

**THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION  
WOMEN'S PLAYERS – POINTS BASED SYSTEM  
2020/2021 SEASON (4 June 2021 ONWARDS)**

The rules and criteria set out in this document will apply for the 2021/22 season and will be effective from 4 June 2021. The criteria will be reviewed in late 2021 in order that revised criteria can be issued (if necessary) in advance of the winter transfer window in January 2022.

For any queries regarding these criteria or the application process, please contact Freddie Carter (Player Status Department) at [Freddie.Carter@thefa.com](mailto:Freddie.Carter@thefa.com) (or [registrations@thefa.com](mailto:registrations@thefa.com)) or on 0844 980 8200 # 4818.

The FA is the approved governing body for Football in the UK. The FA has the ability (subject to other requirements being met) to issue a Governing Body Endorsement for a player, coach or manager who is intended to participate in any of the following:

- any match that has been organised and/or sanctioned by The FA, FIFA or UEFA;
- any match that has been organised by either the Women's Super League or the Women's Championship and that has also been sanctioned by The FA; or
- any match or category of match whereby consent of the FA has been given for that player, coach or manager's club to play.

Please note that this guidance should be reviewed in conjunction with the relevant advice issued by the Home Office. The FA is not registered to give advice on immigration routes or processes or to advise on an individual's immigration status and clubs should fully apprise themselves of their duties and responsibilities as sponsors. Information on aspects of immigration policy and law can be found on the Home Office website at [www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration](http://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration). You may also wish to seek advice from an Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) registered advisor or someone who is appropriately qualified but otherwise exempt from such a registration requirement, for example, a qualified solicitor. The UK Visas and Immigration Centre can be contacted on 0300 123 2241.

If a club is seeking a GBE during a transfer window, any application should be submitted to The FA by midday on the relevant transfer deadline day (at the latest) in order for The FA to process the application that day. If a club signs and registers a Player who does not have a GBE, it should do so in the knowledge that the Player may not be granted a GBE if his application does not comply with the terms of these criteria and the Player may not be able to undertake any employment duties for the applicant club. Clubs are advised to allow sufficient time for entry clearance or leave to remain to be granted. The time taken may vary depending upon where the player is making her application from. A guide to visa processing times is available on the Home Office website at: [www.gov.uk/visa-processingtimes](http://www.gov.uk/visa-processingtimes).

Please note that an individual's personal and immigration history may be taken into account when their application is being considered.

## GLOSSARY

**Aggregated FIFA Women's World Rankings** means the FIFA Women's World Rankings for senior women's international teams [aggregated](#) across the preceding two year period and published by the FA.

**Available Continental Minutes** means the total number of minutes (including, for the avoidance of doubt, any injury time or added time) played by the Player's club (in the group stages onwards) in a Continental Competition during the Reference Period, minus the number of minutes that the Player was Unavailable for Selection.

**Available Domestic Cup Minutes** means the total number of minutes (including, for the avoidance of doubt, any injury time or added time) played by the Player's club in a Domestic Cup during the Last Season, minus the number of minutes that the Player was Unavailable for Selection.

**Available Domestic Minutes** means the total number of minutes (including, for the avoidance of doubt, any injury time or added time) played by the Player's club in its domestic league competition during the Reference Period (including any play-off games), minus the number of minutes that the Player was Unavailable for Selection.

**Available International Matches** means the total number of matches played by the Player's National Association in Senior Competitive International Matches during the International Reference Period, minus the number of matches that the Player was Unavailable for Selection. If less than 30% of the matches played by the Player's National Association during the International Reference Period were Senior Competitive International Matches, Available International Matches shall also include International Friendlies.

**Auto Pass Percentage** means the percentage set out in Table 1 of this criteria.

**Band 1** means the English Women's Super League, Australian W-League, French Feminine Division 1, Italian Femminile Serie A, German Frauen Bundesliga, National Women's Soccer League, Spanish Women's Primera Division, and the Swedish Damallsvenskan.

