

This guidance is to be used for all International Sportsperson governing body endorsement requests made on or after the **20 December 2023**.

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

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

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

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

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

If you wish to sponsor such migrants, you must have a sponsor licence. Before you apply to the Home Office for a licence you must be endorsed by the **approved 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 **approved governing body** for their sport before you assign the certificate of sponsorship.

An **approved governing body** is one specified in [Appendix Sports Governing Bodies](#) of the Immigration Rules. Such a 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.

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

Length of endorsement

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

Type of application	Length of endorsement
Sponsor	4 years from date of issue.
Migrant	For an initial maximum period of 3 years, with a further extension of a maximum period of 3 years. If the contract is for fewer than 3 years, it will be issued for the length of the contract.

Change of employment

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

Salary

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

Supplementary employment

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

Compliance with the Code of Practice for Sports Governing Bodies

In reviewing this criteria, British Horseracing Authority 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 the British Horseracing Authority (BHA) requirements for the International Sportsperson route. The requirements are effective from 20 December 2023.

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

These requirements are applicable to Great Britain. Enquiries for Northern Ireland should be directed to the [Irish Horseracing Regulatory Board](#).

Consultation

The following requirements have been agreed by the Home Office following consultation between the BHA and the following industry bodies and parties:

- [National Trainers Federation](#)
- [National Association of Racing Staff](#)
- [Professional Jockeys Association](#)
- [Irish Horseracing Regulatory Board](#)

Prior to contacting the Home Office during the annual review of this criteria, British Horseracing Authority 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 jockeys & trainers in the UK.

Review

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

Length of season

Horseracing takes place all year round in Great Britain however, there are two types which are predominantly take place within the following season dates:

- Flat Racing – Runs from the end of March until beginning of November with Winter Flat season taking place in the intervening months
- Jump Racing – Runs from April to April

Requirements

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

Category	Requirement
Sponsor	<p>Governing body endorsements will only be considered from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The British Horseracing Authority• BHA Licensed Trainer;• BHA Registered Owner wishing to employ/retain a migrant Trainer/Jockey.

Migrant	Jockey (Professional)	<p>Initial Application</p> <p>The jockey should have been issued with a licence, equivalent to a professional jockey's licence in Great Britain, from a Recognised Racing Authority*. Full details of any such licence and its period of validity should be submitted with the application.</p> <p>The jockey should also have ridden one or more “black type” winners (i.e. winners at group/grade 1, 2 or 3 level and listed races as recognised in Parts I and II of the International Cataloguing Standards “Blue Book”).</p> <p>An endorsement will be issued on condition that the jockey is issued a licence by the BHA.</p>
	Trainer	<p>Initial Application</p> <p>The trainer should hold a licence to train with a Recognised Racing Authority. This should be submitted with the application.</p> <p>The Trainer should also have trained one or more “black type” winners (i.e. winners at group or grade 1, 2 or 3 level and listed races as recognised in Parts I and II of the International Cataloguing Standards “Blue Book”.) and the winners of more than 100 races under the Rules of a Recognised Racing Authority.</p> <p>If an overseas Trainer is having runners in Great Britain for more than 90 consecutive days they will be likely to require a BHA Licence to train.</p>
	Assistant Trainer	<p>Individual must work as an Assistant Trainer in a Recognised Racing Authority and demonstrate 4 years’ experience in a registered capacity, which includes roles that demonstrate considerable experience of caring for racehorses, staff supervisory skills and acting as Trainer’s representative where necessary. Where BHA records do not confirm this level of prior experience, the relevant records will be verified via the stable employee records of the relevant Recognised Racing Authority.</p> <p>Role to be recognised on the Racing Industry Minimum Rating Scale at Level 6.</p> <p>Staff are normally required to have been in the employment of the Sponsor for 6 months, prior to qualifying for endorsement.</p>

