

Final - NON-UK PLAYER AND/OR COACH VISA ELIGIBILITY GRID – FOR SEASON 2026-27.

England Hockey, May 2026

The following table outlines the UK visa requirements for any individual that does not hold a British passport and intends to play or coach club hockey in UK from 2026-27 onwards. It is provided for guidance for player registration and eligibility purposes. If you require immigration guidance you must contact UK Visas and Immigration or a UK immigration law specialist.

| Club Level | Permissions and Visas that permit work or participation in sport | Definition of a Professional Sportsperson summary (UK Visas & Immigration - UKVI) |
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| All Club Grades | No Work Restrictions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU/EEA with pre-settled/settled status (see primrose box below) • Irish passport holder • Certificate of right of abode • UK Ancestry & UK Ancestry Dependant • Family Member (spouse/partner of a pre-settled or a settled person or of a British Citizen) • Settlement (Indefinite leave to enter/remain) • Homes for Ukrainians • Refugee | A player or coach falling within any of the following circumstances will be a professional: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • player or coach at a professional or semi- professional level whether paid or unpaid • receives payment, including payment in kind, and that payment covers all, or the majority of, their costs for travelling to, and living in, the UK, or has received such payment within the previous 4 years • currently registered to a professional or semi-professional sports team or has been so registered within the previous 4 years • has represented their nation, national, state or regional team, within the previous 2 years, including all youth and development age groups from under 17s upwards • has an established international reputation in sport • engages an agent/representative or has engaged an agent/representative in the last 12 months • is providing services as a sportsperson or coach at any level of sport, unless they are doing so at a charity event. <p>Please see above summary of UKVI’s definition of a Professional Sportsperson for what is not considered amateur.</p> <p>For full definition see https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules/immigration-rules-introduction interpretation. (nb NGBs are not able to vary these)</p> |
| EHL Premier & Division One North / South | 1. As an amateur Players who hold one of the following visas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student • Graduate • Skilled worker • Global Talent • Youth Mobility 2. As a professional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Sportspersons visa (see grey box below) Work restricted to a club registered with a Home Office sponsor licence | |
| EHL Conference & Area League Divisions | 1. As an amateur Players who hold one of the following visas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student • Graduate • Skilled worker • Global Talent • Youth Mobility or Visitor Visa. | |

IMPORTANT NOTES.

- To play as an Amateur a player must not receive any payment, in the way of any salary, benefit in kind, including, flights to & from UK, accommodation, match fees, sponsorship or bursaries.
- To play as an Amateur a player may receive any reasonable out of pocket match day expenses eg: travel, which all receipts need to be fully documented within a club’s annual accounts.
- Unless they have an International Sportsperson visa It is illegal for a club to engage a player offering any of the benefits as shown in 1. above with anyone who has one of the visas as shown in the purple or green box.

Clubs must check that every player and coach has the legal right to work in the UK before any engagement begins (with evidence of eligibility as per blue box above). Failure to do so can result in fines of up to £60,000 per individual found to be engaged illegally, reputational damage, and for clubs at tbc level sponsor licence revocations

The International Sportsperson route of the points-based system, as determined by UK Visas & Immigration, 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 and who will base themselves in the UK and 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. There is a separate EH policy for these. See <https://www.englandhockey.co.uk/governance/rules-and-regulations/regulations-and-policies>.

Pre-settled/settled status usually applies to an EU passport holder who was in the UK before 30.06.21

For more info see <https://www.gov.uk/sports-person-visa>, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sponsorship-sporting-code-of-practice>.

For queries contact competitions.info@englandhockey.co.uk.