



## Rugby Football League Governing Body Endorsement Requirements

This guidance is to be used for all Tier 2 and Tier 5 governing body endorsement requests made on or after the 1 December 2018.

### **Section 1: overview of governing body endorsements for Tier 2 (Sportsperson) and Tier 5 (Temporary Worker) Creative and Sporting categories of the points-based system**

This page provides a brief explanation of what endorsement requirements apply in respect of the Tier 2 (Sportsperson) and/or Tier 5 (Temporary Worker) Creative and Sporting categories of the points-based system.

**The Tier 2 (Sportsperson) category** is for elite sportspeople, coaches performance analysts who are internationally established at the highest level and whose employment will make a significant contribution to the development of their sport at the highest level in the U.K., and who will base themselves in the U.K.; and the post cannot be filled by a suitable settled worker.

**The Tier 5 (Temporary Worker) Creative and Sporting category** is for sportspeople (and their entourage where appropriate), coaches and performance analysts who are internationally established at the highest level in their sport, and/or will make a significant contribution to the development of their sport in the U.K.

**The application process explained:** migrants applying to come to the U.K. under either of the sporting categories above need to be sponsored by an organisation that has a sponsor licence under Tier 2 (Sportsperson) or Tier 5 (Temporary Worker) Creative and Sporting.

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 U.K. as sportspeople. Once licensed, you can assign certificates of sponsorship to a sportsperson, coach or performance analyst with a job offer that allows them to apply for leave to enter or remain in the U.K. 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 M](#) 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 M](#) of the Immigration Rules.

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

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### Length of endorsement

Governing body endorsements should be issued for a period appropriate to the period of approval for sponsorship or the tier under which the migrant's application is being made, that is:

Type of application	Tier	Length of endorsement
Sponsor	Tier 2 (Sportsperson) and/or Tier 5 (Temporary Worker) Creative and Sporting	4 years from date of issue
Migrant	Tier 2 (Sportsperson)	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.
Migrant	Tier 5 (Temporary Worker) Creative and Sporting	For the length of the contract or up to a maximum of 12 months whichever is the shorter period.

### 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 category, 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 leave to remain. Leave to remain 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. In the case of players, the RFL will not endorse an application unless the financial package on offer to the player is in the case of:

- Super League clubs - would place the player in the relevant club's top 20 highest paid players, as defined in the Salary Cap Regulations
- Championship clubs - is at least £17,500 per annum
- League 1 clubs - is at least £10,000 per annum.



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The club shall provide such evidence as required by the RFL as to the make-up of the financial package.

### **Supplementary Employment**

Tier 2 and Tier 5 migrants are eligible to undertake supplementary employment under the Home Office supplementary employment regulations. The [Tier 2 & 5 Guidance for Sponsors](#) has more information on supplementary employment.



## Rugby Football League Governing Body Endorsement Requirements

### Section 2: requirements

This page explains the Rugby Football League (RFL) requirements under the Tier 2 (Sportsperson) and Tier 5 (Temporary Worker) Creative and Sporting categories. These requirements are effective from 1 December 2018.

These requirements are applicable to the U.K.

### Consultation

The following requirements have been agreed by the Home Office following consultation with the RFL and other U.K. based national federations, the clubs and the Rugby League Players Association. These requirements come into force in relation to applications received by the RFL after the date of issue of the Requirements and remain in force until they are superseded by a revised set of requirements.

### Review

The requirements will be reviewed annually in January of each year (or as otherwise agreed between the Home Office and the RFL).

### Length of season

The season for rugby league normally runs from February to November.

### Requirements

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

Category	Requirement	
<b>Sponsor</b>  Tier 2 (Sportsperson) and/or Tier 5 (Temporary Worker) Creative and Sporting	Governing body endorsements will be issued to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rugby Football League (RFL)</li> <li>• Scotland Rugby League</li> <li>• Wales Rugby League</li> <li>• clubs participating in any of:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the Super League</li> <li>○ the Championship</li> <li>○ League 1</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>Migrant</b>  Tier 2 (Sportsperson) and/or Tier 5 (Temporary	<b>Player</b>	Governing body endorsements for an individual must be used to support an individual's application for leave to enter or remain in the U.K. within 3 months of the endorsement issue date.  <b>Initial application: primary requirements</b> In determining whether a player meets the requirements the following time periods will be considered in relation to the following types of matches:

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Category	Requirement
<b>Worker) Creative and Sporting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Rugby League (NRL) matches - where the application is made:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ on or before the End of Season Registration Deadline (9 August 2019 in the 2019 Season) the RFL will consider the last 2 complete seasons prior to the application date (i.e. the 2017 and 2018 Seasons for applications made on or before 9 August 2019)</li> <li>○ after the End of Season Registration Deadline the RFL will consider the current and the previous Season (i.e. for applications after 9 August 2019 the 2018 and 2019 Seasons)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• State of origin and International matches - the RFL will consider the last 2 calendar years from the date of application. If a country has not played a match in one of those years, the RFL will consider the last 3 calendar years. The decision of the Rugby League International Federation (the “RLIF”) as to whether an International Fixture is officially recognised shall be final.</li> <li>• World Rugby Sevens Series               <p>The RFL will consider the last two complete seasons. For the avoidance of doubt the World Rugby Sevens season currently runs from December to June. Therefore, if an application is made in 2019, before the final tournament has been played, the relevant seasons will be 2017 and 2018. If the application is made after the final tournament has been played, the relevant seasons will be 2018 and 2019. The RFL will grant an endorsement if the applicant club is able to show that the player has achieved at least one of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>NRL</b> - played in 50% of NRL matches including play off matches, but not pre-season matches in the qualifying period.</li> </ol> <p>Where the player has played in the NRL for one season of the qualifying period <b>and</b> played in the</p> </li> </ul>

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Category	Requirement
	<p>Super League, the Championship or League 1 in the season prior to that, they will be required to have played in both of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50% of NRL fixtures in the relevant season</li> <li>• 75% of Super League, Championship or League 1 fixtures during the final season of their previous permission, or during the entire period of their previous permission if the period endorsed was less than one season</li> </ul> <p>Where the player has played in Super League for both seasons (and the application is made prior to the End of Season Registration Deadline) the Player will be required to have played in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 75% of Super League, Championship or League 1 fixtures during the two seasons, or during the entire period of the previous permission if the period endorsed was less than two complete seasons.</li> </ul> <p>2. <b>State of Origin:</b> the player has played in 1 State of origin match in the qualifying period.</p> <p>3. <b>International: Australia, New Zealand and England and/or Great Britain</b> - the player has played in 1 match in either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the RL World Cup 2017</li> <li>• the Four Nations</li> <li>• a RLIF officially recognised match in the qualifying period</li> </ul> <p>4. <b>International: other</b> NB.the Player must have achieved at least two of the following:</p> <p>The player has either played in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 match in the Rugby League World Cup 2017;</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>or</b></p>

## Rugby Football League Governing Body Endorsement Requirements

Category	Requirement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50% of RLIF officially recognised matches for any country in Tiers 1 to 3 of the RLIF Rankings, other than Australia, New Zealand, England and/or Great Britain, in the qualifying period, referred to on Page 5</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>AND</b></p> <p>either in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a minimum of 40% of RLIF officially recognised matches since 1 October 2013; <b>or</b></li> <li>• 25% of NRL matches including play off matches, but not pre-season matches, in the qualifying period. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to this strand the qualifying period is NRL seasons (which seasons are relevant is dependent on the timing of the application in relation to the End of Season deadline) and not calendar years.</li> </ul> <p>The countries in Tiers 1 to 3 of the RLIF Rankings are the countries ranked 1 to 25 at the time the qualifying matches were played, or at the time of application.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. <b>Rugby Union players:</b> the player meets the current governing body endorsement requirements as published on the Rugby Football Union (RFU) website only.</li> <li>6. <b>World Rugby Sevens Series players:</b> the player has played in 50% of officially sanctioned tournaments in the qualifying period for countries ranked 1-15. For the avoidance of doubt this does not mean 50% of those played by his team.</li> <li>7. <b>Initial application: secondary requirements</b> If the player does not meet any of the initial criteria set above, the RFL may consider the player against the secondary criteria below:  The financial package being paid to the player by the applicant club is £100,000 per annum (or the same pro rata) or more <b>and</b> the player has played in either:</li> </ol>