**Band 1 Continental Competition** means the UEFA Women's Champions League and the Copa Libertadores Femenina.

**Band 2** means all senior domestic leagues not in Band 1.

**Band 2 Continental Competition** means all continental competitions which are not Band 1 Continental Competitions.

**Certificate of Sponsorship** means a certificate assigned to a Player pursuant to a club's Sponsor's Licence.

**Continental Competition** means a Band 1 Continental Competition or a Band 2 Continental Competition.

**Continental Progression** means the progress made by the Player's Last Club in a Continental Competition in the Last Season.

**Current Club** means:

- 1) the Player's Last Club, if the application for a GBE is made after the club the Player plays for as at the date of the application has completed its season; or

- 2) the club the Player is playing for as at the date the application is made, if the application for a GBE is made before the club the Player plays for as at the date of the application has completed its season (i.e. mid-season).

If the Player is a Free Agent, the Player's Current Club is the club the Player played in the half of the season immediately before the date the application is made. If the Player is a Free Agent and was not registered for any club in the half of the season immediately before the date the application is made, she shall not be granted any points for the criteria which adopt this definition.

**Domestic Cup** means any domestic cup competition which is open to clubs in the country's top domestic division and provides a route to qualification to a Band 1 Continental Competition or Band 2 Continental Competition.

**English Club** means a club affiliated to The FA.

**Exceptions Panel** means a panel appointed by The FA to consider an application for a GBE in accordance with paragraphs 44-51

**Extended GBE** means a new GBE applied for by a Club in respect of a Player who has already received a GBE for that Club which is due to expire.

**Final League Position** means the final league position of the Player's Last Club at the conclusion of the last full season prior to the date of the application for a GBE. If the season did not finish but a final league table was compiled, the Last Club's league position shall be taken from that final league table.

**Free Agent** means a Player who is not registered for any club as at the date that the application for a GBE is made.

**GBE** means Governing Body Endorsement.

**Home Association** means The Scottish Football Association, the Football Association of Wales and The Irish Football Association.

**International Friendlies** means any match played by the National Association's senior team which is not a Senior Competitive International Match.

**International Reference Period** means:

- 1) the twenty four months prior to the date of the application for a GBE, if the Player is 22 or over on the date the GBE is applied for; or
- 2) the twelve months prior to the date of the application for a GBE, if the Player is 21 or under on the date the GBE is applied for.

**Last Club** means the club the Player played for in the last full season prior to the date of the application for a GBE. If the Player played for two (or more) clubs during that season, the Player's Last Club is the club the Player played for at the end of the season. If the Player is a Free Agent and was not registered for any club at the end of the Last Season, she shall not be granted any points for the criteria which adopt this definition.

**Last Season** means the last full season prior to the date of the application for a GBE.

**National Association** means a football association that is a member of, and recognised by, FIFA.

**PBS** means the Home Office Points Based System.

**Player** means any player who is not a citizen of the United Kingdom or Ireland and has not acquired permanent residence in the United Kingdom, been granted pre-settled status or settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme.

**Player's Domestic Cup Minutes** means the percentage of Available Domestic Cup Minutes the Player played in.

**Player's Domestic Minutes** means the percentage of Available Domestic Minutes the Player played in.

**Player's Continental Minutes** means the percentage of Available Continental Minutes the Player played in.

**Player's International Appearances** means the percentage of Available International Matches the Player played in.

**Reference Period** means the twelve months prior to the date of the application for a GBE.

**Relevant Interested Parties** means a representative of (i) the league in which the Player plays, or will play if the application for a GBE is successful, and (ii) the Professional Footballers' Association.

**Season** means the period commencing on the date of the first match of the FA Women's Super League or FA Women's Championship and ending on the date of the last match of the FA Women's Super League or FA Women's Championship.

**Senior Competitive International Matches** means any match played by the National Association's senior team in the following tournaments:

- 1) FIFA Women's World Cup Finals and Qualifying Groups;
- 2) UEFA Women's Championships and Qualifiers;
- 3) African Championship for Women and Qualifiers;
- 4) Asian Women's Championships and Qualifiers;
- 5) CONCACAF Women's Gold Cup;
- 6) CONMEBOL Women's Championships and Qualifiers;
- 7) Olympic Football Tournament Women's Finals;
- 8) OFC; and
- 9) Olympic Qualifying (Asia, Africa and CONCACAF).

