

Eligibility Proposals Introduction: An Eligibility Working Party (EWP) was set up after the 2019 CS AGM and over four months from early November 2019 to mid February 2020 examined the rules and procedures related to eligibility for Championship titles and International representation. The covid pandemic and ongoing restrictions prevented an earlier presentation of the proposals.

These proposals are both aimed at clarifying eligibility issues. However they are entirely separate motions and not dependent on each other.

1) Proposal to amend the Chess Scotland Constitution

Proposed by Douglas Bryson, (Chairman, Eligibility Working Party)

Seconded by Jim Webster, (President of Chess Scotland)

The Chess Scotland Constitution shall be amended to include the following new section 16:

16. Eligibility

16.1 These rules apply to

- Eligibility for National Individual Championship Titles
- International representation in official FIDE and ECU competitions in a Scotland national team or as a Scotland player in an international individual event.

16.2 There are three eligibility considerations as follows: -

16.2.1 Was the player born in Scotland?

16.2.2 Was either of the player's parents born in Scotland?

16.2.3 Has the player been resident in Scotland for at least two years* immediately prior to the date of receipt of an application to Chess Scotland for an initial FIDE registration or a transfer to Scotland?

(*This period is one year for a junior under the age of 18 at the time of receipt of the application.)

16.3 A positive response to any one of the above three questions would mean that the player is eligible subject to the following provision.

16.3.1 National Individual Championship Titles and International Representation

Players must be SCO registered with FIDE to be eligible for National Individual Championship titles or to represent Scotland in international competition. To be SCO registered a player must satisfy one of the three eligibility criteria as in 16.2 above.

Eligibility Proposals Introduction: An Eligibility Working Party (EWP) was set up after the 2019 AGM and over four months from early November 2019 to mid February 2020 examined the rules and procedures related to eligibility for Championship titles and International representation.

Over a period of years directors have introduced changes to existing policy not all of which have been discussed, publicised or endorsed by AGM votes. This has resulted in various documents relating to rules on eligibility which are not always fully consistent with other documents. It is not always obvious which document was “correct”. The Chess Scotland official rule book has not been updated on the website for a number of years. This meant that players and officials have been unsure of exactly which rulings are the current interpretations of CS policy on eligibility and what sources should be consulted to get information on eligibility.

The 2016 AGM ruling which restricted eligibility to Championship titles only to holders of a Scotland registration (SCO) was of particular significance and changed the previous policy which permitted non-Scot residents to have title eligibility. The lack of documentation about how the rule was to be implemented or modified led directly to confusion over eligibility for the 2019 Championship title. This resulted in a challenge to the initial title award and subsequent AGM motions which modified the result.

The 2019 Championship difficulties provoked the desire for clarification of eligibility issues.

The EWP proposes that a new set of eligibility conditions which are broadly in line with the historic and generally accepted procedures be placed in the Constitution to state more clearly what are the eligibility principles which should be followed for championships and international play. If the rules are in the Constitution it should minimise divergence from established procedure and provide a source document for anyone seeking CS rules on eligibility.

If members vote **Yes** then the provisions of the motion will be included in the CS Constitution. If members vote **No** (or not by the required Yes majority) then the provisions of the motion will be enacted but will not be in the CS Constitution.

Constitutional provisions require that changes secure over a 2/3rd tally of total votes cast.

END OF ELIGIBILITY PROPOSAL



2) Proposal to establish the rights of GM Matthew Turner

Proposed by Douglas Bryson, (Chairman, Eligibility Working Party)

Seconded by Alistair Maxwell, (Rules Director of Chess Scotland)

This meeting confirms that the full rights normally associated with a SCO registration apply to Matthew Turner.

GM Matthew Turner: The EWP propose that members vote on GM Matthew Turner to provide clarification on the future rights of the player to Championship titles and International representation. Matthew was one of the 2019 co-winners of the title and a summary of the issues surrounding his current Scotland status is given below.

GM Matthew Turner (MT) is currently the highest rated active player with a SCO registration but has never represented Scotland in an international competition. In 2019 he took outright first place in the Scottish Championship which was later adjusted to a joint title win after his title rights were challenged.

MT attended the 2011 CS AGM and made a request to transfer to a Scotland registration (from England). The request was made on the basis of a grandparent connection to Scotland. The AGM voted to proceed with the transfer despite the player not fulfilling any of the normal registration requirements, in particular that of a link at parent level. MT has never been resident in Scotland. CS membership was consulted at both Council 2014 and AGM 2015 and both times a vote to change to the grandparent rule was defeated.

In 2013 MT was the joint top scorer in the Scottish Championship among SCO registered or Scotland resident players. He had held a SCO registration for over a year at that point but was ruled ineligible and did not feature in tie-break calculations (the tie-break would have been lost). At the 2016 Scottish Championship MT was the clear top scorer but was again ruled ineligible.

The 2016 AGM made a rule change that only players badged as "SCO" would in future be eligible for the Scottish Championship titles (whereas in previous years players registered with other federations but resident in Scotland were eligible throughout the history of the Championship). In 2019 MT was the highest scorer in the Scottish Championship and was awarded the title. The Championship Director and Executive Director had interpreted the 2016 AGM amendment as giving rights to title eligibility to any holder of the SCO badge.

However there had been no discussion among the full CS board on this interpretation and no change in policy was documented or publicised and the rule book was not updated. Moreover, there was no clarification if the new interpretation applied specifically to GM Matthew Turner.

The title award was challenged on the basis the Championship arbiters had made an incorrect interpretation of the 2016 changes and that previous title requirements relating to residency should still apply (i.e. MT was ineligible unless he had completed a period of residency).

The 2019 AGM voted in favour of a motion that the title be shared by MT and the next highest scorer GM Colin McNab.

Chess Scotland has never made a definitive statement on what rights are held by MT. It is now over 10 years since the initial vote by members to grant MT SCO status. Chess Scotland would like to offer a vote to members on whether GM Matthew Turner should be granted full future rights to Championship titles and International representation associated with his Scotland registration. The situation is unique since no other player offering only a grandparent connection has been allocated SCO status. This vote would not change the grandparent rule (parent is the bloodline level required in the eligibility rules) and would simply clarify the exact rights of one player.

If members vote **Yes** they agree with the proposal then Matthew Turner will then have the same rights as any other SCO badged player from the date of the completion of this vote.

If members vote **No** they disagree then Matthew Turner would retain his Scotland registration but would only qualify for full SCO rights if he completed a two year period of residency.

Since this is not a constitutional motion the vote requires only a simple majority.

End of MT Proposal

.....