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Category	Requirement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20% of NRL matches including play off matches, but not pre-season matches, in the last Season (if the application is made before the End of Season Registration Date) or the current Season (if the application is made after the End of Season Registration Date) (i.e. if the application is made on or before 9 August 2019, the 2018 season and, if the application is made after 9 August 2019, the 2019 season), save that, the reference above to NRL matches shall be Super League matches where applicable.</li> <li>• 50% of RLIF officially recognised matches for any country in Tiers 1 to 3 of the RLIF Rankings, other than Australia or New Zealand, in the qualifying period.</li> </ul> <p>The RFL may, in its absolute discretion, refuse to grant a governing body endorsement under this requirement if it has good reason to believe that the financial package to be provided is being artificially inflated to meet the requirement.</p> <p><b>Extension and change of employer applications</b>            Extension applications will only be considered for players who currently hold a certificate of sponsorship or have previously held a certificate of sponsorship, during the last playing season. Where a player has moved, the player must have been granted new leave to enter or remain in the U.K. before they can play for their new club.            The player must have achieved at least one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• played in at least 75% of competitive matches (first team matches not including friendly matches) in the Super League, Championship or League 1 (as applicable) for the period of the previous permission</li> <li>• continues to meet any of the requirements set out in 3, 4 or 7 above for initial applications (save that any reference to NRL matches in such requirements shall be deemed to be references to Super League, Championship or League 1, as applicable, matches).</li> </ul> <p><b>Applications for players whose current/last club is located outside of the U.K. but which competes in Super League, the Championship or League 1</b></p>



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Category	Requirement
	<p>Any such application will be an initial application not a change of employer application; however, to reflect that they have been competing in a U.K. based competition the player must have achieved at least one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• played in at least 75% of competitive matches (first team matches not including friendly matches) in the Super League, Championship or League 1 (as applicable) for the period of the previous contract <b>and</b> the player met the initial requirements which were in place at the time when they signed for their previous club, based on the World rankings at that time, as verified by the RLIF.</li> <li>• meets any of the requirements set out in 3, 4 or 7 for initial applications (save that any reference to NRL matches in such requirements shall be deemed to be references to Super League, Championship or League 1, as applicable, matches).</li> </ul> <p><b>Injuries, illness and international duty</b></p> <p>Exclusions from selection due to injury, illness or international duty will be excluded from the assessment when applying the requirements both in initial applications and in extensions or changes of employer. Clubs should submit supporting evidence in such cases, stipulating the period of injury, illness or international duty and a detailed record of the exact matches the player has missed due to injury, illness or international duty. This evidence should be from the team doctor, or other official medical practitioner, or the team manager of the International Team (as applicable) on headed paper.</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt the calculation will be that the number of matches missed by injury, illness or international duty shall be deducted from the number of matches the player was available to play in. It will not be assumed that the player would have played in those matches if they had been fit. This could be if there are 20 matches in a season and the player plays in 10 and misses 5 through injury they will have played in 10 of the 15 available matches, a percentage of 66%.</p>

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	<p><i>The Board on behalf of the RFL shall be entitled to refuse registration of a Player or refuse to accept a Contract (and for the purpose of this clauses “Contract” shall include any Contract renewal, variation or extension) or may impose such terms and conditions as it considers appropriate on a registration in any of the following circumstances...</i></p> <p><i>(b) the Board reasonably believes that to accept the registration or Contract may bring the Game into disrepute or may adversely affect the integrity of any competition;</i></p> <p><i>In exercising its rights under this paragraph (b) the Board shall consider such factors as it considers appropriate which, where relevant, may include (but not be limited to):</i></p> <p><i>(a) the severity of any underlying incident(s) / convictions;</i>  <i>(b) action taken against any other players who have been involved in similar incident(s) / have similar convictions;</i>  <i>(c) any steps taken by the Player to mitigate the underlying incident;</i>  <i>(d) any management plan proposed by the Club;</i>  <i>(e) the interests of the RFL (including its reputation and need to promote the Game);</i>  <i>(f) the interests of other Clubs;</i>  <i>(g) the integrity of the RFL’s competitions;</i>  <i>(g) the interests of the Club’s Officials, other Players, supporters, shareholders and sponsors.</i></p> <p>The RFL may recognise the sanctions or suspensions of any other sporting body including, but not limited to, competent RFL member bodies, the Rugby League European Federation, the Rugby League International Federation, other members of the Rugby League International Federation or the Governing Body of any other sport (a “Recognised Sanction”). A Recognised Sanction shall be enforced by the RFL and its Members until that sanction or suspension has been deemed to have been complied with and served or unless an Off Field Operational Rules Tribunal determines the matter and consents to the Recognised Sanction being lifted.</p> <p><b>Trials</b></p> <p>Governing body endorsements cannot be issued to clubs for the purposes of having players on trial.</p>

