Overseas players and the Home Office Immigration Rules

25/01/2019

The United Kingdom's immigration arrangements for Professional Sportspersons seek to strive a balance between ensuring that UK sports can access top end talent that will enhance sport in the UK, whilst at the same time protecting opportunities for resident players and supporting the grassroots sport.

There is one policy which ALL sports must adhere to. It is not the prerogative of the Home Office to provide entry mechanisms for all levels of players, to play sport in the UK.

A player from overseas will fall into 1 of 3 groups. If a player falls into group 2 then they will not be eligible to play sport here, paid or unpaid.* The table below has been created to help you to understand what group your player falls into.

Amateur ←		→ **Professional**
Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Playing sport is incidental to the reason for coming to the UK	Playing sport is deemed to be the main reason for coming to the UK	Playing sport is deemed to be the main reason for coming to the UK
Has never received, is not intending on receiving, or has not received within the previous 4 years, payment, including payment in kind, for playing or coaching that is covering all, or the majority of, their costs for travelling to, and living in the UK	Is currently receiving payment, including payment in kind, for playing or coaching that is covering all, or the majority of, their costs for travelling to, and living in the UK, or who has done so within the previous four years.	Is currently receiving payment, including payment in kind, for playing or coaching that is covering all, or the majority of, their costs for travelling to, and living in the UK, or who has done so within the previous four years.
Is not currently registered to, or who has not been registered within the previous 4 years to a professional or semi-professional sports team. This includes all academy and development team age groups.**	Is currently registered to a professional or semi-professional sports team, or who has been so registered within the previous four years. This includes all academy and development team age groups.**	Is currently registered to a professional or semi-professional sports team, or who has been so registered within the previous four years. This includes all academy and development team age groups.**
Has not represented their nation or national team within the previous two years, including all youth and development age groups from under 17's upwards.	Has represented their nation or national team within the previous two years, including all youth and development age groups from under 17's upwards.	Has represented their nation or national team within the previous two years, including all youth and development age groups from under 17's upwards.
Has not represented their state or regional team within the previous two years, including all youth and development age groups from under 17's upwards. ***	Has represented their state or regional team within the previous two years, including all youth and development age groups from under 17's upwards. ***	Has represented their state or regional team within the previous two years, including all youth and development age groups from under 17's upwards. ***
Has not within the last 12 months engaged an agent or representative, with the aim of finding opportunities as a sportsperson, and/or developing a current or future career as a sportsperson.	Engages an agent or representative, with the aim of finding opportunities as a sportsperson, and/or developing a current or future career as a sportsperson, or has engaged such an agent in the last 12 months.	Engages an agent or representative, with the aim of finding opportunities as a sportsperson, and/or developing a current or future career as a sportsperson, or has engaged such an agent in the last 12 months.
	Is currently providing services as a sportsperson, playing or coaching in any capacity, at a professional or semi-professional level of sport.	Is currently providing services as a sportsperson, playing or coaching in any capacity, at a professional or semi-professional level of sport;
		Has an established international reputation in their chosen field of sport.
		Is providing services as a sportsperson or coach at any level of sport, unless they are doing so as an "Amateur" in a charity event.
		Can meet the GBE criteria for a Tier 5 Creative & Sporting visa
Visitor entry mechanisms	**No current valid entry mechanisms ***	**Tier 5 Creative & Sporting Visa**

*this does not include those who hold British Passports, Ancestral Visas, Leave to Remain or currently those who are EU citizens.

** In cricket this is typically the outfits who have been awarded First Class Status - this currently includes ACT and Mpumalanga participation in the Africa T20 Cup

*** In cricket the majority of State and Regional outfits have FC status and are therefore classed as semi-professional / professional outfits so will be covered under the 4 year rule