

FIT Operations Policy No 3

Player Eligibility

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Player eligibility for international sporting competition can be a complex and often emotive issue. The defining elements are at the very heart of global competition and key issues involved in ascertaining eligibility include aspects of nationality, passport, residency, place of birth, playing history, the respective country's selection process and even a player's gender, birth date and age.
- 1.2 A player's eligibility to represent a country requires some form of direct link between the individual and the represented country. The International Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) has ruled that Legal Nationality and Sporting Nationality may be "different", one defined in Public Law and the other in Private Law.
- 1.3 The Federation of International Touch (the Federation) therefore has the authority to decide eligibility criteria for participants in the sport in the international arena as governed by the Federation and Member Country National Touch Associations (NTA). Specific eligibility criteria may differ from Legal Nationality and should be subject to any internationally endorsed antidiscrimination or equality policies. The focus of this Eligibility Policy is that the criteria are both fair and equitable to most.
- 1.4 The Federation also agrees that the basis of International Sport should be just that, about individuals competing for their country against individuals from another country and any competing national team should be a Member Country NTA representative national team.

2. Application

- 2.1 This policy applies to all Federation Events classified as Tier 1 to Tier 3 as defined in the Classification of Events policy.
- 2.2 This policy applies to all participants of Member countries competing at any Federation Event. Member countries are responsible to ensure all individuals representing that Member country meet the eligibility criteria prior to participation at a Federation Event.
- 2.3 Member countries are encouraged to apply this policy to all events that are not afforded Federation Event status.
- 2.4 This eligibility policy applies to representative players registered in national teams. The policy does not apply to officials, coaches, referees, support staff or to representative players under eighteen (18) years of age.

- 2.5 Because of the status of some Developing Nation countries, the Federation may allow certain eligibility criteria to be waived for those countries for some competitions and Federation Events, on a specific case-by-case basis. A Developing Nation must submit an application for exemption in accordance with the details at Appendix 1 for each player exemption occasion.
- 2.6 For the exceptional circumstance when a Member country seeks to include an ineligible player in their national squad for a Federation Event, that Member country must submit a player exemption request in accordance with Appendix 1 not less than three (3) months prior to the commencement of the Federation Event.
- 2.7 This Policy should be interpreted in conjunction with the Federation International Club Event Policy (Pending).

3. Definitions

- 3.1 Birth Certificate: A formal, statutory document recording the place, date and time of birth of an individual. For the purposes of this policy a certified copy of a Birth Certificate or “Birth Extract” is deemed to be a Birth Certificate.
- 3.2 Citizenship: A process whereby an immigrant individual achieves the requirements to satisfy a country’s criteria for being a legitimate national.
- 3.3 Country: A geographic region as defined by the 2008 FIT Constitution.
- 3.4 Developing Nation: A country not yet affiliated with the Federation, not a Federation Full or Associate Member and which has been awarded the status of “Developing Nation”.
- 3.5 Driving Licence: A current, photographic, identification card issued by a government department entitling an individual to drive in a specific country or region.
- 3.6 Federation Event: A tournament at which international competition occurs in accordance with event classification contained in the Federation Event Classification Policy.
- 3.7 International competition: Competition between two or more Member National Touch Associations. The competing teams are national representative teams.
- 3.8 Legal National: An individual player who has been formally recognised by the respective government as a person of origin of a country, on the basis of birth, parentage, residency or other legal criteria pertaining to that country.
- 3.9 Member: National Touch Associations affiliated with the Federation and they may be Full Members, Associate Members or Federation Members as defined from time to time.
- 3.10 Open (division): A playing division in which there are only gender qualifications.
- 3.11 Parent: Either a biological (blood) parent or a legal guardian (adopted) of an individual. For the purpose of this policy a step parent or foster parent is not considered a parent unless they are the legal guardian of the player in question.
- 3.12 Passport: An official document issued by a government department certifying nationality of a country and used by an individual for international travel.
- 3.13 Place of Birth: The location of birth as recorded on an individual’s Birth Certificate.

