is “unmeasured” for either or both sets of regulations
- average hours agreements which seem unrealistic in the context of the job
- large deductions from salary, for accommodation or other reasons

You should be mindful that both sets of regulations are complex and there are a number of exemptions that may apply to an individual case. If you are in doubt, you should consider requesting additional information from the sponsor or seeking advice from the Economic Migration Policy team via the Work and Study Technical Team.

Genuine requirement

This section tells you how to assess the genuineness of an application on the International Sportsperson route.

When an applicant applies for entry clearance or permission to stay as an International Sportsperson, you must be satisfied they:

- genuinely intend and are able, to undertake the role for which they are being sponsored
- do not intend to undertake employment other than in the role for which they are being sponsored, or as otherwise permitted at ISP 11.3

To assess this on the balance of probabilities, you may request after confirming with your manager:

- additional information and evidence and refuse the application if the information or evidence is not provided (the Home Office must receive any requested documents at the address given in the request, within 10 business days of the date the request is made)
- that an applicant attends an interview and refuse the application if the applicant fails to comply with any such request without providing a reasonable explanation

You may take into account the applicants:

- knowledge of the role
- relevant experience relative to skills required to do the role
- knowledge of the sponsor in the UK
- explanation of how they were recruited
- any other relevant information

You will not need to take the above actions for most applicants and will only do so when:

- individual sponsors are assigning unusually large numbers of CoS for Sportspersons relative to their size or for the same type of role
- there are reasonable grounds to believe the applicant will not be working in the role described on the CoS
- intelligence suggests applicants are linked to extremism, terrorism or trafficking

English language requirement

This section tells you about the English language requirement for an International Sportsperson.

The applicant can apply for entry clearance or permission to stay for 12 months or less without needing to demonstrate English language ability.

If the applicant is applying for entry clearance or permission to stay for a period exceeding 12 months, they need to meet the English language requirement. You must award 10 points if the applicant meets the English language requirement by demonstrating skills of at least level A1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages in speaking and listening.

To assess whether the requirement is met, you should refer to the English language guidance.

Financial requirement

This section explains how to assess the financial requirement (previously known as maintenance) for International Sportspersons.

You must award 10 points if the applicant meets the financial requirement. An applicant can meet the financial requirement in one of three ways:

- they are applying for permission to stay and have been living in the UK with permission for 12 months or longer on the date of application
- their A-rated sponsor has confirmed on the CoS that they will, if necessary, maintain and accommodate the applicant up to the end of the first month of their employment, for an amount of at least £1,270
- they provide evidence showing they have held funds of at least £1,270 for a 28-day period as set out in the financial requirement guidance

- For further details see the financial requirement guidance.

Applicants under 18 years of age

For guidance on the Parental Consent Requirement for applicant not applying as a dependent child which applies to applicants under 18 years see: Children guidance.

You should note that under the validity requirements, the applicant must be at least 16 years of age on the date of application.

Related content
Contents

Settlement

This section explains how to assess settlement applications on the International Sportsperson route. The requirements applicants must meet are split into 3 parts: validity, suitability and eligibility.

Validity for settlement application

This section tells you about the validity requirements that an applicant must meet when they apply for settlement (previously known as indefinite leave to remain) as an International Sportsperson.

If you are not satisfied that the application meets all the validity requirements for settlement as specified in paragraphs ISP 12.1 to ISP 12.3 you should consider whether to request further information, reject the application, or (on a discretionary basis) proceed with the consideration of the application.

When applying for settlement as an International Sportsperson, the applicant must:

- apply online on the gov.uk website on the specified form “Settle in the UK in various immigration categories: form SET(O)
- have paid the relevant application fee
- have provided any required biometrics
- have provided a passport or other travel document which satisfactorily establishes their identity and nationality
- be in the UK
- have, at any point during the 5-year continuous residence period, been granted leave as an International Sportsperson for a period exceeding 12 months

Suitability for settlement application

This section tells you about the suitability requirements that an applicant must meet when you apply for settlement as an International Sportsperson.

