

## **POINTS BASED SYSTEM**

### **GOVERNING BODY ENDORSEMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR FEMALE PLAYERS OF CLUBS OF THE FA WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE**

#### **Background**

This document explains the criteria for football clubs to obtain Governing Body Endorsements for Tier 2 and 5 of the UK Border Agency points based system for female professional football players for the 2009-10 season. Governing Body Endorsements will be issued to international players of the highest calibre who are able to make a significant contribution in footballing terms to the development of the United Kingdom game at the highest level (i.e. clubs competing in the National Division of the FA Women's Premier League)

#### **Consultation**

The following criteria have been agreed by the UK Border Agency following consultation between The FA and FA Women's Premier League.

#### **Length of season**

The season for this sport is from September to April.

#### **Criteria for Clubs**

To be eligible to apply for a Governing Body Endorsement (GBE) and to become a Sponsor and issue Certificates of Sponsorship a club must be in membership of the FA Women's Premier League.

#### **Criteria for players**

To be eligible for a Governing Body Endorsement under PBS:

1. A player must have played for her country in at least 75% of its competitive women's 'A' team matches she was available for selection, during the four years preceding the date of the application; and
2. The player's country must be at or above 40th place in the official FIFA world rankings when averaged over the two years preceding the date of the application.

#### **Competitive matches**

The definition of a competitive women's 'A' team international match is a:

- FIFA Women's World Cup;
- FIFA Women's World Cup Qualifying competition; and
- The UEFA Women's Championships and Qualifiers;
- The African Championship for Women and Qualifiers;
- The Asian Women's Championships and Qualifiers;
- The CONCACAF Women's Gold Cup;
- The CONMEBOL Women's Championships and Qualifiers.

#### **International appearances**

Prior to submitting an application, clubs should provide written confirmation of the player's international appearance record over the preceding four years highlighting the competitive women's 'A' matches. This should be obtained from the player's home association. The Football Association will be unable to make a decision on the application until written evidence is provided. If any evidence submitted needs verifying, The FA will liaise with other parties and verify all information through all available sources, if necessary.

#### **FIFA rankings**

There are currently 140 international teams listed in the official FIFA Women's world rankings. Those countries which have regularly achieved a 40th placing or higher over a period of two years are regarded as nations who have competed regularly at a highly competitive international level and have players of the highest standard who have contributed consistently to the achievement of that world ranking.

The FA will produce the aggregated two-year rankings list on a monthly basis when the official FIFA women's world rankings are published and those countries ranked 40th or above meet the criterion. The aggregated rankings can be downloaded from this website. If clubs have any queries about the rankings they should contact The Football Association at the address given at the end of this document.

### **Injuries**

Exclusion from selection for international matches due to injury or suspension will be taken into consideration when applying the criteria. Clubs should submit supporting evidence in such cases stipulating the games the player has missed. Ideally evidence will be required from the player's national association or, if not available from the association, from her club. It should be noted that where a player is listed as on the substitutes' bench, she will not be considered as injured when reaching a decision on issuing an endorsement.

### **Length of issue**

Governing Body Endorsements should be issued for a period appropriate to the period of approval for sponsorship or the tier under which the application is being made, that is:

As a Sponsor – Tier 2 or Tier 5 – for 4 years.

#### Migrant Tier 2 Sport

First applications under Tier 2: the Governing Body Endorsement will be issued for the period of the player's contract up to a maximum of three years.

Extension applications under Tier 2: if a club wishes to retain the services of a player, they should obtain a new Governing Body Endorsement before the permission expires. If the criteria are satisfied a Governing Body Endorsement will be issued for the period of a player's contract up to a maximum of two years. A second extension of a further two years is possible when the first extension is about to expire.

Change of employer (transfer of player): a club wishing to sign a player from another United Kingdom club must obtain an endorsement from The FA. If the criteria are satisfied a Governing Body Endorsement will be issued for the period of a player's contract up to a maximum of three years.