**Sponsor's Licence** means a licence obtained from the Home Office under the PBS.

**Stakeholders** means The FA, The FA Women's Super League, The FA Women's Championship and The Professional Footballers' Association.

**T2** means T2 Sports person.

**T5** means T5 (Temporary Worker) Creative or Sporting.

**The FA** means the Football Association

**Unavailable for Selection** means the Player was not available to play due to injury, a period of automatic suspension arising from a sending-off or accumulation of cautions, or any other circumstances, including pregnancy or maternity leave (provided the combined period does not exceed 18 months), which would legitimately prevent the player from physically entering the field of play but which shall not include any other period of suspension imposed by the player's national association, UEFA, FIFA or the World Anti-Doping Agency or the Player's club not being obliged to release the Player for a Senior Competitive International Match or an International Friendly (as the match falls outside the FIFA international match calendar). For the avoidance of doubt, a player may

not be classed as injured or otherwise unavailable (and therefore Unavailable for Selection) if she was listed as a substitute in a match and was not used. Such matches may not be eligible for exclusion when calculating the Available Minutes (as applicable). In international competitions where players are listed as substitutes regardless of whether or not they are injured, players may be classed as injured or otherwise unavailable (and therefore Unavailable for Selection) if sufficient evidence is provided to support this.

## **GOVERNING BODY ENDORSEMENT REQUIREMENTS**

### **GBE STATUS**

1. A club must obtain a GBE from The FA before a Player is permitted to undertake any employment duties for the club (including participation at training and in friendly matches). A Player can register for a club without a GBE but, in order to play any football, she must have obtained a GBE, been assigned a Certificate of Sponsorship by that club and secured leave to remain under T2 or T5 of the PBS (subject to satisfying any other eligibility requirements of The FA and any competitions the club participates in).
2. A club can apply for a GBE for a Player at any time during the Season. In order to apply for a GBE, a club must hold a valid Sponsor's Licence under T2 and/or T5 of the PBS. In order to apply for and obtain a valid Sponsor's Licence, a club must have obtained an endorsement letter for a Sponsor's Licence from the FA. If a Club's Sponsor's Licence is revoked, any Player who has obtained a GBE in order to play for the Club may have her leave curtailed and may have to make a change in employment application which must be granted before the Player can undertake any employment duties for the new club.
3. Clubs in the FA Women's Super League or FA Women's Championship are eligible for a Sponsor's Licence. Clubs in other leagues within the women's football pyramid are not permitted to field Players unless:
  - a) The Player has obtained a visa outside the GBE system which permits them to play football (on such terms as they in fact play); and
  - b) The Player's employment by the club complies with the terms and conditions of their visa and any relevant immigration law, including the Immigration Rules (or any successor legislation), and including but not limited to in relation to the requirements regarding professional sportspersons.
4. If The FA grants an application for a GBE for a Player in accordance with these criteria, the club is permitted to assign a Certificate of Sponsorship to the Player for the period covered by the GBE. The GBE must be presented to the Home Office when the club applies for entry clearance on behalf of a player, which must be done within 3 months of a Certificate of Sponsorship being assigned. Any Certificate of Sponsorship and a copy of the player's biometric residence permit must be submitted to The FA by the club within 3 months of being assigned. Clubs must keep a copy of the relevant page of the Player's passport evidencing their entitlement to work and contact details for the Player, which must be provided to The FA upon request. The club will also have to comply with any other criteria set by the Home Office in order to secure leave to remain under T2 (Sports person) or T5 (Temporary Worker – Creative and Sporting) of the PBS.
5. A GBE under T2 of the PBS will be granted for three years or the length of the player's contract (whichever is shorter) and a GBE under T5 of the PBS will be granted for twelve months or the length of the player's contract (whichever is shorter). A Player will not be eligible to play for the club beyond the expiry date of the GBE unless the club has applied for and obtained an Extended GBE before the existing GBE has expired in accordance with these criteria and the PBS.

