**NEPL REGISTRATION RULES 2021**

1. A player may not take part in any competition of the League unless his club, in accordance with the following Rules, has previously registered him.

2. Clubs must register players in the following categories

 **Category 1: ELIGIBLE PLAYERS** A player who is either (a) a British citizen and born in England and Wales or (b) has been resident in England or Wales since 1 April 2021 and for a minimum of 210 days between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022 or (c) a player who is a British citizen and born in Scotland or Northern Ireland but who does not meet the above residency requirement. In all cases if the player has played as a ‘home’, ‘local’ or ‘non-overseas’ player in an overseas league, excluding a league in Scotland or Northern Ireland, in the period between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021, the player will forfeit any right of Category 1 status and will become a Category 3 player.

 **Category 2: COUNTY CONTRACTED PLAYERS** A player, regardless of nationality, who has a playing contract with a First Class County. As an exemption, any player with a ‘Rookie’ or ‘Academy’ contract with a First Class County will be a Category 1 player. (See further details relating to the definition and registration of County Contracted players at Rules 17 – 25 below).

 **Category 3: UNQUALIFIED PLAYERS** A player who does not satisfy the requirements to be a Category 1 or Category 2 player. (See further details relating to the definition and registration of Unqualified Players at Rules 12 – 14 and Appendix 1).

3. Clubs must, not later than seven days before the date of the first League fixture of the season, lodge with the League Registration Secretary (Email: neplreg@gmail.com) a list of all existing players continuing their registration with the club. Any newly registered players (i.e. not registered by that club in the preceding season) must have been registered via the League Registered Players (LRP) system using that club’s play-cricket website and had that registration approved by the League Registration Secretary by the same deadline of 7 days before the season start date.

4. Clubs must re-register all Category 2 and 3 players each season.

5. A club cannot apply for registration of a player unless he/she is a bona fide member of that club and has duly signed the appropriate League Registration Form all of which incorporate a statement that the player has seen, read and undertakes to abide by the ECB’s Code of Conduct.

6. After the start of the season for any player not currently registered with a club, that club must BOTH submit the appropriate League registration form to neplreg@gmail.com and also submit a registration application via their play-cricket website, not less than 72 hours before the start of the match in which the player makes his first appearance for the club, subject to any other requirements of the League or Cup Match Play Rules. It is recognised that the League Registration Secretary may not be able to process the registration 72 hours before the start of the match. However, the player cannot play in the match unless the Registration Secretary (or in his absence the League Secretary) has approved the registration and informed the club accordingly. This requirement will be rigorously enforced and an appropriate sanction will be imposed for playing an unregistered player. Clubs are therefore encouraged to submit registration applications as early as possible. Any player registered via this means after 31st July (including any player transferred under Rule 8 below) will not be permitted to play for that club in any 1st XI League or Cup match before the end of the season.

7. Clubs must comply with the player eligibility rules for the Sunday Leagues, Midweek League, Banks Cup and Banks Shield competition. Clubs must register any unregistered player who has received special permission to play in the Sunday Leagues or Banks Cup not later than 72 hours after the match ends. Clubs must identify on its Play-Cricket site any unregistered player who plays in the Midweek League or Banks Shield not later than 72 hours after the match ends.

8. After the start of the season a registered player may apply, on not less than 72 hours notice, to the League Registration Secretary to transfer their registration to another club. Provided that the two clubs involved have indicated to each other, and to the League Registration Secretary, their agreement the League Registration Secretary may, thereupon, transfer the registration and give written notice to the clubs and the player of his agreement.

9. In situations where a player seeking registration with a club previously played for a club in another League then details of that arrangement must be made known to the NEPL League Registration Secretary who, in turn, will advise his counterpart in the League that player is leaving. The player and the player’s previous Club must complete and submit the NEPL League Transfer Form before the registration will be approved.

 **Junior Players**

10. Clubs must provide the League Registration Secretary with a list of all junior players (including dates of birth) who are classed as under 15 (i.e. their 15th birthday is on or after 1 September of the preceding year), and register such players on the NEPL Play cricket website. All players who are over 15 years of age (i.e. their 15th birthday was before 1 September in the preceding year) must complete a NEPL registration form and submit this to the League Registration Secretary in the normal way.

11. Under 12 players will not be permitted to play in NEPL senior matches unless written permission is received from a parent or guardian of the child AND also from his/her County squad manager or pathway development officer.

 **Unqualified Players**

12. Each club will be entitled to register only one unqualified player, who may play in 1st XI Matches only. For the purposes of this Rule the definition of an unqualified player is to be as per the current ECB and Home Office Rules and Guidelines, including residency requirements and those of the “Managing Migration” Regulations.