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Category	Requirement
	<p><b>Coach or similar position such as Director of Football</b></p> <p><b>Initial applications: requirements</b>            In determining whether an applicant meets the requirements, the RFL will consider whether the applicant does so for at least 2 seasons; one of the last 2 seasons and one other season. Where applications are made in mid-season or where there are other relevant reasons the RFL will decide which seasons are to be considered relevant.</p> <p>The applicant must have worked in at least one or a combination of the following roles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Head Coach - National Team (England and/or Great Britain, Australia or New Zealand)</li> <li>2. Head Coach - Australian State of origin, from the states of New South Wales and Queensland only</li> <li>3. Head Coach - Australian National Rugby League (First grade)</li> <li>4. Head Coach – Super League, Championship or League 1 (only to continue in Super League, Championship or League 1)</li> <li>5. Assistant Coach – Australian National Rugby League (First grade) provided that in the case of NRL assistant coaches the following conditions must also be met by the candidate:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. holds a current Australian Rugby League (ARL) High Performance Coach Award which must be evidenced by the ARL Education Department</li> <li>b. has been in post as an assistant NRL first team coach or in an equivalent post for at least 3 seasons (for the avoidance of doubt these do not have to have been consecutive), to include written confirmation from the NRL club of the coaching structure at the club together with verification from the ARL Education department</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p>In addition, the Club must meet the advertising requirements set out below.</p>

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Category	Requirement
	<p>It is the responsibility of the club to provide any evidence required by the RFL.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> endorsements will only be issued for non-EEA coaches to take the head coach/director of rugby role. Only one governing body endorsement will be awarded per club to either the head coach or director of football/rugby. Endorsements will <b>not</b> be issued for player coaches.</p> <p><b>Extension and change of employer applications</b> Extension applications will only be considered for coaches who currently hold a certificate of sponsorship or previously held a certificate of sponsorship, during the last playing season on the terms set out below.</p> <p>A coach who completes the term of their previous permission will be granted a governing body endorsement for an extension with the same club.</p> <p>A coach who negotiates a termination of an existing contract prior to its expiry in order to take up a contract at another club, or a coach who wishes to move to another club within a month of the expiry of his previous agreement, will be granted a governing body endorsement subject to the new club having satisfied the advertisement requirement below.</p> <p>Where a coach has been dismissed prior to the expiry of their previous permission a new club must apply under the requirements set out above.</p> <p><b>Advertising: for coaching posts only (in relation to new post and change of employer applications, but not extension applications)</b></p> <p>Vacancies for head coaches at Super League, Championship or League 1 clubs must be made public by way of official club press releases or by other means that will ensure that suitably qualified resident workers will be aware of the vacancy.</p> <p>Evidence to show that a press release and/or resident labour search as appropriate has been undertaken should be provided. This should include a copy of the press release /advertisement and details of responses. If a club has used</p>

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Category	Requirement
	<p>alternative recruitment methods they should provide details of why the method was chosen, what they did and the result.</p>
<p><b>Head Performance Analyst</b></p>	<p><b>Initial applications: requirements</b>            In determining whether an applicant meets the requirements, the RFL will consider whether the applicant does so for at least 3 seasons; one of the last 2 seasons and two other seasons. Where applications are made in mid-season or where there are other relevant reasons the RFL will decide which seasons are to be considered relevant.</p> <p>The applicant must have worked in at least one or a combination of the following roles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Head Performance Analyst (being the most senior performance analyst whether known as this title or an alternative job title) - National Team (England and/or Great Britain, Australia or New Zealand)</li> <li>2. Head Performance Analyst (being the most senior performance analyst whether known as this title or an alternative job title) - Super League first team;</li> <li>3. Head Performance Analyst (being the most senior performance analyst whether known as this title or an alternative job title) - NRL first team.</li> </ol> <p>In addition, the applicant must hold a degree in Sports and Exercise Science or Performance Analysis or a related discipline.</p> <p>Any application must include written confirmation from the NRL club or national governing body of the analyst structure at the club.</p> <p>In all cases, it is the responsibility of the sponsor to provide any evidence required by the RFL.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Only one governing body endorsement will be awarded per sponsor for a Head of Performance Analysis.</p> <p><b>Extension and change of employer applications</b></p>

