



SWF Player Approach Policy 2026

Player Registration

Season 2026 is the second 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.

Players registered with a club for a senior 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, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Check given name
 - b. Check given name including middle names
 - c. Check any aliases
 - d. Check with club if registration confirmed by player/parent(s)/guardian(s), but not viewable on COMET

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

- 2) The club making the approach must inform the club holding the registration in writing that they would like to make an approach. 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. The club holding the registration must respond to the approaching club within 14 days of receiving the written notice of approach, confirming whether the player and their parent(s)/guardian(s) wish to take the enquiry further. It is best practice to copy swf@scotwomensfootball.com into player approach emails between club secretaries. A proforma email can be found in Appendix 1.



If a club is approached by a player or their parent(s)/guardian(s), the club being approached must then follow the above steps, starting with point 1). At this point, a player approach has begun.

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. A proforma permission form can be found in Appendix 2.

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) knowingly 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'. Additional scenarios not listed above may be considered illegal player approaches at the discretion of Scottish Women's Football.

Raising an Illegal Player Approach

Where a club wishes to report an Illegal Player Approach, they should formally communicate this to SWF and evidence their complaint using the SWF Illegal Player Approach form. Evidence including photographs and/or statements from relevant personnel are strongly advised to support the complaint. The Illegal Player Approach shall follow SWF's Complaint Handling Process in so far as the respondent will have the opportunity to respond to any allegations.

Note: Approaches made over 4 weeks prior to raising an Illegal Player Approach 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 prior to the matter being raised with SWF 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	£150	Increased monetary fine and potential point deduction
League One	£150	Increased monetary fine and potential point deduction
SWFL	£125	Increased monetary fine and potential point deduction
Youth Performance	£100	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 secretary and ask for this to happen in writing via email with SWF copied in.
- The club can cancel a player's registration on their own through SFA COMET.
- The club can also request that SWF process the cancellation on their behalf. This must be done via email.
- Any request to de-register a player should be actioned within 14 days of receipt of request.
- 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 is provided, SWF will look to help both parties to resolve issues. SWF may offer a mediated meeting in such cases but is not limited to this course of action.
 - 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.

Note: The de-registration of a player must not be impacted by the return of any club kit or monies owed.



Appendix 1: Player Approach Email Proforma

Dear <Insert Club Name>,

In line with the SWF Player Approach Policy, <Insert Club Name> would like to request permission to approach <Insert Player Name (COMET ID)> regarding opportunities with our club.

For the avoidance of doubt, we would like to discuss the following opportunities with <Insert Player Name>:

Please delete as necessary

- Joining the club
- Training with the club
- Playing friendlies with the club
- Other (please specify)

We would be grateful if this request could be shared with the player/parent(s)/guardian(s) and if you could confirm whether they are happy for us to make contact regarding this approach.

Please don't hesitate to let us know if you require any additional information. We appreciate your time and consideration and look forward to your response.

Kind regards,

<Insert Club Name>



Appendix 2: Open Trial Permission Form

Open Trial Permission Form

Details of club granting permission:

Club Name	
Club Secretary's Name	

Player Details:

Name	
COMET ID	

Open Trial Details:

Host Club	
Date	
Time	
Location	

Permission granted: Yes/No

Signed: _____

Club Role: _____

Date: _____