If you are not satisfied that the application meets all the suitability requirements for settlement as specified in paragraphs ISP 13.1. to ISP 13.2, you must refuse the application.

You must check:

- that the applicant does not fall for refusal under Part Suitability of the Immigration Rules
- that where the applicant is applying for permission to stay, the applicant is not:
  - in breach of immigration laws, except where the section entitled ‘Exceptions for Overstayers’ under Part Suitability applies, that period of overstaying will be disregarded
  - on immigration bail

Overstaying

- You must check the applicant is not in breach of immigration laws, except where permitted by the Immigration Rules in respect of periods of overstaying. Full guidance on overstaying is available.

Immigration bail

Any applicant who is in the UK on immigration bail does not hold permission to be in the UK and is not suitable for the Skilled Worker route, except where permitted by the Immigration Rules in respect of periods of overstaying.

Eligibility for settlement application

This section tells you about the eligibility requirements that an applicant must meet to be granted settlement as an International Sportsperson.

If you are not satisfied that the application meets all the eligibility requirements for an International Sportsperson as specified in paragraphs ISP 14.1. to ISP 18.3, you must refuse the application.

Sponsor requirement

The sponsor in the applicant's most recent permission must:

- still be approved by the Home Office to sponsor an International Sportsperson
- confirm that:
  - they still require the applicant to work for them for the foreseeable future
  - the applicant is paid and will be paid for the foreseeable future, at least £35,800 per year

Salary conditions

The salary must be basic pay (excluding overtime) and it must only include allowances where they are part of the guaranteed salary package and would be paid to a local settled worker in similar circumstances.

The salary should not include:

- other allowances and benefits, such as:
  - bonus or incentive pay
  - employer pension contributions
  - travel and subsistence (including travel to and from the applicant's home country)
- the value of any shares the applicant has received as an employee-owner in exchange for some of their UK employment rights

If the applicant is being sponsored to work for more than 48 hours a week, only the salary for the first 48 hours a week will be considered towards the salary threshold of £35,800.

If the applicant is currently absent from work for one of the reasons set out in paragraph 9.30.1 or has returned from such an absence within the month before the date of application, you should base their salary on what they will receive on their return to work as confirmed by the sponsor.

Qualifying period requirement

The applicant must have spent the 5 years before the date of application in the UK with permission on any (or a combination) of the following routes:

- T2 Minister of Religion / Tier 2 (Minister of Religion)
- T5 Creative and Sporting
- International Sportsperson / T2 Sportsperson / Tier 2 (Sportsperson)
- Skilled Worker / Tier 2 (General)
- Representative of an Overseas Business
- Innovator Founder / Innovator
- Global Talent
- Tier 1 (Entrepreneur)
- Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent)
- Tier 1 (General)
- Tier 1 (Investor)

In addition, the applicant may count the time spent towards this qualifying period that was spent waiting for a decision on an International Sportsperson application, as long as they meet the conditions as specified in ISP 14.2(h).

Continuous residence requirement

The applicant must meet the continuous residence requirement as specified in Appendix Continuous residence.

Absences from the UK must be considered in line with Appendix Continuous residence. For further details see the guidance on calculating the continuous period.

English language requirement

For applications for settlement, the applicant must have English language skills of at least level B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages in speaking and listening.

To assess whether the requirement is met, you should refer to the English language guidance.

Knowledge of Life in the UK

The applicant must meet the Knowledge of Life in the UK requirement as specified in Appendix KOL UK.

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Grant or refuse

This section tells you how to grant or refuse an application on the International Sportsperson route.

The actions you must take will differ dependant on the type of application under consideration:

- entry clearance
- permission to stay
- settlement

Biometric information

Successful applicants for entry clearance and permission to stay are given an eVisa.

They will need to create a UKVI account to access their eVisa and view their immigration status. For further information, see GOV.UK - get access to your eVisa.

Related content
Contents

Grant or refuse entry clearance

This section tells you how to grant or refuse an application for entry clearance for an International Sportsperson.

