



IMPORTANT UPDATE

To: County FA Secretaries (via email and published on MyFA)

From: FA Registrations Department

Subject: FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfers of Players – International Clearance

Date: 13 February 2015

Changes to FIFA Regulations regarding international clearance for minor players

We would like to draw your attention to a recent amendment to FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players. This concerns the age from which international clearance is required for any player seeking to register for a club in England, who has previously been registered for a club abroad (including the other Home Associations), or who is a foreign national seeking to register for the first time in this country.

FIFA has confirmed that, due to the increased movement of players under the age of 12, the age from which an International Transfer Certificate is required has been lowered to 10 years old, effective from 1 March 2015. The following FIFA circular refers:

http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/affederation/administration/02/51/06/50/circularno.1468_e_neutral.pdf

Process for requesting international clearance for minor players

We would also like to take this opportunity to reinforce the process for requesting international clearance for minor players. Please note that this process is applicable to clubs at all levels.

FIFA Regulations (Article 19 - attached) state that international transfers are only permitted if the player is over the age of 18. The only exceptions to this rule available to amateur clubs are:

- (i) Where the player is moving to this country with his parents for reasons not linked to football, or
- (ii) Where both the player's residence and his new club are within 50km of a national border (applicable to players moving from Wales/Scotland only).

The same principle applies to any player who is not a national of England and who wishes to register for a club in England for the first time (i.e. he has not previously played football).

FIFA Article 19 states that FIFA's approval is required for all such requests, however this authority is delegated to The FA where the request involves an amateur player registering with a purely amateur club. In this case, The FA is responsible for ensuring that the regulations are being observed and therefore we require, as a minimum, the following information alongside submission by the registering club of an international clearance request form (attached):

- The date on which the player moved to England
- Who the player is currently residing with in England (e.g. their parents)

- The reasons behind the move to England (e.g. to attend boarding school; due to parents' employment, etc)

Based on this information, if the player's circumstances comply with one of the exceptions listed under FIFA Regulations, we will then advise you of the further documentation that we require in order to process the application. This will usually include the following documents, depending on the exact circumstances of the player:

- Proof of employment [in England] of the player's parents
- Copy of the player's passport (photo page) and birth certificate
- Copies of the parents' passports (photo page)
- Current proof of residency, i.e. the player's address in England

If the player's circumstances do not comply with one of the exceptions (for example he is attending boarding school, participating in a student exchange programme or is otherwise in this country without his parents), then we are unable to process the player's clearance. We are able to request special dispensation from FIFA to enable the player to be registered here, although it should be noted that in our experience, such requests are largely unsuccessful. To be able to submit a case to FIFA for a decision, we will require further documentation and this will be advised to the requesting club.

Due to the number of requests we receive and the amount of documentation we require from the registering club (including additional information which may be requested by FIFA following an application for special dispensation), this process can take several weeks to complete. We recognise that this can be frustrating, however please bear in mind that this is a FIFA Regulation which The FA is obliged to enforce. Whilst we have questioned FIFA in relation to the appropriateness of such a restriction at grassroots level, unfortunately there has been no change.

Finally, please note that all applications for international clearance, queries regarding clearance for a specific player or queries regarding the process in general, should be emailed to registrations@thefa.com in the first instance.

Rachel Foster
Registrations Department
February 2015