		<p>Only permanent staff employed by a training operation with permanent stables in more than one country who move a significant population of their racehorses in line with highlights of the seasonal racing calendar may be considered.</p>
	Head Lad / Lass*	<p>Individual must work as a Head Lad/Lass in a Recognised Racing Authority and demonstrate 4 years' experience in a registered capacity, which includes roles that demonstrate considerable experience of caring for racehorses and supervisory staff skills where necessary. Where BHA records do not confirm this level of prior experience, the relevant records will be verified via the stable employee records of the relevant Recognised Racing Authority.</p> <p>Role to be recognised on the Racing Industry Minimum Rating Scale at Level 4 or above.</p> <p>Staff are normally required to have been in the employment of the Sponsor for 6 months, prior to qualifying for endorsement.</p> <p>Only permanent staff employed by a training operation with permanent stables in more than one country who move a significant population of their racehorses in line with highlights of the seasonal racing calendar may be considered.</p>
	Stable Lad / Lass*	<p>Individual must work as a Stable Lad/Lass in a Recognised Racing Authority and demonstrate 3 years' experience in a registered capacity, which includes roles that demonstrate considerable experience of caring for and potentially, exercising racehorses. Where BHA records do not confirm this level of prior experience, the relevant records will be verified via the stable employee records of the relevant Recognised Racing Authority.</p> <p>Role to be recognised on the Racing Industry Minimum Rating Scale at Level 3 or above.</p> <p>Staff are normally required to have been in the employment of the Sponsor for 6 months, prior to qualifying for endorsement.</p> <p>Only permanent staff employed by a training operation with permanent stables in more than one country who move a significant population of their</p>

		<p>racehorses in line with highlights of the seasonal racing calendar may be considered.</p>
	Apprentice Conditional /	<p>Individual must hold an equivalent Jockey's Licence in a Recognised Racing Authority and demonstrate five wins in in Thoroughbred races that are open to professional Jockeys in the preceding 12 months. Race results will be required for assessment, as part of any application and individual must meet criteria and ultimately be granted a BHA Licence. Where BHA records do not confirm this level of prior experience, the relevant records will be verified via the records of the relevant Recognised Racing Authority.</p> <p>Role to be recognised on the Racing Industry Minimum Rating Scale at Level 3 or above.</p> <p>Staff are normally required to have been in the employment of the Sponsor for 6 months, prior to qualifying for endorsement.</p> <p>Only permanent staff employed by a training operation with permanent stables in more than one country who move a significant population of their racehorses in line with highlights of the seasonal racing calendar may be considered.</p>
	Work Rider*	<p>Individual must work as a Work Rider in a Recognised Racing Authority and demonstrate 3 years' experience in a registered capacity, which includes roles that demonstrate considerable experience of exercising racehorses. Where BHA records do not confirm this level of prior experience, the relevant records will be verified via the stable employee records of the relevant Recognised Racing Authority.</p> <p>Role to be recognised on the Racing Industry Minimum Rating Scale at Level 3 or above.</p> <p>Staff are normally required to have been in the employment of the Sponsor for 6 months, prior to qualifying for endorsement.</p> <p>Only permanent staff employed by a training operation with permanent stables in more than one country who move a significant population of their racehorses in line with highlights of the seasonal racing calendar may be considered.</p>

