



SWF Player Approach Policy 2025

Player Registration

Season 2025 is the first season with rolling registrations, which have been implemented by the SFA. Registrations do not end at the end of a season.

Players registered with a club for a regional playing season remain registered with the club until their registration is terminated.

Players registered with a club for a performance playing season remain registered with the club until their registration is terminated.

Legal Player Approaches

To make a player approach, a club must seek permission to speak to the player and their parent(s)/guardian(s). If a club wishes to make an approach to a player, they must do the following:

- 1) Check whether the player is currently registered with another club before speaking to the player and their parent(s)/guardian(s). This check should include any aliases, including middle names, that the player may have.

If the player is currently registered with another club, the following must be completed:

- 2) The club making the inquiry must inform the club holding the registration in writing that they would like to make an enquiry. This must be done by a club official. The club that holds the registration then must inform the player and their parents to see whether there is any desire to take the enquiry further. It is best practice to copy swf@scotwomensfootball.com into initial player approach emails between club secretaries.
- 3) Clubs must request special permission to allow the player to take part in any club activities, in addition to the request to speak to the player/player's parent/guardian. Club activities include, but are not limited to:
 - a. discussions about joining the team
 - b. attending training
 - c. playing in friendlies
 - d. playing in league/cup fixtures

If a club is approached by a player or their parent(s)/guardian(s), the club being approached must then follow the above steps from the beginning.

A club failing to perform the above duties may result in the club having disciplinary action taken against them for making an Illegal Player Approach.

Note: Any player attending an open try out or training session must have written permission from the club that holds the registration in order to participate.



Illegal Player Approaches:

- Approaches to players and their parent(s)/guardian(s) first
- Approaches to clubs and players and or their parent(s)/guardian(s) simultaneously
- Approaches by clubs to players and/or their parent(s)/guardian(s) using coaches, volunteers, schoolteachers, players or parents or anyone else as proxies
- Approaches to a player more than once in the same playing season
- Approaches to more than one player in a team in the same approach
- Approaches to another player at the same club within 28 days of an earlier notice of approach or acknowledgement
- Approaches via club social media platforms in the first instance
- Clubs making an approach must not advise players and or their parent(s)/guardian(s) of how to leave their current club

Any approach that breaches the above is considered an 'Illegal Player Approach'.

Lodging a complaint

Where a club wishes to report an Illegal Player Approach to one of their players, they should formally communicate this to SWF and evidence their complaint using the SWF Intimation Breach of Policy form. Evidence including photographs and/or statements from relevant personnel are strongly advised to support the complaint. The complaint shall follow SWF's Complaint Handling Process.

Note: Approaches made over 4 weeks prior to lodging the complaint shall not be investigated.



Penalties

- Should it be proved that an Illegal Player Approach has been made, the current level of fine is detailed in the below table and varies depending on first or repeated offence. Multiple approaches or repeated offences are liable to be fined at an escalated scale and further action taken against the club and individuals concerned.
- Where an approach has been made by an official or coach working in a community programme, school of football, sports academy, development, regional or national squad or any other event run or part run by the Scottish FA, Scottish Schools or any national association the incident will be reported to our partner associations and disciplinary action to be taken via their appropriate policy.
- If a club fails to advise a player or their parents of an official approach from another club, then they will be subject to a £25 fine unless evidence of sharing the approach can be provided to SWF within 7 days. Repeated offences are liable to be fined at an escalated scale and further action taken against the club and individuals concerned. The club may also be referred to the SWF Disciplinary Committee.

League Name	First offence	Repeated offence
Championship	£250	Increased monetary fine and potential point deduction
League One	£200	Increased monetary fine and potential point deduction
SWFL	£150	Increased monetary fine and potential point deduction
Youth Performance	£125	Increased monetary fine and potential point deduction
Youth Regional	£100	Increased monetary fine and potential point deduction



Player Registration Cancellation

- A player wishing to be de-registered should firstly approach their club and ask for this to happen. The club can cancel a player's registration on their own through the online system. The club can also request SWF to process the cancellation on their behalf. This must be done via email.
- Where a club refuses to release a player, the player or their parent(s)/guardian(s) may request, in writing, at any time that SWF cancel their registration. This application triggers a 14 days' notice period during which SWF will:
 - Advise the club of the application and request an explanation for refusing the player's request.
 - Encourage the club to release the player prior to the 14-day deadline if there is no valid reason for with-holding cancellation.
 - Where no valid reason to withhold release, release the player automatically after the 14 days period is over.
 - Where a valid reason for refusing to release a player may is provided, SWF will look to help both parties to resolve issues.
 - Where the parent club has lodged a complaint over an Illegal Player Approach of the player by another club.

The above reason may not be sufficient to stop the automatic release of a player, however, they may be sufficient for SWF to stop the player from registering for another club.