- 3.14 Represented: An individual selected on the basis of merit through a formal selection process, listed on the player registration sheet for a Member country participating in international competition, is deemed to have represented that country.
- 3.15 Residency: Continuous domicile in a country except for short periods of absence away from the normal place of residence for holidays and the like. The normal, common use definition in the order of “a few weeks but no longer than a few months” is to apply.
- 3.16 Senior (divisions): Playing divisions that have minimum age eligibility criteria.
- 3.17 Reserved.

4. Eligibility Criteria

- 4.1 For an individual to be eligible to represent a Member country in international competition, the individual must be able to prove:
 - 4.1.1 They are a Legal National (including Citizenship) of the Member country; or
 - 4.1.2 They have parent (mother or father) who was born in the Member country; or
 - 4.1.3 They have been a resident of the Member country for three (3) years.
- 4.2 In addition to the above requirement at paragraph 4.1, to be eligible to represent a Member country in international competition an individual must not have represented another Member country in international competition in the sport during the previous three (3) years.
- 4.3 In addition to the criteria listed in paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2 above, to be eligible to participate in Federation events, an individual must also meet:
 - 4.3.1 Membership and eligibility requirements of the Member National Touch Association including, but not limited to, matters relating to registration, insurance and financial status; and
 - 4.3.2 Gender criteria (male / men’s or female / women’s); and
 - 4.3.3 Age criteria in Senior aged divisions. It is normal for age-related divisions to specify a minimum age by the year of competition or a minimum year of birth. Tournament regulations will specify the criteria.
- 4.4 An individual participating in any Federation Event must be able to clearly prove their identity by having available to present one of the following as required:
 - 4.4.1 Current driving licence; or
 - 4.4.2 Current passport; or
 - 4.4.3 Other, suitable photographic evidence.
- 4.5 The responsibility to prove eligibility rests with both the individual and with the Member country. Participants whose eligibility may be perceived as questionable for a particular Federation Event should ensure that adequate and appropriate justification is at hand.
- 4.6 Developing Nations and in exceptional circumstances Member countries may seek clearance to enable non-eligible individuals to represent their country. National Touch Associations may apply in writing to the Secretary General for clearance not less than three months before the

respective competition. The submission should contain all relevant detail and specify the reason for exemption request. The Secretary General will consider the matter and advise a decision within two weeks.

- 4.7 The decision of the Secretary General may be appealed to the appointed FIT Judiciary Chair for the respective event in accordance with the Federation Judiciary Policy. The event FIT Judiciary Chair or a nominated alternative as necessary, will consider the matter summarily and advise a decision within two weeks.

5. Second Representation

- 5.1 An individual who has represented one Member country in international competition may seek a clearance to represent a second Member country provided that individual meets the eligibility criteria listed in paragraph 4.1 to 4.3 above, for the second Member country.
- 5.2 An individual is entitled to one change only. Once a change has been undertaken in an individual's lifetime, no further changes will be allowed.
- 5.3 Consideration of the circumstances of any request for a change should be applied and may include reasons of immigration, marriage, employment, development of the sport and personal matters.
- 5.4 The following clearance procedures applies should an individual wish to change intended representation to a second Member country:
- 5.4.1 An individual initially must apply for clearance by completing the Clearance Application / Second Representation Form (see Appendix 2) and submit the form to the Federation Secretary General, together with any supporting documentation not less than four (4) months prior to the respective Federation Event.
- 5.4.2 The Federation Secretary General will then seek written comment from the individual's current Member Country NTA followed by the individual's intended Member Country NTA.
- 5.4.3 Following consideration of the matter the Federation Secretary General will advise the individual and both Member Country NTA of the decision in writing.
- 5.4.4 The Secretary General is to maintain a record of all clearance application requests and associated decisions.
- 5.4.5 An individual may appeal the decision of the Secretary General to the Federation Board in accordance with the Federation Judiciary Policy. The Board may appoint a Federation Appeals Panel to determine the appeal on its behalf. Any such appeal must be lodged with the Secretary General within 7 days of notification of the decision.
- 5.5 Reserved.

