Volleyball England Governing Body Endorsement Guidance and Requirements

This guidance is to be used for all International Sportsperson Volleyball England governing body endorsement requests, in accordance with the Home Office Points Based Immigration System, made on or after 21 October 2026.

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

This page provides a brief explanation of what endorsement requirements apply in respect of the International Sportsperson route of the points-based system. The Immigration Rules for the International Sportsperson route can be found at Appendix International Sportsperson.

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

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

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

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

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

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

1.6 Length of endorsement

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

Type of application	Length of endorsement
Sponsor	Endorsements for sponsors will not have an end date. They will be valid for as long as the sponsor continues to hold a valid sponsor licence.
Migrant	For an initial maximum period of 3 years, with a further extension of a maximum period of 3 years. If the contract is for fewer than 3 years, it will be issued for the length of the contract.

1.7 Change of employment

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

1.8 Salary

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

1.9 Supplementary employment

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

1.10 Compliance with the Code of Practice for Sports Governing Bodies

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

Section 2: Requirements

This page explains Volleyball England requirements under the International Sportsperson route for the 2026/27 season. These requirements are effective from 21 October 2026.

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

These requirements are applicable to England only.

2.1 Consultation

The following requirements have been agreed by the Home Office following consultation with Volleyball England.

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

2.2 Review

The requirements will be reviewed annually prior to the start of the Volleyball England Super League season. The next review will be in May 2027.

2.3 Length of season

The season for volleyball in England runs from 1 September to 22 April annually. With European and International club competitions running throughout the year.

2.4 Requirements

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

Category	Requirement	
Sponsor	Only Volleyball England and men's and women's Super League teams are eligible for a sponsor endorsement.	
Migrant	**Player**	In order to be issued a governing body endorsement, a Player must meet one of the following requirements: • A Player must have played in at least eight competitive matches for an FIVB tier II, III, IV, V ranked National Federation's International Senior team during the two years preceding the date of the application of endorsement; or • A Player must have been a participating member of a squad in the 1st or 2nd domestic league in an FIVB tier III, IV or V National Federation. Specifically, they must have been part of the 14-person roster in at

		least 8 competitive matches during the 2023, 2024 or 2025 season; <u>or</u> • A Player must have been a participating member of a squad in the NCAA D1, D2 or D3. Specifically, they must have been a part of the 14-person roster in at least 8 competitive matches during the 2023, 2024 or 2025 season; <u>or</u> • A Player must have been a participating member of a squad in the Canadian University League. Specifically, they must have been a part of the 14-person roster in at least 8 competitive matches during the 2023, 2024 or 2025 season; <u>or</u> • A player must have been a participating member of a squad in the highest domestic University League in an FIVB tier IV or V National Federation. Specifically, they must have been a part of the 14-person roster in at least 8 competitive matches during the 2023, 2024 or 2025 season **<u>For the avoidance of doubt:</u>** ***Competitive games*** comprise games played in: • Commonwealth Games • World Championships • Games within any qualifying tournament for the above • World Ranking Points matches ***The FIVB National Federation rankings*** can be found here
	Coach	In order to be issued a governing body endorsement, a Coach is required to have proven experience of coaching as a Head or Assistant Coach for one full season. This means having been head coach of a team that meets one of the below requirements within the last 5 years: • FIVB tier II, III, IV or V National Federation national team; <u>or</u> • A club team in the highest domestic league in an FIVB tier III, IV, or V national federation.

		A coach is also required to have gained a FIVB Coaches Course Level II qualification or above or an equivalent satisfactory qualification, which also includes awareness of Health & Safety, a First Aid qualification, an awareness of child welfare issues and a relevant police check from their country of origin. Attendance at a Safeguarding and Protecting Children course is required to practice once in the UK. Relevant FIVB Online Courses and Technical Material can be found here. For further details of coach awards please see the Volleyball England website HERE Evidence to show a recruitment search has been undertaken should be provided. This should include a copy of an advertisement and the names of all applicants (an advert must be live for a minimum of two weeks on the Volleyball England website) - see the full policy guidance on sponsoring a worker for more information.
	Player/Coach	A Player/Coach must meet the playing criteria (as above) and is required to have gained a UKCC Level 2 qualification or above or an equivalent qualification which also includes Health & Safety, First Aid qualifications, an awareness of child welfare issues and a relevant police check from their country of origin. Attendance at a Safeguarding and Protecting Children course is required to practice once in the UK.