#### Migrant Tier 5 sporting

Length of contract or up to 12 months, whichever is the shorter period. No in-country extensions are possible of more than a total period of 12 months. For example if a player initially had six months approval he would be allowed to apply for an extension up to another six months. If a club wishes to continue to employ a player beyond 12 months, the individual will have to return overseas to make a new application.

### **Tier 5 to Tier 2 switching**

Players may enter under Tier 5 without the need to demonstrate the competency in English required under Tier 2. Players may then apply to switch to Tier 2 as soon as they have passed the examination in the English language at the appropriate level. For this the club will need to obtain a new endorsement and issue a new Certificate of Sponsorship. If at the end of the maximum 12 months he cannot meet the English language requirement he will need to return home and obtain further entry clearance for another 12 month period under Tier 5.

Switching into Tier 5 whilst in the UK is not allowed.

### **Salary information**

The salary is usually agreed as part of the contract between the individual player and employer. This and other conditions of employment should be at least equal to those normally given to a 'resident worker' for this work. A copy of the contract must be provided with the application to confirm the salary.

### **Trials arrangements**

Governing Body Endorsements will not be issued to clubs for the purpose of having players to trial for them. Clubs may wish to contact the Immigration Enquiry Bureau on 0870 606 7766 for further information should they wish to consider taking a non-European Economic Area (EEA) player on trial.

### **Panels**

Where an application does not meet the published criteria, a club may request a panel to consider the player's skills and experience. In these cases The Football Association will refer the club's evidence to an independent panel.

Where possible the club's supporting evidence will be sent to The Football Association and other football bodies in advance for their consideration in order to allow an informed decision.

The panel will normally consist of representatives from the relevant football governing bodies together with up to three independent experts. The FA will endeavour to ensure there are no conflicts of interest between the independent experts and the applicant club. If the applicant club wishes to object to the involvement of any of the independent experts it must do so in writing at least 24 hours before the panel hearing explaining their reasons for the objection.

The panel's terms of reference are:

- To consider whether the player is of the highest calibre.
- To consider whether the player is able to contribute significantly to the development of the game at the top level in United Kingdom.

The panel will make a recommendation to The Football Association whose decision will then be relayed to the club. The details of the voting will not be disclosed. Each member of the Panel will provide written reasons for their own decision to the Secretary of the Panel. A positive vote is required to approve an application (e.g. 4-2, 5-1 or 6-0)

Full terms of reference and roles of the panel members and the club are available to attendees.

Clubs should note that, in respect of any application, there will only be one panel available (ie a panel and recommendation, followed by a decision). A club should therefore ensure that all evidence in support of its application is presented to the panel.

If the club has previously made an application that was unsuccessful at panel a further panel **cannot** be requested for the same player during the season. For these purposes a season is deemed to run from 1 August until 31 July.

### **Ceasing the employment of players**

If the club ceases to employ the player prematurely the club must inform the UK Border Agency.

### **Fees**

An administration fee of £400 plus VAT will be charged for each application for a GBE.

The costs of an application that is referred to a Panel will be £1000 plus VAT to cover the fees and travel of the independent experts. The costs of the representatives of The FA, League and PFA will be met by their own organisations. Each club will meet its own costs of appeal.

### **Leave to remain / Visas**

The FA is not registered to give advice on immigration. Information on aspects of immigration policy and law can be found on the UK Border Agency's web site.

[www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk) Clubs are advised to allow sufficient time for entry clearance to be granted. The time needed to obtain entry clearance may vary depending upon where the player is applying for entry clearance. Service standards are set out on the UKBA web site: [www.ukvisas.gov.uk/en/aboutus/customerservicestandards](http://www.ukvisas.gov.uk/en/aboutus/customerservicestandards). This site also contains a Guide to Visa processing times for specific overseas posts.

**Further Information**

This guidance can be downloaded from The FA website.

**Contacts**

Enquiries should be directed to:

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