Granting entry clearance

You must grant entry clearance if the applicant meets all the requirements of paragraphs ISP 1.1 to ISP 9.2 of the Immigration Rules.

If the applicant meets the above requirements, you must grant entry clearance for the shorter period of either:

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

Biometric information for entry clearance

Successful applicants for entry clearance are given an eVisa.

They will need to create a UKVI account to access their eVisa and view their immigration status. For further information, see get access to your eVisa on GOV.UK.

Refuse entry clearance

You must refuse the application if:

- the applicant does not meet all the requirements of paragraphs ISP 2.1 to ISP 2.2 of the Immigration Rules
- the applicant does not meet all the suitability and eligibility requirements, except for any period of overstaying allowed under the Immigration Rules

Rights of appeal and administrative review

If an application for entry clearance or permission to stay is refused on the International Sportsperson route, the applicant cannot appeal against the decision. However, if they think the Home Office has made an error in considering their application, they can apply for an administrative review under Appendix AR: Administrative Review. Details of how to make an administrative review application must be included in the decision letter.

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Grant or refuse

Grant or refuse entry at UK port

This section tells Border Force officers how to grant or refuse entry at a UK port for an International Sportsperson.

Granting permission to enter

Before the Border Force officer grants permission to enter, you must be satisfied that:

- the applicant has valid entry clearance or permission to stay in the UK as an International Sportsperson
- there are no reasons to believe the applicant gave false information to obtain the entry clearance or permission to stay in the UK or that circumstances have changed since it was issued
- the suitability requirements in Part Suitability of the Immigration Rules are met

Refusing permission to enter

The Border Force officer must refuse under paragraph 9.14.1. of the Immigration Rules if someone seeks entry as an International Sportsperson without a valid UK entry clearance or permission to stay for this purpose.

The Border Force officer must take into account the applicant's continuing permission if you are considering refusing them after their return from a short absence abroad. The Border Force officer must consider the refusal under paragraph 9.18.1 of the Immigration Rules.

If the applicant is subject to a deportation order, any permission they have been granted is cancelled. The Border Force officer must refuse under paragraph 9.2.1(c) of the Immigration Rules.

Official – sensitive: start of section

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Official – sensitive: end of section

Appeal rights and refusal forms

An applicant who has valid entry clearance (EC) or a biometric residence permit (BRP) which is cancelled at the border will not have a right of appeal against that decision. Where an EC or a BRP is cancelled the applicant may have a right to administrative review of that decision.

Where there is a right to administrative review at the border, the Border Force officer must serve an IS82 No RD AR in UK port cases and at the juxtaposed controls you must serve an IS82 JUXT AR.

Where the applicant has an EC or BRP and is having their permission cancelled at the border and does not qualify for administrative review, the Border Force officer must serve an IS82 RD no AR in UK port cases and at the juxtaposed controls you must serve the IS82 JUXT No AR.

Where the applicant does not hold an EC or BRP there is no right to administrative review, the Border Force officer must serve the applicant an IS82 No AR RLE in UK port cases and an IS82 JUXT No AR RLE at the juxtaposed controls.

If the applicant is the subject of an extant deportation order, they do not have a right of appeal before removal. The Border Force officer must serve them with form IS 82A, which you can find on the caseworking system.

Related content
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Grant or refuse

Grant or refuse permission to stay

This section tells you how to grant or refuse permission to stay as an International Sportsperson.

Grant permission to stay

You must grant permission to stay if the applicant:

- meets all the suitability and eligibility requirements of the Immigration Rules
- does not fall for refusal under Part Suitability of the Immigration Rules

If the applicant meets the above requirements, you must grant permission to stay for the shorter period of either:

- up to 14 days after the period of employment stated on their Certificate of Sponsorship
- up to 12 months (for applicants scoring 70 points from Table A)
- up to 3 years (for applicants scoring 80 points from both Table A and Table B)

Refuse permission to stay

You should refuse permission to stay if:

- the applicant does not meet all of the suitability and eligibility requirements of the Immigration Rules
- any of the suitability requirements in Part Suitability of the Immigration Rules are not met
- the applicant is in breach of immigration laws, except for any period of overstaying allowed under the Immigration Rules

Rights of appeal and administrative review

If an application for permission to stay is refused, the applicant cannot appeal against the decision. However, if they think the Home Office has made an error in considering their application, they can apply for an administrative review. Details of how to make an administrative review application must be included in the decision letter.