### **Extensions to or transfers of a GBE**

6. An Extended GBE under T2 of the PBS can be obtained for three years or the length of the player's contract (whichever is shorter). If a GBE was granted for less than twelve months under T5 of the PBS, an Extended GBE can be obtained to extend the period of the Player's GBE to a total of twelve months and the application can be made within the country. If a Club wishes to grant an Extended GBE under T5 of the PBS to extend the period of the Player's GBE to over twelve months, the Player must leave the country before the expiry of the twelve month period and make an application for an Extended GBE under T5 of the PBS.
7. A Player who has been granted a GBE under T5 (Temporary Worker – Creative and Sporting) of the PBS can apply (in country) to transfer to a GBE under T2 (Sportsperson) of the PBS, provided that application is made within twelve months of the T5 GBE being granted. The club must submit a new application for a GBE and provide a pass certificate, or other written confirmation containing an appropriate reference number, from an accredited English language test centre that the Player has passed the English language test required to secure leave to remain under T2 of the PBS (in addition to the documents listed in paragraph 18).
8. A Player who has been granted a GBE must submit a new application for a GBE if she wishes to permanently transfer (or has permanently transferred) to another club. If the GBE is granted, the player must submit a change of employment application to the Home Office, which must be granted before the Player can undertake any employment duties for the new club.
9. Any application for an Extended GBE (in accordance with paragraph 6), a transfer of a GBE (in accordance with paragraph 7) or a new club application for a GBE (in accordance with paragraph 8) shall be considered as follows:
  - a) If the Player's International Appearances meet the Auto Pass Percentage set out in Table 1 of the criteria, a new or Extended GBE will be granted (as appropriate).
  - b) If the Player's International Appearances do not meet the Auto Pass Percentage set out in Table 1 of the criteria, but the value of the Player's Domestic Minutes for the applicant Club is at least [30%], a new or Extended GBE will be granted (as appropriate).
  - c) If the Player does not satisfy the requirements in either paragraph (a) or (b) above, the club must submit details of the Player's Domestic Minutes for the last 12 months and any other information which it considers to be relevant to its application to The FA. The FA will then provide this information to the Relevant Interested Parties by email. The FA and the Relevant Interested Parties shall consider this information, and any other information which they deem to be relevant in their absolute discretion, to determine whether the player remains of sufficient quality to be awarded a GBE. The FA and the Relevant Interested Parties shall make a decision by simple majority and if a majority of The FA and the Relevant Interested Parties recommend that the player should be awarded a GBE, a new or Extended GBE will be granted (as appropriate).
  - d) The player shall not have a new or Extended GBE granted (as appropriate) other than in accordance with paragraphs (a) or (b) above.
10. If a Player:
  - a) does not turn up for employment;
  - b) is absent for more than 10 working days without permission;
  - c) has her contract terminated during the period that a GBE is effective;
  - d) is no longer sponsored by the club for any other reason; or

- e) experiences significant changes in her circumstances (such as a change in job title, salary or location of employment),

the club must inform the Home Office within 10 days.

- 11. The club must also inform the Home Office if there is a change of circumstances at the club within 20 working days. A change in circumstances might include changes of name, address or contact details, changes in structure (including mergers, takeovers and de-mergers), changes in financial circumstances (such as administration, receivership, company voluntary arrangement, debt arrangement scheme, liquidation or sequestration)

### **Temporary Transfers/Loans**

- 12. If a Player who has been granted a GBE in accordance with these criteria is loaned to another club during the period of validity of the GBE, the Player's club must notify the Home Office of the loan and change of location via the Sponsor Management System within 10 working days (regardless of the jurisdiction in which the loanee club is based). The loaning club will retain responsibility as the Player's sponsor.
- 13. If a Player is loaned from an English Club to another English Club (a "**Domestic Loan**"), no GBE application will be required by the loanee club. If the Player is loaned from an English Club to a club affiliated to another Home Association, or another National Association, the governing body endorsement process of that association will have to be satisfied by the loanee club.
- 14. If a Domestic Loan is made permanent, the new club will be required to submit an application for a GBE (which must comply with the requirements set out in these criteria). If the GBE is granted, the player will need to make a change of employment application. Provided the Domestic Loan continues until the date on which the change of employment application is granted, the Player can continue to play for the new club in the interim period.
- 15. If a Player is loaned from a club affiliated to another National Association (including any Home Nation) to an English Club, a GBE application will be required (which must comply with the requirements set out in these criteria).
- 16. When a Player returns to her parent club after a loan period, no GBE application will be required by the parent club (provided the GBE remains valid beyond the date of the Player's return).
- 17. GBEs will not be issued in respect of Players who are trialling with an English Club. If a Club wishes to trial a Player, it should contact the Home Office.

