British Judo Association Governing Body Endorsement Requirements

This guidance is to be used for all International Sportsperson governing body endorsement requests made on or after **13 November 2026**.

Section 1: Overview of governing body endorsements for the International Sportsperson route of the points-based system

This page provides a brief explanation of what endorsement requirements apply in respect of the International Sportsperson route of the points-based system. The Immigration Rules for the International Sportsperson route can be found at Appendix International Sportsperson.

The International Sportsperson route is for elite sportspeople and coaches who:

- are internationally established and whose employment will make a significant contribution to the development of their sport at the highest level in the UK
- who will base themselves in the UK
- will be filling a post that cannot be filled by a suitable British citizen or person who has a right to enter or stay in the UK without restriction.

The application process explained: migrants applying to come to the UK under the International Sportsperson route need to be sponsored by an organisation that has an International Sportsperson sponsor licence.

If you wish to sponsor such migrants, you must have a sponsor licence. Before you apply to the Home Office for a licence you must be endorsed by the **approved governing body** for your sport. This endorsement confirms to the Home Office that the application for a licence is from a genuine sports club (or equivalent) that has a legitimate requirement to bring migrants to the UK as sportspeople. Once licensed, you can assign certificates of sponsorship to a sportsperson or coach with a job offer that allows them to apply for entry clearance or permission to stay in the UK. Each individual must also have a personal endorsement from the **approved governing body** for their sport before you assign the certificate of sponsorship.

An **approved governing body** is one specified in Appendix Sports Governing Bodies of the Immigration Rules. Such a governing body must be recognised by one of the home country sports councils such as Sport England, and will have been approved by the Home Office before being included in Appendix Sports Governing Bodies of the Immigration Rules.

Approved governing bodies will work within the Home Office's 'Code of practice for sports governing bodies' and must comply with any immigration regulations, UK legislation and the principles of the points-based system as detailed on the GOV.UK website.

Length of endorsement

Governing body endorsements should be issued for a period appropriate to the period of approval for sponsorship, that is:

Type of application	Length of endorsement
Sponsor	Endorsements for sponsors will not have an end date. They will be valid for as long as the sponsor continues to hold a valid sponsor licence.

Migrant	For an initial maximum period of 3 years, with a further extension of a maximum period of 3 years. If the contract is for fewer than 3 years, it will be issued for the length of the contract.

Change of employment

If a migrant is intending to change employer, their new employer must request a new governing body endorsement. The endorsement can be issued for the length of the contract or to the maximum period permitted within the route, whichever is the shorter. The new employer must assign a new certificate of sponsorship to the migrant to allow them to apply to the Home Office for new permission to stay. Permission to stay must be granted before the migrant can start work with the new employer.

Salary

The salary should be agreed as part of the contract between the migrant and the sponsor. This and the other conditions of employment should be at least equal to those normally given to a resident worker for the type of work undertaken.

Supplementary employment

International Sportsperson migrants are eligible to undertake supplementary employment under the Home Office supplementary employment regulations. The 'Supplementary employment' section Workers and Temporary Workers: guidance for sponsors - Sponsor an International Sportsperson guidance has more information on this.

Short stay visa

The Permitted Paid Engagement visa is available for experts in their professions who have been invited by a UK-based organisation or client to come to the UK for up to 1 month to take part in sporting activities. You can find out more about this on the 'Permitted Paid Engagement visa' page on the GOV.UK website.

The Standard Visitor visa is available for those who want to visit the UK to take part in a specific sports-related event. You can find out more about this on the 'Standard Visitor visa' page on the GOV.Uk website.

Compliance with the Code of Practice for Sports Governing Bodies

In reviewing this criteria, British Judo Association confirm we have reread the Code 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.

British Judo Association Governing Body Endorsement Requirements

Section 2: Requirements

This page explains the British Judo Association (BJA) requirements under the International Sportsperson route. The requirements are effective from 13 November 2026.

Only the roles listed as part of this criteria are eligible for endorsement.

These requirements are applicable to England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Consultation

The following requirements have been agreed by the Home Office following consultation with the British Judo Association (BJA).

Prior to contacting the Home Office during the annual review of this criteria, BJA 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 judo in the UK.

Review

The requirements will be reviewed annually. The next review will be in October 2027.

Length of season

Judo typically runs throughout the year, there is no natural start or end to the season.

Requirements

The table below shows the endorsement requirements for sponsors and migrants.

Endorsement category	**Requirements to be met**	
Sponsor	Governing body endorsements will only be considered by the BJA from clubs or associations affiliated with the BJA as a Category A Club with a Senior Licence. In order to obtain an endorsement, the association or club must: • prove their affiliation to the BJA by providing their valid Licence certificate • ensure the request is only made by the Licence Holder or with the written approval of the Licence Holder • have a sufficient database of members or written proof of external sponsorship to pay equivalent wages of a British citizen	
Migrant	Senior Coach	The criteria apply to extensions and changes of employment and initial applications. Governing body endorsements for an individual will be issued if they have the minimum of a 1st for Sport Level 3 Coaching Judo or equivalent qualification (recognised by the International Judo Federation (IJF)) ~~and~~ have a minimum of 2 years relevant coaching experience as set out below and the IJF Academy Certificate Award. This needs to be demonstrated through their history of employment record

