

[REDACTED]

Sent via email only: [REDACTED]

Ref: FOI-477

22 April 2025

Dear [REDACTED]

1. Thank you for your email of 21 March 2025 in which you requested information from UK Anti-Doping ('UKAD') under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act'). Specifically, your request was as follows:

Professional Football Leagues

For each season on record to 2024/25 (YTD), please provide the number of TUEs requested for ADHD-related medication in the Women's Super League (WSL), English Premier League (EPL), EFL Championship, League One, and League Two. If data is available, please include the Scottish Premiership and Championship, as well.

If possible, please list these totals for each season individually in a table format or CSV.

Academy Scholars/PDP Players (if applicable)

For each season on record to 2024/25 (Year-to-Date), please provide the number of TUE requests for ADHD-related medication by academy scholars/PDP players.

If possible, please separate these figures by academy category (CAT 1 through CAT 4).

Additional Information

Finally, I would appreciate it if you could provide or direct me to the most up-to-date regulations regarding the dosage and guidance for ADHD-related TUEs. It is my understanding that regulations were recently updated to account for the negative effects of asking athletes to stop medications for competition. What was the policy prior to the change, when did it change, and what factors and/or organisations informed this change?

2. Where capitalised terms are used in this response but not defined, they have the same meaning as defined in the 2021 UK Anti-Doping Rules.

Part 1 of your request

3. UKAD holds Therapeutic Use Exemption ('TUE') data for five (5) years. UKAD therefore holds, and is prepared to disclose, the information sought at Part 1 of your request for each season from 2019/2020 onwards. This information is contained in Table 1 below.
4. For the avoidance of doubt, TUE requests that have been rejected and later appealed have been counted as a singular TUE request for the purposes of the statistics represented in Table 1.

Table 1: Total number of ADHD related TUE requests submitted to UKAD by first-team players affiliated to English and Scottish professional football league clubs¹ since the 2019/20 season

Season	Total Submitted
2019/20	3
2020/21	2
2021/22	3
2022/23	10
2023/24	5
2024/25 ²	9

Response to Part 2 of your request

5. UKAD confirms that, subject to the clarifications below, it holds the information sought at Part 2 of your request.

¹ Includes first-team players affiliated to clubs in the following English and Scottish professional football leagues: Women's Super League (England only); English Premier League; English Football League (EFL) - Championship, League One, and League Two; Scottish Premiership and Championship.

² Number of TUE applications submitted up to and including 28/03/2025.

6. As previously stated in response to Part 1 of your request, UKAD holds TUE data for five (5) years. UKAD therefore holds, and is prepared to disclose, the information sought at Part 2 of your request for each season from 2019/2020 onwards. This information is contained in Table 2 below.
7. You requested that the information be separated “by academy category (CAT 1 through CAT 4)”. UKAD does not categorise academy scholars or player development programme (‘PDP’) players by academy category. UKAD is therefore unable to disclose the information in the form that you requested.
8. Please note that only academy scholars playing for an academy in the U18 Premier League and U21 players within a PDP are required to obtain a TUE in advance of using or possessing a Prohibited Substance or Method (unless exceptional circumstances apply). Any other academy scholar or PDP player under 16 years of age is only required to obtain a retroactive TUE if selected for Doping Control. As a result, the statistics contained within Table 2 are not representative of all academy scholars or players within a PDP because many academy scholars and PDP players are not included in the National TUE Pool for football in England or Scotland.³

Table 2: Total number of ADHD related TUE requests submitted to UKAD by academy scholars and player development programme players that are affiliated to a men’s English professional football league club since the 2019/20 season

Season	Total Submitted
2019/20	2
2020/21	1
2021/22	1
2022/23	3
2023/24	12
2024/25 ⁴	8

³ Please see the National TUE Pool page on the UKAD website, available [here](#).

⁴ Number of TUE applications submitted up to and including 28/03/2025.

Response to Part 3 of your request

9. In March 2018, UKAD published a policy which outlined the medical evidence required to support a TUE request to use stimulant medication to treat ADHD. The policy was written in consultation with experts in the diagnosis and treatment of ADHD. The policy was updated in March 2020 and again in April 2023 to ensure that it reflects best practice in the diagnosis and treatment of ADHD in the United Kingdom. The current version of the policy is publicly available on UKAD's website at the following address: <https://www.ukad.org.uk/special-topics>.
10. UKAD is not aware of any recent change in regulations "to account for the negative effects of asking athletes to stop medications for competition." An Athlete is, and has always been, able to apply for a TUE to permit the Use of Prohibited Substances to treat ADHD while In-Competition.

Considerations

11. UKAD notes the following considerations in relation to the information disclosed in response to your request.
12. The total number of TUE requests represented in Table 1 and Table 2 include reviewed, non-reviewed, and international applications.
 - 12.1. A **Reviewed TUE Application** is an application which is sent to the UKAD TUE Committee for review following an initial assessment by UKAD which identified that the athlete is required to obtain a TUE.
 - 12.2. A **Non-Reviewed TUE Application** is an application which, following an initial assessment, does not require further processing for one of the following reasons:
 - 12.2.1. The medication is permitted at all times;
 - 12.2.2. The medication is permitted at the prescribed dose;
 - 12.2.3. The medication is prohibited In-Competition only and the athlete is not competing whilst using the medication (or during a defined washout period); or
 - 12.2.4. The athlete is competing at a level whereby they are not required to obtain a TUE in advance but are instead required to submit a retroactive TUE application following Doping Control.

- 12.3. An **International TUE Application** is an application which is incorrectly submitted to UKAD by an Athlete that is International-Level, requiring their respective International Federation to consider the request. Such applications are forwarded to the Athlete's International Federation for processing.
13. For the purposes of the statistics provided, each season is defined as starting on 1 July and ending on 30 June the following year. For any statistics provided in relation to the 2024/2025 season in response to this request, those statistics represent the number of requests made as at 28 March 2025.
14. The data provided is not representative of requests made by International-Level players who are required to obtain a TUE through the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) or Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA). International-Level players are typically players competing within UEFA (e.g. Champions League) or FIFA (e.g. World Cup) sanctioned competitions. These players are classified as International-Level until their team is eliminated from the competition.
15. TUEs related to ADHD are granted for specific time periods. These time periods are three (3) months, six (6) months, one (1) year, or four (4) years. The duration of approval is dependent on whether the application is a first-time request or a request to renew an expiring TUE. As a result, some TUEs may require renewing on more than one occasion during a season, or in consecutive seasons, depending on when the TUE was granted and the duration of the TUE.

Conclusion

16. If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of this response and should be addressed via email to foi@ukad.org.uk. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any further communications.
17. If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information

Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely



UK Anti-Doping