### **APPLICATION PROCESS**

- 18. A club must submit any application for a GBE to The FA's Player Status Department along with any evidence in support of the application, including:
  - a) A fully completed application form (see Appendix 1).
  - b) A fully completed application spreadsheet (see Appendix 2).
  - c) A transfer agreement (or loan agreement) in respect of the Player.
  - d) A playing contract in respect of the Player (in draft or final form).
  - e) Written evidence to support any claim made by the applicant club that a Player was Unavailable for Selection for a particular match, including the reason(s).



- f) Written evidence to support any claim made by the applicant club that exceptional circumstances prevented the Player from achieving 24 points (where appropriate, in accordance with paragraph 24 below).
19. The club must also pay an administration fee of £500 plus VAT for each application within 14 days of the date on which the decision is communicated to the Each club shall bear its own costs in respect of any application.
20. If any information submitted as part of the GBE application process is amended (including the terms and conditions of a Player's contract):
- a) before a GBE has granted and before the Player is registered with The FA, the club must inform The FA who may require a new application to be submitted (and a new fee to be paid);
  - b) after a GBE has been granted but before the Player is registered with The FA, the club must inform The FA who may require a new application to be submitted (and a new fee to be paid);
  - c) after a GBE has been granted and after the Player is registered, the club must inform the Home Office via the Sponsorship Management System. The Home Office will confirm whether they require a new application to be submitted (and a new fee to be paid).
21. If a new application is required in accordance with paragraphs 20.b or 20.c, it will be assessed by reference to the criteria set out in this document and the Club must comply with paragraphs 18-20 of these criteria in respect of the new application. The FA may also inform the Home Office who may curtail the Player's right to work.

## **CRITERIA**

22. The FA will grant a GBE if the Player's International Appearances meet the Auto Pass Percentage set out in Table 1 of the criteria.
23. If a Player is not granted a GBE in accordance with paragraph 22 above, The FA will grant a GBE if a Player achieves 24 points in accordance with paragraphs 31 to 42 below.
24. The Club may request that an Exceptions Panel consider the application in the following circumstances only:
- a) A Player achieves between 20-23 points in accordance with paragraphs 31 to 42 below, and the Club can evidence that exceptional circumstances prevented the Player from achieving 24 points.
  - b) A Player was Unavailable for Selection for the full International Reference Period.
25. If the Club requests an Exceptions Panel, the procedure in paragraphs 43 to 51 shall apply.
26. If a Player is not granted a GBE in accordance with paragraphs 23, 24, or 43 to 51, she will have no further opportunity to apply for a GBE unless her circumstances change and will not be eligible to play for the applicant club.

## **Calculations**

27. If a Player has played for two (or more) clubs during the Reference Period, or a Player is or has been a Free Agent during the Reference Period, the Player’s Continental Minutes, Player’s Domestic Cup Minutes, and the Player’s Domestic Minutes (each, the “Minutes”) will be calculated in accordance with paragraphs 28-29 below.
28. For each of the Minutes criteria, the applicant club should calculate a weighted average (using the annex to the application form at Appendix 1) as follows:
- Calculate the number of days during the Reference Period the Player has been registered for each/any club or no club (as appropriate).
  - Calculate the percentage of the overall Reference Period that each of those periods of time represents.
  - Calculate the Minutes for each period of time (which will be zero for any period in which the Player was a Free Agent).
  - Multiply each of the numbers at (b) by their corresponding number at (c).
  - Add each of the numbers at (d) to find the weighted average value for the Minutes.
29. If only one of the clubs played in a Continental Competition, the Player’s Continental Minutes shall be the percentage the Player played in for that club.
30. If the calculation of a Player’s International Appearances, Player’s Domestic Minutes or Player’s Continental Minutes (or any other percentage) results in:
- a decimal number of .5 or higher, the number will be rounded up to the next whole number; or
  - a decimal number of lower than .5, the number will be rounded down to the next whole number.