13. Each club will be entitled to register one Unqualified Junior, providing that they have been resident within the United Kingdom since 1st January of that year. In exceptional circumstances a Club may register an ~~Overseas~~ Unqualified Junior who does not meet the residency requirement. A Junior Unqualified player must be qualified to play in the same season for his club’s junior side. An Unqualified Junior may only play in junior, 3rd and 2nd eleven matches.

14. In exceptional circumstances, a club may be able to replace an Unqualified Player or Unqualified Junior Player with another Unqualified Player or Unqualified Junior Player during the season. Such a replacement will always be subject to the requirements of Registration Rules 6 and 8 above.

 **County Contracted Players**

15. Any player, regardless of nationality, who has a playing contract with a First Class County, must be registered as a Category 2 (County Contracted) player, subject to the exceptions stated below. A Category 2 registration takes precedence over all other categories.

16. Durham County Cricket Club (DCCC) will, as soon as practicable, inform the League Secretary the names of all players who will have playing contracts for the following season and who will need to be registered as Category 2 players. At the same time DCCC will inform the League Secretary the names of all players who will have Academy or Rookie contracts for the following season and who may be registered as Category 1 players.

17. DCCC will inform the League Secretary the names of any players who are subsequently awarded playing contracts. Such players will need to be registered as Category 2 players, unless they are players identified as being covered by Rule 21 below. DCCC will also inform the League Secretary the names of any players who are subsequently awarded Academy or Rookie contracts. The League Secretary will then inform all Clubs of these details.

 18. An Academy or Rookie player who has been registered as a Category 1 player before the start of the season in accordance with Rule 17 and who subsequently is awarded a playing contract with any First Class County will remain as a Category 1 player for the duration of the season.

19. Each Club may register one player who has a playing contract with another First Class County. All such registrations will be Category 2, unless they are players identified as being covered by Rule 18 above.

20. Each club may register up to two Category 2 (County Contracted) players, including only one player contracted to Durham County Cricket Club; however, only one of those players can play in any particular match. Category 2 players and players who have Rookie or Academy contracts with a First Class County may only play for a Club’s 1st XI.

21. County Contracted players will be registered by clubs as per the procedure outlined in Registration Rules 3, 4 and 5 above.

22. In exceptional circumstances, a club may be able to replace a County Contracted player with another Category 2 player during the season. Such a replacement will always be subject to the requirements of Registration Rules 6 and 8 above.

 General

23. Any decision of the League Registration Secretary will be subject to ratification by the Registration Sub-Committee, which may grant, cancel or refuse registration or transfer of registration for any reasonable cause. The club involved will be informed of the reason for cancellation or refusal. If it wishes to appeal against the decision the club will be required to give notice in writing to the League Secretary.

24. The making of a false statement, or statements, on a signed League Registration Form or the submission of false information as part of the registration process or playing a player who has breached immigration rules is a disciplinary offence and the Club concerned will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

 **Appendix 1: Category 3: Unqualified Player**

1.1 All players will require prior permission (a visa) to come to the UK to participate in sport if they do not hold:

 • British passport (or is a spouse/dependant of

 • Ancestral visa

1.2 Clubs are recommended to consult the visa matrix issued by the ECB including the definitions of amateur sportsperson, professional sportsperson, player pathway etc. The matrix identifies that visitors on certain types of visa can only play as an Amateur for a predominantly amateur club / league. The NEPL is such a league. The matrix provides a general overview only of the Home Office rules but it is a useful guide. However, Clubs should not just rely on the matrix as migration laws and regulations are under review and subject to change. The latest version of the matrix at the time of drafting these regulation rules is dated January 2021 and has been circulated to NEPL Clubs. The League Secretary will forward to Clubs any later version of the matrix that is received from the ECB.

1.3 The League Secretary will forward to Clubs any guidance issued by the ECB on managed migration in club cricket but it is the responsibility of Clubs to ensure that all relevant rules and regulations are complied with. If they are not complied with any such player will be deemed ineligible for registration.

1.4 The ECB and NEPL do not employ registered immigration officials and cannot offer definitive advice. The ECB’s Managed Migration team can provide assistance but Clubs should seek definitive guidance from the Home Office on a potential player’s status before seeking to register the player with the NEPL.

1.5 Every Category 3 Player and Club Secretary must sign the relevant NEPL Unqualified Amateur or Unqualified Professional player registration form and submit this to the League Registration Secretary, together with a copy of the player’s visa. If the visa is not available when the registration form is submitted, a copy must be supplied to the League Registration Secretary before the player plays for the Club.