	Officials	<p>Initial Application</p> <p>Officials encompasses staff who are required to run and manage a raceday and maintain confidence and integrity within horseracing by ensuring that the Rules and Instructions of the British Horseracing Authority are adhered to.</p> <p>The only permissible roles are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Stewarding • Deputy Head of Stewarding • Steward <p>Individuals will have worked as part of a Stewarding function and demonstrate 3 years' experience in a similar role. This should be demonstrated by submitting references from previous employers with the application.</p>
<p>Extensions: The Jockey, Trainer or Entourage member must continue to meet the criteria for initial endorsement.</p>		
<p>Change of Employment: If Trainers, Professional Jockeys and Entourage staff are intending to change employer, their new employer must request a new endorsement to reapply to the Home Office. New leave to remain must be granted before the individual can change employers.</p>		
<p>Head Lad/ Lass, Stable Lad/ Lass, and Work Rider Cap</p> <p>PLEASE NOTE: Each operation may not rely on GBE's in excess of 40% of each of the capped roles but in any event, must not exceed the total number of endorsements issued per category under the previous iteration of this criteria .</p> <p>This cap will be reviewed annually with a view to reduce the sport's use of overseas employees for the Head Lad/ Lass, Stable Lad/ Lass, and Work Rider roles.</p>		
<p>Injuries, Absences and Suspensions</p> <p>Consideration will be given to the following when applying the criteria: injury; a period of maternity or paternity leave; serious illness or any legitimate medical reasons; suspension; international duty; bereavement; or family crisis.</p> <p>In order to obtain the governing body endorsement, a clearance from the individual's most recent Recognised Racing Authority[^] will be required which confirms that the individual is not subject to a provisional/current suspension or subject to any unexpired period of ineligibility or Disqualification in any jurisdiction. as a result of being charged with or found guilty of a corruption offence and/or a doping offence and/or another misconduct offence.</p>		

[^]Recognised Racing Authorities are defined under [Code 24](#) of the Rules of Racing.

Further information

This information is available on the BHA website at: www.britishhorseracing.com

In addition a link to the published information will also be provided on the National Trainers Federation website at www.racehorsetrainers.org and the Authority's Racing Administration website at www.racingadmin.co.uk.)

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

The Licensing Team - Sponsor and Migrant Worker Endorsements (England, Scotland, Wales)

Telephone: 020 7152 0167

Email: licensing@britishhorseracing.com

Annette Baker

Appeals and Disputes (England, Scotland, Wales)

Telephone: 020 7152 0143

Email: abaker@britishhorseracing.com

As part of the wider communication plan to raise employer awareness of the change in procedures the BHA will:

- publicise the information in member newsletters;
- handle queries from their members escalating as needed;
- write to employers highlighting the changes and the various requirements of International Sports person.

Information on visas and immigration is available on the www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/work-visas website.

Dispute handling procedures

Where an application for an individual covered by the requirements for a governing body endorsement as set out for International Sports person has been refused on the grounds that the individual fails to meet the published requirements, the sponsor may seek a review of the application. The sponsor will have 21 days to request such a review. In these cases, the BHA will refer the sponsor's evidence to the Licensing Committee as set out below.

Where possible the sponsor's supporting evidence will be sent to the Licensing Committee 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 Licensing Committee available and the decision of the Licensing Committee is final. Sponsors should therefore ensure that all evidence it wishes to present in support of its application is presented to the Licensing Committee. If the sponsor has previously made an application that was unsuccessfully appealed to the Licensing Committee a further appeal cannot be requested for the same person during the year unless their 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 BHA.

A review shall be commenced by the appellant lodging with the Judicial Panel Secretary, a written notice of appeal within 21 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 Licensing Committee shall have discretion as to whether the deposit is returned.

The procedure for appeal will be in accordance with the BHA's Judicial Panels Code and the Panel shall be comprised as detailed below.

b. The Licensing Committee

The Licensing Committee will be appointed by the Judicial Panel Chairman, in accordance with paragraph 103 of the [Judicial Panels Code](#).

c. Power of the Licensing Committee

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

An individual shall have 21 days from the date of the written refusal to submit an appeal in writing to the BHA. An individual may only appeal on the basis that the BHA have not applied the endorsement criteria correctly.

The Licensing Committee shall consider the appeal in accordance with the [Judicial Panels Code](#).

d. The Decision

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

Section 3: Process for applying for an endorsement

How to apply for governing body endorsements for International Sportsperson applications

Governing body endorsements will be issued by the BHA's Licensing Team. Endorsement requests should be made to the Licensing Team who will then verify the information and approve the endorsement as appropriate.

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

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

Sponsors are required to keep copies of all paperwork relating to endorsements received from the BHA.