

## **SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY TO REPRESENT A COUNTRY AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES**

The summary below is intended as a guide to the rules on an individual's eligibility to represent Great Britain and Northern Ireland at the Olympic Games.

### **1. General Rule (Rule 42)**

Rule 42 of Olympic Charter states the simple rule that the competitor must be a national of the country of the NOC that enter him/her. **The IOC interpret 'nationality' to mean that an individual must possess a valid passport of their country in order to be considered eligible.** To compete for Great Britain at the Olympic Games an individual must have a valid British passport (or British Overseas Territory passport).

### **2. Dual or Multi-nationals (i.e. competitors with a passport of two or more countries)**

Competitors who have a valid passport for two or more countries at the same time may choose which country to represent but, after having represented one country at the Olympic Games, in continental or regional games or in world or regional championships recognised by the relevant International Federation, competitors may not represent the other country for 3 years.

The bye law to Rule 42 does however set out a procedure whereby this period can be reduced or even cancelled by agreement between the relevant NOCs and the relevant International Federation with the IOC Executive Board's approval.

### **3. Change of Nationality**

If a competitor has already represented one country at the Olympic Games, in continental or regional games or in world or regional championships recognised by the relevant International Federation and subsequently changes or acquires a new nationality, he/she may not represent the new country until at least 3 years after the competitor last competed for his former country.

Again, as in point 2 above the bye law to Rule 42 does however set out a procedure whereby this period can be reduced or even cancelled by agreement between the relevant NOCs and the relevant International Federation with the IOC Executive Board's approval.

If a competitor has never represented his/her first country of nationality there is of course no such time restriction after a change of nationality.

### **4. Independence or Change of Border**

If a state (or colony etc) becomes independent, or if a country is incorporated into another by change of border, a competitor may choose to represent the new country (if there is an NOC) OR the former country. However, this choice can only be made once.

## 5. Disputes

The IOC Executive Board resolves any disputes regarding these rules and eligibility generally whether of an individual or general nature.

## 6. Summary of Guidance from the IOC

- (i) A competitor must possess a valid passport of the country he/she seeks to represent in order to be considered for these purposes as a national of that country.
- (ii) “Represented a country” means represented a country in the Olympic Games, in continental or regional games or in world or regional championships at senior or junior level as recognised by the relevant International Federation.
- (iii) The 3 year limit may be reduced or cancelled with the agreement of the relevant NOCs, the International Federation and with the IOC Executive Board’s approval. The IOC’s current practice on granting approvals is to require the NOC to supply the IOC’s NOC Relations Department with copies of the NOC and International Federation consent agreements and a copy of the relevant page(s) of the individual’s passport. The IOC may also request to know the reason for a change of nationality. The BOA will carry out the exercise of obtaining the relevant NOC’s consent and IOC approvals.

**If at any stage a Governing Body thinks there may be a nationality issue to be resolved they must contact the BOA’s legal department promptly so that all necessary steps can be taken in a timely fashion. The IOC may impose a deadline on changes of nationality applications before the Olympic Games.**

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