

## **Some questions and answers on the Eligibility proposals – February 2022.**

The eligibility working party (EWP) was set up after the 2019 AGM with 5 experienced players trying to formulate suitable proposals after discussing eligibility issues. There was guidance provided to the group from the CS Board. It was not strictly mandated that the guidance be followed but there was an overriding desire to secure outcomes to resolve the issues.

The EWP report is a majority opinion document. There was disagreement with the conclusions in particular with regard to the statement on longevity of a SCO badge when that player no longer resides in Scotland and whose initial registration was only based on residency.

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The difficulties of the 2019 Championship provoked the need to finally establish answers to eligibility issues. The problems arose mainly from the interpretation of the 2016 AGM passed motion which changed eligibility with regard to Scottish Championship titles. Specific guidance should have been given prior to the 2019 event that officials wanted to change the previous status of GM Matthew Turner as outlined in the details of the 2<sup>nd</sup> motion.

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### *1) Whose opinions were sought with regard to establishing eligibility rules?*

The remit given to the EWP was for deliberation to be contained within the group of five members.

A decision of what constitutes eligibility doesn't reside with any particular director - it is a fundamental matter for all members from beginner to GM, CS official or ordinary member to decide which players the organisation considers are entitled to be badged as Scottish.

The proposals are simply a continuation of existing eligibility policy with some wording clarifications. They do not seek to impose any new policy positions on the organisation or any particular CS official.

### *2) What was the reasoning for not interviewing the best players in Scotland?*

All players regardless of strength have the right to express an opinion on what they consider constitutes Scottish eligibility - higher rated players have no higher value opinion on this fundamental issue. As mentioned the remit was to make policy proposals from discussion within the appointed members of the EWP.

### *3) Is it the intention to align eligibility to represent Scotland with eligibility for the national championship titles?*

Yes - that is the intention of the proposals to make eligibility for Championship titles or International representation exactly the same.

After the 2016 AGM vote to exclude non-SCO players from title eligibility this meant that eligibility rules could now be identical whereas prior to 2016 there had to be rule provision in relation to residents badged other than SCO who had title eligibility.

Unfortunately the online CS rule book had never been updated to reflect the new situation nor had any specific guidance been updated by rules officials which is one of the main reasons the EWP committee was formed to try and establish these eligibility conditions and then secure their position within the Constitution to provide guidance on future decisions.

*4) In which way have these rules been designed to align with the FIDE requirements of a change of Federation?*

CS has and will continue to abide by FIDE requirements on player requests to change federation. It is and has always been the case that CS determines what period of residence is required to determine eligibility to be badged as SCO. It is the national federation makes this decision.

FIDE don't indicate this requirement other than to indicate the period from which a player is eligible to represent the new federation with regard to fee rates. In the particular case of Britain we have the situation of multiple FIDE countries within one British state. As far as FIDE is concerned anyone in Britain would be eligible to be badged as SCO. It is the Scottish federation which determines that all players in Britain are not eligible to be badged as SCO and we set out our own eligibility conditions as detailed in the proposals.

However there is nothing new in the proposals other than updated text to go with the base issues of birthplace, bloodline and residence which are the long term requirements which allow a player to be badged as SCO.

*5) Are the rules meant to be the same for a change of federation as for a foreign national living in Scotland wishing to represent Scotland?*

Yes. A player without a birthplace or bloodline link must have been resident in Scotland for a minimum of two years (1 year under 18s) before they can transfer to Scotland. Nothing has changed other than a clarification of the wording to indicate that the two year period relates to the period immediately before the request to transfer and not to some 2 year period in the past.

There may be some cases where an immediate transfer is possible without regard to the residence status of the player. For example a player born in Scotland may have moved to England as a child and is FIDE registered as ENG. Later the player may wish to transfer to Scotland. In that case the transfer would be immediate since born in Scotland is a basic eligibility condition - it doesn't require the player to have residence.

*9) What is the basis for the ancestry provision? How does it align with the FIDE rules? How is Scottish ancestry determined as no Scottish citizenship exists? Is it by birth place or does it require a certain amount of time lived in Scotland?*

Do you mean what constitutes "ancestry" - it is born in Scotland or at least one parent born in Scotland. It is determined by the members of the federation deciding these are the terms by which someone is entitled to SCO status.

Eligibility is also given to residents who have completed a two year period of residency prior to the request to transfer.

Or do you mean how does CS ascertain what constitutes ancestry in relation to a checking procedure. That is also set out in the proposals - CS will generally accept a player's claim on birthplace, parentage or residence location without seeking documentary evidence. In the case of transfers the level of "proof" is more involved since the player must provide the information indicated by FIDE.

The rules on FIDE eligibility are set out here. <https://handbook.fide.com/chapter/B042020>

*10) What will be the outcome of Matthew Turner's situation based on this? It appears to only deal with future changes of Federation and indirectly makes MT fully eligible?*

The outcome is detailed in the report. The 2nd proposal asks if members want MT to have full status rights associated with his SCO registration.

If members vote Yes they agree with the proposal then Matthew Turner will then have the same normal rights as any other SCO badged player from the date of the completed 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 (or if there was a further grandparent vote and such a change was passed).

He will only be fully eligible if members vote to make him fully eligible. It needs to be clarified since we have an ongoing level of confusion that various officials and players within CS have completely different opinions on the status of the player.

MT is not in any way pushing for an international place and his only issue of concern was that he would retain the SCO badge regardless of the outcome of the vote.

The EWP as a group does not express an opinion on what the conclusion should be with regard to MT title and international eligibility. The EWP is proposing a mechanism by which members could express an opinion on whether they want MT to have all rights associated with his SCO registration. The aim is to finally resolve the exact status of a player when CS management has never explicitly clarified the status of the player in the 10+ years since his transfer.