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Category	Requirement
	<p>Extension applications will only be considered for performance analysts who currently hold a certificate of sponsorship or previously held a certificate of sponsorship, during the last playing season on the terms set out below.</p> <p>A performance analyst who completes the term of their previous permission will be granted a governing body endorsement for an extension with the same club.</p> <p>A performance analyst who negotiates a termination of an existing contract prior to its expiry in order to take up a contract at another club or a performance analyst who wishes to move to another club within a month of the expiry of his previous agreement will be granted a governing body endorsement subject to the new club having satisfied the advertisement requirement below.</p> <p>Where a performance analyst has been dismissed prior to the expiry of their previous permission a new club must apply under the requirements set out above.</p> <p><b>Advertising: for performance analyst posts only (in relation to new post and change of employer applications, but not extension applications)</b></p> <p>Vacancies for performance analyst at Super League, Championship or League 1 clubs must be made public by way of official club press releases or by other means that will ensure that suitably qualified resident workers will be aware of the vacancy.</p> <p>Evidence to show that a press release and/or resident labour search as appropriate has been undertaken should be provided. This should include a copy of the press release /advertisement and details of responses. If a club has used alternative recruitment methods they should provide details of why the method was chosen, what they did and the result.</p>

Further information

This information is available on the [RFL](#) website.

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



## Rugby Football League Governing Body Endorsement Requirements

RFL  
Operations Department  
Red Hall  
Red Hall Lane  
Leeds LS17 8NB

Telephone: 0844 477 7113

Email: [sam.allen@rfl.uk.com](mailto:sam.allen@rfl.uk.com)

Information on visas and immigration is available on the [GOV.UK](http://GOV.UK) website.

### **Dispute handling procedures**

Where an application for either a player, coach or performance analyst has been refused on the grounds that the player, coach or performance analyst fails to meet the published requirements, the sponsor may seek a review of the application.

Any such review will be considered by an independent panel drawn from the Operational Rules Tribunal (the "Independent Panel").

Applications for review must be made within 28 days of the original decision in writing to the RFL and will usually be heard within 14 days of receipt subject to availability of an Independent Panel. The RFL will submit detailed written reasons for its decision to the Independent Panel and the club. Sponsors should note that, in respect of any application, there will only be one Independent Panel available and the decision of the panel is final.

At the same time as submitting any review request, the applicable sponsor must lodge a deposit of £500 which (or any part of it) may be forfeited or returned at the discretion of the Independent Panel. In addition, the Independent Panel may make such order for the payment of costs as it thinks fit.

The Independent Panel shall have the power to:

- consider whether the player/coach/performance analyst is internationally established and of the highest calibre in consideration of the above requirements
- consider whether the player/coach/performance analyst is able to contribute significantly to the development of the game at the top level in the U.K.

The Independent Panel will decide using the above criteria which shall be final and binding.



## **Rugby Football League Governing Body Endorsement Requirements**

### **Section 3: process for applying for an endorsement**

#### **How to apply for governing body endorsements for Tier 2 (Sportsperson) and Tier 5 (Temporary Worker) Creative and Sporting applications**

Clubs can apply to become a Home Office licensed sponsor by applying on the appropriate form for an endorsement from the RFL and if that is granted by following the processes set out on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

Clubs must be a Home Office licensed sponsor before applying for an endorsement for a player or coach, all applications must be made on the appropriate form as amended from time to time, which is available on application from the RFL. It is the responsibility of the club to provide sufficient documentary evidence to support the information on the form which should be submitted to the Operations Department. Applications will usually be processed within 2 business days of receipt.

The club will receive a written decision which, in the case of applications which have been approved will take the form of a governing body endorsement letter including reference numbers to use when applying on line for a certificate of sponsorship.