**Player’s International Appearances**

31. A Player shall be granted the number of points set out in Table 1 below in respect of the Player’s International Appearances.

<b>Table 1<sup>1</sup></b>					
<b>Player’s International Appearances</b>	<b>Aggregated FIFA Women’s World Ranking of the Player’s National Association</b>				
	<b>1-5</b>	<b>6-10</b>	<b>11-20</b>	<b>21-40</b>	<b>41+</b>
90-100%	Auto Pass	Auto Pass	Auto Pass	Auto Pass	1
80-89%	Auto Pass	Auto Pass	Auto Pass	Auto Pass	0
70-79%	Auto Pass	Auto Pass	Auto Pass	2	0
60-69%	Auto Pass	Auto Pass	3	1	0
50-59%	Auto Pass	4	2	0	0
40-49%	5	3	1	0	0
30-39%	4	2	0	0	0
20-29%	3	1	0	0	0
10-19%	2	0	0	0	0
1-9%	1	0	0	0	0

<sup>1</sup> Please note that all capitalised terms in these tables are defined at the beginning of this document and should be used for the purpose of determining whether or not a Player has met the criteria.

### Player's Domestic Minutes

32. A Player shall be granted the number of points set out in Table 2 below in respect of the Player's Domestic Minutes.

<b>Table 2</b>		
<b>Player's Domestic Minutes</b>	<b>Band 1</b>	<b>Band 2</b>
90-100%	10	5
80-89%	9	4
70-79%	8	3
60-69%	7	2
50-59%	6	1
40-49%	5	0
30-39%	4	0
20-29%	0	0
10-19%	0	0
1-9%	0	0

33. If the Player has played in two domestic league competitions during the Reference Period, the Player shall be granted the higher of the points she is eligible for in Table 2.

### Player's Continental Minutes

34. A Player shall be granted the number of points set out in Table 3 below in respect of the Player's Continental Minutes.

<b>Table 3</b>		
<b>Player's Continental Minutes</b>	<b>Band 1 Continental Competition</b>	<b>Band 2 Continental Competition</b>
90-100%	10	2
80-89%	9	1
70-79%	8	0
60-69%	7	0
50-59%	6	0
40-49%	5	0
30-39%	4	0
20-29%	0	0
10-19%	0	0
1-9%	0	0

35. If the Player has played in two Continental competitions during the Reference Period, the Player shall be granted the higher of the points she is eligible for in Table 3.

### Final League Position of Player's Last Club

36. A Player shall be granted the number of points set out in Table 4 below in respect of the Final League Position of the Player's Last Club, provided (I) the Player appeared on the matchday squad list for the Player's Last Club for at least one match in its domestic league

competition, or (ii) the value of the Player's Domestic Cup Minutes was at least 1%, during the Last Season.

<b>Table 4</b>	
<b>Last Club's Final League Position</b>	<b>Band 1 or Band 2</b>
Title winner / Band 1 Continental Competition Winner	10
Qualified for group stages of a Band 1 Continental Competition	8
Qualified for qualifiers of a Band 1 Continental Competition / group stages of a Band 2 Continental Competition	6
Qualified for qualifiers of a Band 2 Continental Competition	4
Mid Table	2
Relegation	0
Promotion	2

#### **Continental Progression of Player's Last Club**

37. A Player shall be granted the number of points set out in Table 5 in respect of the Continental Progression of the Player's Last Club, provided (i) the Player appeared on the matchday squad list for the Player's Last Club for at least one match in its domestic league competition or a Continental Competition or (ii) the value of the Player's Domestic Cup Minutes was at least 1%, during the Last Season.

<b>Table 5</b>		
<b>Continental Progression</b>	<b>Band 1 Continental Competition</b>	<b>Band 2 Continental Competition</b>
Final	10	3
Semi-Finals	9	2
Quarter-Finals	8	1
Round of 16	7	0
Round of 32	6	0
Group stage	5	0
Other	0	0

38. If the relevant Continental Competition is knock-out only, the Player will be awarded the points listed for group stage in Table 2 for any round prior to the Round of 32.