Injuries, Absences and Suspensions

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

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

In order to obtain the governing body endorsement, the individual must not be subject to a provisional suspension or any unexpired period of ineligibility from playing and/ or

coaching activities in any jurisdiction as a result of being charged with or found guilty of a corruption offence and/ or a doping offence and/ or another misconduct offence.

2.5 Further information

This information is available on the Volleyball England website

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

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Loughborough
LE11 3QF

Telephone: 01509794698 Email: r.payne@volleyballengland.org

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

2.6 Appeals Process

Where an application for either a player to play in a team or a coach to coach a team in one of the leagues covered by the requirements for a governing body endorsement as set out for International Sportsperson has been refused on the grounds that the player or coach fails to meet the published requirements, the sponsor may seek a review of the application. The sponsor will have 10 days to request such a review. In these cases, Volleyball England will refer the sponsor's evidence to the Volleyball England Disciplinary Committee – details here

The sponsor's supporting evidence will be sent to the panel in advance for their consideration in order to allow an informed decision. Sponsors should note that, in respect of any application, there will only be one panel available, and the decision of the panel is final. Sponsors should therefore ensure that all evidence it wishes to present in support of its application is presented to the panel. If the sponsor has previously made an application that was unsuccessful at panel a further panel cannot be requested for the same player during the season unless the player's status changes and they meet the requirements whereby a new application can be submitted.

a. The Review

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

A review shall be commenced by the appellant lodging with Volleyball England, a notice of appeal within 10 days of the decision appealed against. The notice of appeal shall:

i. set out details of the decision appealed against and, if the whole of the decision is not appealed against, identify that part of it which is appealed against;
ii. set out in full the grounds of appeal and an appellant shall not be entitled to rely in any ground of appeal not set out in the notice of appeal; and
iii. be accompanied by a deposit of £500. The panel shall have discretion as to whether the deposit is returned.

The procedure for appeal will be in accordance with the Volleyball England Grievance & Disciplinary Policy and the Panel shall be comprised as detailed below.

b. The Panel

The appointment of the panel will be as determined in the Grievance & Disciplinary Policy.

c. Power of the Panel

An endorsement request may be refused if the Player does not meet the relevant criteria set out in this document or fails to provide the mandatory documents. The named sponsor will notify a Player in writing of any endorsement request which is refused setting out the reasons for refusal.

A Player shall have 10 days from the date of the written refusal to submit an appeal in writing to the named sponsor. A player may only appeal on the basis that the named sponsor has not applied the endorsement criteria correctly.

The named sponsor shall consider the appeal and any evidence submitted in support and shall, within 10 working days of the receipt of the appeal, notify the Player of its decision.

d. The Decision

The panel will make a decision using the above criteria which shall be final and binding. There are no further grounds for appeal.

Section 3: Process for applying for an endorsement

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

Organisations eligible for International Sportsperson sponsor licence governing body endorsement should use the online Sponsor Licence Governing Body Endorsement Application Form which can also be found on the Volleyball England Website here

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

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

Once an organisation has obtained its sponsor licence from the Home Office, the sponsor will be able to apply for Certificates of Sponsorship, which it will allocate to migrants coming here to work for it. Each migrant that an organisation wishes to employ needs to be assigned a Certificate of Sponsorship. However, before an organisation can assign a Certificate of Sponsorship to a sportsperson, they will also have to obtain an endorsement from Volleyball England for all applications made for individual sportspeople and coaches.

Organisations that have obtained International Sportsperson migrant governing body endorsement should use the online Individual Migrant Governing Body Endorsement Application, which can also be found on the Volleyball England Website here

3.3 Administration Fee

An administration fee of £550 is payable for each governing body endorsement for migrant applications. An invoice will be sent to the sponsor by Volleyball England and must be paid in line with Volleyball England payment terms.