6. Sanctions for Policy Breaches

- 6.1 Should a Member country allow an ineligible individual to represent that Member country and participate in any match during any Federation Event and the ineligibility is proven the Federation may take appropriate action. Penalties that may be imposed include, but are not limited to the following:
 - 6.1.1 Deduction of competition points; and / or
 - 6.1.2 Monetary fines; and / or
 - 6.1.3 Banning of individuals from competitions or remaining matches; and / or
 - 6.1.4 Banning of teams from competitions or remaining matches; and / or
 - 6.1.5 Combination of any of the above.
- 6.2 Reserved.

7. Protests and Appeals

- 7.1 A Member country may protest to the Secretary General or to his or her appointee, or to any Tournament Judiciary to consider such matters, about an individual either intending to represent or who is representing or has represented another Member country at a Federation Event. Any eligibility protest must relate to the eligibility criteria detailed at paragraphs 4.1 to 4.3. Further details will normally be included in Event Rules and Regulation documents.
- 7.2 Any eligibility protest must be submitted using the Player Eligibility Protest Form shown at Appendix 3 and must be submitted within thirty (30) minutes of completion of the game in which the alleged transgression occurred. The protest circumstances are to be clearly advised and available evidence supplied at the time of submission.
- 7.3 The Secretary General or appointee, through the respective Tournament Judiciary will consider the matter and will advise all associated Member countries and the individual concerned of the decision without delay.
- 7.4 The complainant Member country may appeal the Secretary General decision to the Federation Board to determine an appeal in accordance with the Federation Judiciary Policy.
- 7.5 Any matter of interpretation, or matter not provided for in this Policy, will be determined by the Federation Board.

8. Policy History / Approval/Application

- 8.1 This policy was approved by the Federation Board on 9th December 2012.
- 8.2 This policy, and any subsequent amendment of this policy, will take effect immediately upon communication of same to Member countries through the respective National Touch Association last notified FIT Contact.
- 8.3 Member countries are responsible for the appropriate application of this policy.
- 8.4 The policy is due for review in December 2014.



- Appendix 1: Eligibility Exemption Application Form (Also available as MS-Word document)
- Appendix 2: Player Clearance / Second Representation Application Form (Also available as MS-Word document)



Eligibility Exemption Application Form

(Applying Member Country NTA to complete and submit as per Eligibility Policy Paragraph 4.6.)

Player Full Name:

Player Date / Place of Birth: DOB:

Place of Birth:

Player Nationality:

Applicable Federation Event:

Applying Member Country:

COMPLETED BY MEMBER COUNTRY NTA

Reason for Application for Exemption (Provide details and refer Para 4.1 – 4.3)

Supporting Evidence / Justification (Provide details and include attachments)

Application submitted by (Person's Name):

Position:

Date Submitted:

E-mail:

Date Received by Secretary General:

Decision by Secretary General:

Date Member Country NTA advised:

Decision Recorded in Register:

Player Clearance / Second Representation Application Form

(Applying Individual to complete and submit as per Eligibility Policy Paragraph 5.4.)

Player Full Name: _____ Player Date / Place of Birth: _____
 Player Nationality: _____ E-mail: _____

(Part A) COMPLETED BY INDIVIDUAL

Previous / Current Member Country Representation History / Dates:

Reason for Clearance / Second Representation Request:

(Part B) COMPLETED BY PREVIOUS / CURRENT MEMBER COUNTRY NTA

Comment by Previous / Current Member Country NTA:

Responsible NTA Contact Name: _____ Position: _____
 E-mail: _____ Date: _____

(Part C) COMPLETED BY NEW / PROPOSED MEMBER COUNTRY NTA

Comment by New / Proposed Member Country NTA:

Responsible NTA Contact Name: _____ Position: _____
 E-mail: _____ Date: _____

Date Received by Secretary General:
 Date Comment received by Previous / Current Member Country NTA:
 Date Comment received by Previous / Current Member Country NTA:
 Decision by Secretary General:
 Date Previous / Current & Proposed New Member Country NTA and Individual advised:
 Decision Recorded in Register:



Appendix 3

(Reserved)

Note: Eligibility Protest Forms currently issued with respective event documentation.