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Grant or refuse settlement

This section tells you how to grant or refuse settlement applications for International Sportspersons.

Grant settlement

You must grant settlement if the applicant:

- meets all of the suitability and eligibility requirements of the Immigration Rules
- does not fall for refusal under Part Suitability of the Immigration Rules

Refuse settlement

You should refuse settlement if the applicant:

- meets all of the suitability and eligibility requirements of the Immigration Rules
- falls for refusal under Part Suitability of the Immigration Rules

Administrative review

If an application for settlement is refused, the applicant cannot appeal against the decision. However, if they think the Home Office has made an error in considering their application, they can apply for an administrative review under Appendix AR: Administrative Review.

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Conditions of permission

This section tells you about the conditions that an applicant must meet if they are granted entry clearance or permission to stay as an International Sportsperson.

Applicants granted entry clearance or permission to stay as an International Sportsperson are subject to the following conditions:

- they cannot take employment except:
  - working for the sponsor in the job recorded on their Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS)
  - supplementary employment
  - voluntary work
  - working out a contractual notice period for a job the person was lawfully working in on the date of application
  - employment as a sportsperson for the applicant's national team while their national team is in the UK, playing in British University and College Sport (BUCS) competitions and temporary engagements as a sports broadcaster providing guest expert commentary on a particular sporting event
- they have no access to public funds
- study is permitted subject to the ATAS condition in Appendix ATAS

Changes of employer and employment

Where a person has permission as an International Sportsperson and they change their employer, you may cancel their permission, unless any of the exemptions apply in paragraph 9.29.1 of the Immigration Rules.

The applicant must make a change of employment application if they change employer.

The applicant does not need to make a change of employment application if:

- their pay increases or decreases but the sponsor would need to report this change via the sponsor management system (SMS)
- they change role but continue to work for the same employer in the same occupation code
- they are moving under Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) or similar arrangements.
- they change sponsor but remain working for the same employer in the same occupation code
- they are a sports player moving on loan
- they have been absent for one month or longer for an acceptable reason

If the applicant has been subject to a TUPE or similar transfer, or there is otherwise a change of sponsor (but not employer), the sponsor licence unit will check the transfer was done correctly. You will need to update the relevant section on the caseworking system with the new sponsors details.

You must consider a change of employment application in the same way as an initial application.

The applicant must:

- provide a new CoS from their new sponsor
- meet all the points requirements

For more information on the requirements, see entry clearance and extension requirements.

Sports players moving on loan

It is permissible for sports players to move on loan if all of the following apply:

- they have permission as an International Sportsperson
- they are sponsored by a sports club
- they are sponsored as a player and are being temporarily loaned to another sports club
- player loans are specifically permitted in rules set down by the relevant sports governing body
- their sponsor has made arrangements with the loan club to enable to the sponsor to continue to meet its sponsor duties
- the player will return to working for the sponsor at the end of the loan

Supplementary employment

In addition to the job specified on the Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS), the applicant can do extra work if:

- it is either:
  - a job listed in Appendix Immigration Salary List
  - a job in the same profession and at the same professional level as the work for which the CoS was assigned
- it is no more than 20 hours per week
- it is outside the working hours covered by the CoS
- the person remains working for the sponsor in the job for which the CoS was assigned

If they meet the above requirements the applicant does not need to inform the Home Office before taking extra work.

Voluntary work

The applicant can do voluntary work in any sector. They must not be paid or receive other money for the voluntary work, except reasonable expenses as described in section 44 of the National Minimum Wage Act.

