

The Football Association - Governing Body Endorsement Requirements for Men's Team Performance Manager

**THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION
MEN'S TEAM PERFORMANCE MANAGER - POINTS BASED SYSTEM
2026/2027 SEASON**

The rules and criteria set out in this document will apply for the 2026/27 season and will be effective from 15 June 2026. The criteria will be reviewed across the 2026/27 season in order that revised criteria can be issued in advance of the summer transfer window in 2027.

For any queries regarding these criteria or the application process, please contact Freddie Carter (Player Status Department) at Freddie.Carter@thefa.com (or GBE@thefa.com)

The FA is the approved governing body for Football in England. 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 Premier League or the English Football League 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. 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.

Clubs are advised to allow sufficient time for entry clearance or permission to stay to be granted. The time taken may vary depending upon where the Performance Manager is making his or her application from. A guide to visa processing times is available on the Home Office website at: www.gov.uk/government/collections/visa-processing-times

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

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.

In order to obtain the GBE, the individual must not be subject to a provisional suspension or any unexpired period of ineligibility from playing and/ or coaching activities 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.

In reviewing these criteria, the Football Association confirm we have reread the Code of Practice for Sports Governing Bodies 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.

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Prior to contacting the Home Office during the annual review of these criteria, the Football Association 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 football in the UK. The Football Association confirms the Irish Football Association, the Scottish Football Association, and the Football Association of Wales have been fully consulted regarding the contents of this document.

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GLOSSARY

Aggregated FIFA World Rankings means the aggregated rankings list for senior men's international teams over a period of two years that are published by The FA following publication of the FIFA World Rankings. This list is available on www.thefa.com.

Band 1 means the English Premier League, the Bundesliga, La Liga, Serie A and Ligue 1.

Band 2 means the Portuguese Primeira Liga, Eredivisie, Belgian First Division A, Campeonato Brasileiro Série A and the English Championship.

Band 3 means the USA's Major League Soccer, the Turkish Super Lig, Primera División of Argentina, Liga MX and the Scottish Premiership.

Band 4 means the Russian Premier League, the Czech First League, Croatian First Football League, the Swiss Super League, La Liga 2, Bundesliga 2, Ukrainian Premier League, the Greek Superleague, the Colombian Categoría Primera A, the Austrian Football Bundesliga, the Danish Superliga, the Japanese J1 League and Ligue 2.

Band 5 means the Serbian SuperLiga, the Polish Ekstraklasa, , the Chilean Primera División, the Uruguayan Primera División, the Swedish Allsvenskan Division, the Norwegian Elitserien Division and the Italian Serie B, the Hungarian Nemzeti Bajnokság, the South Korean K League 1, the Australian A-League and the EFL League One.

Certificate of Sponsorship means a certificate assigned to a Performance Manager pursuant to a club's Sponsor's Licence.

Exceptions Panel means a panel appointed by The FA to consider an application for a GBE in accordance with paragraphs 20-27.

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

GBE means Governing Body Endorsement.

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

ISP means the International Sportsperson route.

ISP (long term) means an application for a period of stay exceeding 12 months.

ISP (short term) means an application for a period of stay of 12 months or less.

Performance Manager means;

- i) any individual who has all or partial responsibility for any of the following:
 - a. Deciding or creating the structure and content of first team training sessions
 - b. Providing leadership to the performance team to support the strategic performance needs of the first team
 - c. Coaching the first team squad, by demonstrating techniques and directing training and exercise sessions
 - d. Providing performance advice to the first team manager and/or assistant manager on performance matters including structure of training sessions, team selection or tactics

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- e. Working on the strength and conditioning of the first team squad; and
- ii) 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.

Guidance: Job titles of a Performance Manager may include but are not limited to:

- Performance manager/coach
- Coach
- Head of coaching
- Head of performance
- Fitness coach
- Strength and conditioning coach
- Goalkeeping coach
- Set-piece specialist/Throw-in/positional coach
- Technical/skills/tactical/Player development coach
- Head coach (if not fulfilling the role of Manager or Assistant Manager)
- First-team coach (if not fulfilling the role of Manager or Assistant Manager)
- Assistant first-team coach (if not fulfilling the role of Assistant Manager)

Guidance: An applicant club is advised to contact The FA if it is in any doubt about the role of the individual and whether these criteria apply.

PBS means the Home Office Points Based System.

Relevant Interested Parties means a representative of (i) the league in which the Performance Manager is employed, or will be employed if the application for a GBE is successful, and (ii) the League Managers Association.

Season means the period between 1 June and 31 May (inclusive). For example, a reference to the 2026/27 Season means 1 June 2026 to 31 May 2027.

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

Stakeholders means The FA, The Premier League, The English Football League and The League Manager's Association.

The FA means the Football Association.

Top League means any league in Band 1, Band 2, Band 3, Band 4 or Band 5.