39. For the avoidance of doubt, a Player shall only be granted the higher of the points she is eligible for in Table 5.

#### **League Quality of Player's Current Club**

40. A Player shall be granted the number of points set out in Table 5 below in respect of the band of the Player's Current Club, provided (i) the Player appeared on the matchday squad list for the Player's Current Club for at least one match in its domestic league competition or a Continental Competition, or (ii) the value of the Player's Domestic Cup Minutes was at least 1% during the Reference Period.

<b>Table 6</b>
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<b>Band of Player's Current Club</b>	<b>Points</b>
Band 1	10
Band 2	5

41. For the purposes of paragraph 41, Available Domestic Cup Minutes shall be calculated by reference to the Reference Period rather than Last Season.
42. If a Player has been loaned to a club in a lower band than her parent club and has made a first team appearance (on the pitch) for her parent club during the Reference Period, she shall be granted the higher of the points she would have been eligible for in accordance with Table 6 if her parent club was the Player's Current Club.

## **EXCEPTIONS PANELS**

**Please note that Exceptions Panels will not be available after the summer transfer window in 2021.**

43. If a club requests an Exceptions Panel in accordance with paragraph 24, The FA will appoint an independent panel of three members, which shall include one legally qualified chair and two panel members who have relevant experience of English professional football (the "Panel Members").
44. The FA may also, at its absolute discretion, refer any question in relation to the interpretation or application of any aspect of these criteria to either a legally qualified chair of the Exceptions Panel or an Exceptions Panel (as appropriate) to determine. Any decision made by a chair of the Exceptions Panel or an Exceptions Panel under this paragraph shall be final and binding.
45. A fee of £5,000 plus VAT will be charged for every Exceptions Panel, which must be paid before the application will be considered by the Exceptions Panel.
46. The club will be notified of the identity of the Panel Members and have the opportunity to challenge the appointment of any Panel Member on the basis of an actual or perceived conflict of interest. Each Panel Member shall also have the opportunity to declare an actual or perceived conflict of interest (of him or herself or any other Panel Member) to the Chair or, if the conflict of interest relates to the Chair, to The FA. The Chair, or The FA respectively, shall then determine whether the Panel Member should be excluded from participating in the application. If the Panel Member is excluded from participating in the application, The FA will appoint a replacement Panel Member (to whom this paragraph shall also apply).
47. The Exceptions Panel can request any further information from The FA's Player Status Department, the applicant club or any third party (via The FA's Player Status Department) that it deems necessary, in its absolute discretion, in order to make its decision. If an Exceptions Panel meeting has been convened or is in progress when a request for further information is made, the Chair may adjourn the meeting to allow the information to be gathered. Where it is able to do so, the applicant club or The FA's Player Status Department will supply the further information to the Exceptions Panel within a reasonable timescale.
48. The Exceptions Panel shall only recommend to The FA that a GBE be granted if it is satisfied that either:

- a. exceptional circumstances prevented the Player from achieving 24 points, and if those exceptional circumstances did not apply, the Player would have achieved 24 points; or
  - b. although the Player was Unavailable for Selection for the full International Reference Period, and if the Player had not been Unavailable for Selection for the full International Reference Period, the Player would have achieved 24 points.
49. The Exceptions Panel will make its decision, based on the papers submitted to it, at an in-person or virtual meeting at which The FA will provide appropriate secretarial support. Each Panel Member has one vote and the decision will be made by a simple majority, with the chair having a casting vote.
50. If the Exceptions Panel recommends to The FA that a GBE be granted, The FA will consider whether to grant a GBE (but is under no obligation to do so).
51. Written reasons for the decision will be supplied by the Exceptions Panel to the applicant club. An anonymised summary of each decision will be made available (on a confidential basis) to all Stakeholders and Stakeholders may make these summaries available to clubs in the FA Women's Super League or the FA Women's Championship.



Appendix 1  
Application Form



Appendix 2  
Criteria tables