Secondary employment

The applicant can do a second (additional) job that is not in the same profession as the job specified on the CoS and is not supplementary employment (for example: it requires more than 20 hours work a week). They will need a new CoS for this second job and apply for a variation of permission, in addition to the CoS and permission for their existing job. This is because working in the second job is not covered by their existing conditions.

They cannot apply for further permission to stay for the second job until they have started working for their first sponsor. They will need to make a new application which must include a letter saying they want to change their existing permission to stay. The letter must include:

- the applicant's name
- date of birth
- CoS reference number, from the current permission
- confirmation of the date when the current permission expires

If you approve their secondary employment, you will be varying the applicant's initial permission and the applicant will have 2 sponsors during the period that both CoS are valid. Where the CoS reference number is displayed, the card should now read '2 CoS as Letter'. This indicates that the applicant has secondary employment.

You must also change the applicant's approval letter to state the primary and secondary sponsors and the employment end dates for each.

Absence from employment

Where a person on the International Sportsperson route has been absent from work without pay, or on reduced pay, for more than 4 weeks during any calendar year, you may cancel their permission, unless the reason for absence or reduction in salary is one of the following:

- statutory maternity leave, paternity leave, parental leave or shared parental leave
- statutory adoption leave
- sick leave
- assisting with a national or international humanitarian or environmental crisis, providing their sponsor agreed to the absence for that purpose
- taking part in legally organised industrial action

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Taking a fair and proportionate approach to the assessment of evidence

This section tells you how to conduct a fair and appropriate assessment of evidence.

You must review the information on the application form and other available evidence on the case working systems before deciding whether you are satisfied on the balance of probabilities (it is more likely than not) that a requirement is met.

If the applicant provides evidence that is meant to show a requirement is met and you are not satisfied the evidence is genuine, you should discuss whether to make further checks with a manager.

Official sensitive – start of section

The information on this page has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use.

Official sensitive – end of section

Format of evidence

The Immigration Rules no longer set out specific format requirements for most documents. This doesn't mean that format is irrelevant – it will help you assess if a piece of evidence is genuine and if it provides the information, you need to be satisfied the requirement is met.

You must not refuse an application because the evidence is not in a particular format but may request alternative or additional evidence if you are not satisfied what the applicant (or their sponsor) has provided shows the requirements of the rules are met.

If evidence, such as a bank letter, does not include the information you would normally expect you should consider whether to take further action to verify it.

Where evidence is missing or inadequate

The applicant will be told what evidence to provide as part of the application process.

If evidence is missing or inadequate, you do not have to offer the applicant an opportunity to provide different evidence. For example: if the applicant provides bank statements and they do not show the required level of funds or the evidence is not sufficient to satisfy you, you do not need to check whether the applicant has another bank account that might meet the requirement.

However, you should consider seeking further information or making verification checks when, for example:

- evidence is missing (for example a missing page from a series) that you believe the applicant has, or could obtain
- evidence is inadequate but could be clarified, for example, if a letter from an official financial sponsor does not include all the information you would expect

You should check any discrepancies about information on the Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) with the sponsor.

You may decide to ask for further information from the applicant, sponsor, or issuing institution, or make verification checks, if you think it would help assess whether the requirements are met. If you are not sure whether this would help, you should discuss this with manager.

When contacting the applicant or sponsor, they should be given 10 UK working days in which to provide a response.

You do not need to contact the applicant or sponsor if evidence is missing or inadequate, but:

- you do not need the information because you can get it elsewhere, for example, from the CoS
- receiving it would make no difference to their decision (for example because the applicant would still be refused for other reasons)

Related content
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Dependants of an International Sportsperson

This section tells you which dependants can join a person who comes to the UK on the International Sportsperson route.

The following dependants are permitted to come to the UK to join or accompany a person granted entry clearance or permission to stay as an International Sportsperson, provided they meet the requirements of the rules:

- dependent partner
- dependent children

- See the guidance for dependants.

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