GOVERNING BODY ENDORSEMENT REQUIREMENTS

GBE STATUS

1. Before a Performance Manager is permitted to undertake any employment duties for the club, the club must have obtained a GBE in respect of the Performance Manager and the Performance Manager must have been assigned a Certificate of Sponsorship by that club and secured permission to stay under the International Sportsperson route (ISP) of the PBS.
2. A club can apply for a GBE for a Performance Manager at any time during the Season. In order to apply for a GBE, a club must hold a valid Sponsor's Licence under ISP 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 Performance Manager who has obtained a GBE in order to play for the Club may have his or her permission curtailed and may have to make a change in employment application which must be granted before the Performance Manager can undertake any employment duties for the new club.
3. Clubs in the Premier League or English Football League are eligible for a Sponsor's Licence. Clubs in other leagues within the men's football pyramid are not permitted to employ Performance Managers unless:
 - a) The Performance Manager has obtained a visa outside the GBE system which permits them to carry out that role for the club (on such terms as they in fact carry out that role); and
 - b) The Performance Manager'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).
4. If The FA grants an application for a GBE for a Performance Manager in accordance with these criteria, the club is permitted to assign a Certificate of Sponsorship to the Performance Manager 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 Performance Manager, which must be done within three months of a Certificate of Sponsorship being assigned. Any Certificate of Sponsorship and a copy of the Performance Manager's biometric residence permit must be submitted to The FA by the club within three months of being assigned. Clubs must keep a copy of the relevant page of the Performance Manager's passport evidencing their entitlement to work and contact details for the Performance Manager, 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 permission to stay under ISP of the PBS.
5. A GBE under ISP of the PBS will be granted for three years or the length of the Performance Manager's contract (whichever is shorter). A Performance Manager will not be eligible to undertake employment duties 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 application for an Extended GBE or to transfer a GBE may only be made under the GBE criteria pursuant to which the individual was originally endorsed. Where an individual seeks

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an extension or transfer in respect of a different role (for example, as a Manager), the individual must satisfy the full requirements of the applicable GBE criteria for that role.

7. An Extended GBE under ISP of the PBS can be obtained for three years or the length of the Performance Manager's contract (whichever is shorter).
8. A Performance Manager who has been granted a GBE under ISP (short term) of the PBS can apply (in country) to transfer to a GBE under ISP (long term) of the PBS. 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 Performance Manager has passed the English language test required to secure permission to stay under ISP (long term) of the PBS (in addition to the documents listed in paragraph 7).
9. A Performance Manager who has been granted a GBE must submit a new application for a GBE if he or she wishes to take up that role with another club. If the GBE is granted, the Performance Manager must submit a change of employment application to the Home Office, which must be granted before the Performance Manager can undertake any employment duties for the new club.
10. Any application for an Extended GBE (in accordance with paragraph 7), a transfer of a GBE (in accordance with paragraph 8) or a new club application for a GBE (in accordance with paragraph 9) shall be considered as follows:
 - a) If the Performance Manager meets the criteria set out in paragraph 17, a new or Extended GBE will be granted (as appropriate).
 - b) If the Performance Manager does not meet the criteria set out in paragraph 17, the club must submit any 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 Performance Manager 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 Performance Manager should be awarded a GBE, a new or Extended GBE will be granted (as appropriate).
 - c) The Performance Manager shall not have a new or Extended GBE granted (as appropriate) other than in accordance with paragraphs 10.a) or 10.b) above.
11. If a Performance Manager:
 - a) does not turn up for employment;
 - b) is absent for more than 10 working days without permission;
 - c) has his or 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 any significant changes in circumstances (such as a change in job title, salary or location of employment),

the club must inform the Home Office within 10 days.

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12. 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).

APPLICATION PROCESS

13. A club must submit a fully completed application form for a GBE to The FA's Player Status Department along with any evidence in support of the application.
14. 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 club. Each club shall bear its own costs in respect of any application.
15. If any information submitted as part of the GBE application process is amended (including the terms and conditions of a Performance Manager's contract or scope, job description or nature of the role):
 - a) before a GBE has granted and before the Performance Manager has commenced his or her role, 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 Performance Manager has commenced his or her role, the club must inform The FA who may require a new application to be submitted (and a new fee to be paid); or
 - c) after a GBE has been granted and after the Performance Manager has commenced his or her role, 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).
16. If a new application is required in accordance with paragraphs 15.b) or 15.c), it will be assessed by reference to the criteria set out in this document and the Club must comply with paragraphs 17-19 of these criteria in respect of the new application. The FA may also inform the Home Office who may curtail the Performance Manager's right to work.

CRITERIA

17. A Performance Manager will only be granted a GBE if:
 - a) The Performance Manager holds an undergraduate degree or masters in sport science or a related discipline; or
 - b) The Performance Manager holds a UEFA 'B' license/diploma or equivalent. The FA may consult with any relevant governing body to determine whether an alternative qualification should be considered an 'equivalent'.
 - c) The Performance Manager:
 - i. has been employed as a Performance Manager for at least five years in a Top League or national association; or
 - ii. has five years' experience in similar elite sports.
18. If a Performance Manager is not granted a GBE in accordance with paragraph 17 above, the Club may request that an Exceptions Panel consider the application. If the Club requests an Exceptions Panel, the procedure in paragraphs 20-27 shall apply.

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19. If a Performance Manager is not granted a GBE in accordance with paragraphs 17 or 20-27, he or she will have no further opportunity to apply for a GBE unless his or her circumstances change and will not be eligible to be the Performance Manager for the applicant club.

EXCEPTIONS PANELS

20. If a club requests an Exceptions Panel in accordance with paragraph 18, 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 at the top level of the game (the "**Panel Members**").
21. A fee of £5,000 plus VAT will be charged for every Exceptions Panel, which must be paid by the club before the application will be considered by the Exceptions Panel.
22. 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).
23. 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 secretariat will supply the further information to the Exceptions Panel within a reasonable timescale.
24. The Exceptions Panel shall only recommend to The FA that a GBE be granted if it is satisfied that the Performance Manager is of the highest calibre and is able to contribute significantly to the development of the game at the top level in England. In doing so, the Exceptions Panel will have regard to any matters that the Exceptions Panel determine to be relevant in its absolute discretion.
25. 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.
26. 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).
27. Written reasons for the decision will be supplied by the Exceptions Panel to the applicant club. Written reasons will also be provided to the relevant league Stakeholder with a redacted copy provided (on a confidential basis) to all Stakeholders.

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