		within the application and also through their record of achievements obtained through references: **Practicing for three weeks or less** Governing body endorsements for an individual will be issued if they have: • the post has been fairly advertised in the relevant press and on the BJA website so that British citizens have an opportunity to apply • a national and/or international coaching qualification equivalent to a minimum of 1st for Sport Level 3 certificate in Coaching Judo - this will be ascertained by obtaining copies of their relevant certificates • knowledge of the technical laws associated with the judo as ascertained through achieving their UKCC certificates - this needs to be demonstrated through obtained references and • a minimum of two years coaching experience at an international level - this needs to be demonstrated by identifying the candidate's success at major national and/or international events or competitions (Olympic/ Paralympic and IJF and Continental Tour events) and should be supported through the application and through obtained references • hold an appropriate insurance cover to that issued by the BJA insurers • will only be delivering coaching to BJA members In relation to individual's coming to the UK for periods of less than three weeks, to fulfil one or more coaching engagements, these regulations require that the sponsor supply information on where courses are to be held and the length of the courses. **Practicing for more than 3 weeks** Governing body endorsements will only be issued for contracted and salaried coaching staff if the sponsor demonstrates that all of the following criteria are met: • the post has been fairly advertised in the relevant press and on the BJA website so that British citizens have an opportunity to apply • a national and/or international coaching qualification equivalent to a minimum of 1st for Sport Level 3 Certificate in coaching Judo - this will be ascertained by obtaining copies of their relevant certificates • knowledge of the technical laws associated with the judo as ascertained through achieving their UKCC

		certificates - this needs to be demonstrated through obtained references and • a minimum of three years coaching experience at a high level of national and international (Olympic/ Paralympic and IJF and Continental Tour events) - this needs to be demonstrated by identifying the candidate's success at major national and/or international competitions/events and should be supported through the application and through obtained references • hold an appropriate insurance cover to that issued by the BJA insurers • will only be delivering coaching to BJA members
	Senior Training Partners	Governing body endorsements for an individual will be issued if during the 48 months immediately prior to the date of the governing body endorsement application the sparring partner must have either: • been ranked within the top 75 in the world as measured by the IJF World Rankings (Senior) • represented at a senior level, a playing nation ranked in the top 8 in the world as measured by the IJF World Team Rankings (Senior) This needs to be demonstrated through their history of employment record within the application and also through their record of achievements obtained through references. **Practicing for 3 weeks or less** Governing body endorsements will only be issued to specialist training partners who will be operating under the British Judo world Class Performance Programme. The training partner will need to be a minimum of Black belt 1st Dan and have competed at senior international level. For individuals coming to the UK to fulfil one or more training camp engagements, these regulations require that the sponsor supply information on where training will be held and the length of training blocks. **Practicing for more than 3 weeks** Governing body endorsements will be issued for proven financially sponsored training partners. These regulations require that the sponsor demonstrates that the individual: • is able to financially support their time in the UK

		• commits to train within the GB World Class Performance Programme • will need to be a minimum of Black Belt 1st Dan and have competed at senior international level • must provide the official recognition of their Dan Grade

Injuries, Absences and Suspensions

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 governing body endorsement, 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 offence.

Further information

This information is available on the British Judo Association website at www.britishjudo.org.uk

For any queries relating to the requirements or the endorsement process please contact:

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British Judo Association
University of Wolverhampton (Walsall Campus)
Gorway Road
Walsall
WS1 3BD
Telephone: 0121 728 6920
Email: andrew.scoular@britishjudo.org.uk

Information on visas and immigration is available on the GOV.UK website.

Dispute handling procedures

Where an application for an individual covered by the requirements for a governing body endorsement as set out for International Sportsperson has been refused on the grounds that the individual fails to meet the published requirements, the sponsor may seek a review of the application. The review will only be considered on the basis that the SGB has not applied the endorsement criteria correctly. The sponsor will have 28 days to request such a review. In these cases, the British Judo will refer the sponsor's evidence to an independent panel as set out below.

Where possible the sponsor's supporting evidence will be sent to the panel in advance for their consideration in order to allow an informed decision.

Sponsors should note that, in respect of any application, there will only be one panel available and the decision of the panel is final. Sponsors should therefore ensure that all evidence it wishes to present in support of its application is presented to the panel. If the sponsor has previously made an application that was unsuccessful at panel a further panel cannot be requested for the same player

during the season unless his status changes and he meets the requirements whereby a new application can be submitted.

a. The Review

The request for a review may only be made by the sponsor for whom the governing body endorsement has been initially rejected by British Judo.

A review shall be commenced by the appellant lodging British Judo, a notice of appeal within 28 days of the decision appealed against. The notice of appeal shall:

i. set out details of the decision appealed against and, if the whole of the decision is not appealed against, identify that part of it which is appealed against;
ii. set out in full the grounds of appeal and an appellant shall not be entitled to rely in any ground of appeal not set out in the notice of appeal; and
iii. be accompanied by a deposit of £100. The panel shall have discretion as to whether the deposit is returned.

The procedure for appeal will be in accordance with the Disciplinary Regulations and the Panel shall be comprised as detailed below.

b. The Panel

The panel will be appointed by the Disciplinary Hearings Manager. The appointed panel shall consist of: an independent chairman, one representative of British Judo (who has not been involved in the initial decision) and one representative from the following: Chairman, President, Vice Chairman of the British Judo Association.

c. Power of the Panel

An endorsement request may be refused if the individual does not meet the relevant criteria set out in this document or fails to provide the mandatory documents. The British Judo will notify the individual in writing of any endorsement request which is refused setting out the reasons for refusal.

The individual shall have 7 days from the date of the written refusal to submit an appeal in writing to British Judo. An individual may only appeal on the basis that British Judo have not applied the endorsement criteria correctly.

British Judo shall consider the appeal and any evidence submitted in support and shall, within 7 working days of the receipt of the appeal, notify the individual of its decision.

d. The Decision

The panel will make a decision using the above criteria which shall be final and binding. There are no other grounds of appeal.

Section 3: Process for applying for an endorsement

Contact British Judo at the above address with the full details and reason for applying.