

Commonwealth Sport Byelaw 16

Byelaw 16 refers to an athlete's eligibility to compete for a Commonwealth Games Association (CGA) at the Commonwealth Games or Commonwealth Youth Games.

The full text of Byelaw 16 can be found at [Constitution-2025.pdf](#). The wording below covers the sections most relevant to athletes seeking to check their eligibility to represent Northern Ireland.

Any specific queries regarding eligibility should be directed initially to Commonwealth Sport NI.

Byelaw 16 Eligibility

- 1 It is the responsibility of all affiliated CGAs to ensure that their competitors are fully aware of and comply with Byelaw 16.
- 2 **Primacy**
 - 2.1 Subject to Byelaw 16(4) 16(5) 16(6) and 16(7), a competitor shall be eligible to represent the Commonwealth Country which enters them where they satisfy at least one of the following requirements:
 - a. Are in possession of a current valid passport of the Commonwealth Country which enters them, or
 - b. Are a subject who can demonstrate Belonger Status' in Great Britain or relevant British Overseas Territory of the Commonwealth Country which enters them.
 - 2.2 In respect of the following Affiliated CGAs –
 - I. Guernsey, Jersey, and Isle of Man. The governments of these three Crown Dependencies do not define citizenship. For Affiliated CGAs, citizenship shall be defined as three (3) years continuous residency immediately prior to the Commonwealth Games. For the avoidance of doubt, the immediately prior three-year period shall mean the three-year period that immediately precedes the 'final entries deadline'* date of the relevant Games as determined by the respective Organising Committee ('Continuous Residency') and the competitor must be in possession of a current valid UK passport.
 - II. **Northern Ireland. Byelaw 16 will defer to the Belfast Agreement (1998). Northern Ireland athletes who meet birth right criteria are to be treated equally regardless of their possession of either a current valid UK or Irish passport (but must hold one of these). This right is enshrined within the Constitution Issues (iv) of the 1998 Belfast Agreement.**
 - III. Norfolk Island. Any individual who was in possession of a current valid New Zealand passport and was also deemed eligible to compete at the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games for Norfolk Islands may continue to compete for Norfolk Islands at future iterations of the Games.

3 Secondary

- 3.1 Subject to Byelaw 16(4) 16(5) 16(6) and 16(7), where a competitor was born in a Commonwealth Country which has common citizenship/passport with other Commonwealth Countries, the competitor may represent either:
- a. the Commonwealth Country of their birth; or
 - b. the Commonwealth Country of birth of their parent; or
 - c. where the IF recognises grandparents as part of its eligibility criteria, the competitor may represent the Commonwealth Country of birth of their grandparent; or
 - d. the Commonwealth Country where they have completed a minimum period of three (3) years continuous residency immediately prior to the Commonwealth Games. For the avoidance of doubt, the immediately prior three-year period shall mean the three-year period that immediately precedes the 'final entries deadline'* date of the relevant Games as determined by the respective Organising Committee.
- 3.2 Subject to the other provisions of this Byelaw 16, where a competitor is eligible to represent more than one Affiliated CGA due to common passport privileges they may choose which Affiliated CGA to represent. For the avoidance of doubt, if an individual has competed at a Commonwealth Youth Games this will not be deemed to be a choice of country, and the competitor may choose to represent a different Affiliated CGA at a Commonwealth Games.
- 3.3 For the avoidance of doubt subject to Byelaw 16(4) and 16(5) any competitor of a common passport area who competes for their common passport country (i.e. Great Britain, New Zealand and Australia) at either the Olympic Games, Youth Olympic Games and/or any World Championships or any other major sporting event shall be entitled to choose to represent their home Affiliated CGA (e.g. Turks and Caicos) at the Commonwealth Games.

The additional sections of Byelaw 16 may be accessed at [Constitution-2025.pdf](#). These sections cover topics as follows:

- 4 Disqualifications and Suspensions
- 5 Compliance with applicable rules and regulations
- 6 Transfer of allegiance
- 7 Dispensations