

C. RULES RELATING TO PLAYERS

PLAYERS WITH WRITTEN CONTRACTS

- 1 (a) *Minimum Age*
- (i) A Player under 18 years of age and in receipt of full-time education² may not enter into a contract of employment with a Club in membership of The Association and/or an Affiliated Association.
 - (ii) A Player under 17 years of age may not enter into a contract of employment with a Club in membership with The Association and/or an Affiliated Association, except under a Scholarship as provided for by Rule C3.
- (b) *Financial Arrangements – Registration*
- (i) Subject to paragraph (a) and (b)(ii) to (b)(vii) of this Rule, and to the rules and regulations of the league of which the Club is a member, any Club in membership of The Association and/or an Affiliated Association may negotiate a financial arrangement with its Players.
 - (ii) All Players under written contract must be registered with The Association.
 - (iii) No Club shall enter into a contract which enables any party to that contract to acquire the ability materially to influence the Club's policies or the performance of its teams in Matches and/or Competitions. This Rule shall be applied in conjunction with any regulations governing Third Party Investment in Players as may be adopted by The Association from time to time.
 - (iv) All payments and/or benefits whatsoever due and/or made to a Player must be set out in a written agreement between the Club and the Player. Any other payments and/or benefits whatsoever due and/or made on behalf of, or in relation to, a Player (not otherwise detailed in the written agreement between the Club and Player) must also be set out in a written agreement, to which the Club shall be a party.
In each case a copy of any such agreement must be provided to The Association.
 - (v) All payments made to Players must be made by the Club and fully recorded in the accounting records of the Club.
 - (vi) All salaried payments must be subject to PAYE and National Insurance.
 - (vii) All salary payments due on written contracts must be stated gross, before PAYE and National Insurance deductions.
 - (viii) Any Players paid expenses must be reimbursed via an expense claim form. The Club must retain all expense records in a format acceptable to HM Revenue and Customs.
- (c) *Contract of Employment*
- (i) All contracts must be in the full name of the Club. If the Club is a corporate body, the contract must also include the Company registration number.
 - (ii) Contracts or letters of employment exchanged between a Club and any Club Official, Player or any other employee of the Club, must specify that

² Throughout these Rules full-time education refers to a child who is of compulsory school age within the meaning of the Education Acts applying in England or who is over the school leaving age but is for the time being attending a school or in full-time education in an establishment of further education.

all emoluments due are paid to the employee concerned and not to any company or agency acting on behalf of the employee.

- (iii) All such contracts must also specify that the individual is directly under the disciplinary control of the Club and of The Association.
- (d) *Form G(1) – Registration for One Calendar Month*
A registration for a period of one calendar month is effected when The Association receives Form “G(1)” (in such form as shall be published by The Association from time to time), signed by the Player.
- (e) *Form G(2) – Registration Exceeding One Calendar Month*
A registration for a period in excess of one calendar month is effected when The Association receives Form “G(2)” (in such form as shall be published by The Association from time to time), signed by the Player. Such a registration must terminate on the first Saturday in May, or the date of the last league or knock-out Competition match of the Club’s first team, whichever is the later, or on 30th June in any calendar year.
- (f) *Forms to be Returned to The Association*
 - (i) Within five days of having been signed by the Player, Forms G(1) or G(2) must be returned to The Association, accompanied by a copy of the contract.
 - (ii) A Player seeking registration under written contract is not permitted to play under the terms of the contract until the Club registering the Player has received the confirmation of registration from The Association.
- (g) *Transfers*
 - (i) A Player’s registration may be transferred from one Club to another using the relevant Form “H” (in such form as shall be published by The Association from time to time). The Player must be re-registered by the Club to which the registration is transferred.
 - (ii) A transfer must be bona fide; applications for the purpose of obtaining a Player’s registration for special matches are not permitted.
 - (iii) In the case of last-minute registration or transfer of a Player, the registration form, contract of employment and the transfer form (if any) must first be sent to The Association by facsimile transmission or by electronic mail and then the original documents to follow by first-class mail.
 - (iv) In the event of a Player registration being transferred from one Club to another in consideration of the payment of a fee, a copy of the written transfer agreement must be sent to The Association with the transfer and registration forms and the contract of employment. In the event of a transfer of a Player where a consideration is agreed, the consideration can only be paid between the two Clubs (the transferor and transferee Clubs). The full name of each contracting Club should be stated in the transfer agreement. The full consideration involved must be recorded in the accounting records of both Clubs.
 - (v) In the event of a Club making a payment to a club which is affiliated with another national association in membership of FIFA in respect of a Player’s registration, or an agreed fee to an Authorised Agent, the payment must be made through The Association in accordance with the procedures adopted by The Association which are in force from time to time.

- (vi) For leagues sanctioned by The Association, when a Player is temporarily transferred between Clubs in the same league or in different leagues, compliance with the relevant league rules must govern the transfer.
 - (vii) A copy of the appropriate association or league's temporary transfer form must be submitted to The Association within five days of its signature.
 - (viii) In the case of last-minute registration of a temporary transfer the provisions set out in Rule C1(g)(iii) above must be observed.
 - (ix) A Club accepting a Player on temporary transfer must satisfy itself as to the Player's fitness.
 - (x) A Player subject to a temporary transfer must not play until such transfer has been authorised by The Association.
 - (xi) In the event of a Player under temporary transfer being recalled in accordance with the rules of the league or leagues concerned, a copy of the recall letter or notice must be received and acknowledged by The Association before the Player can play for the Club initiating the recall.
- (h) *Second Registration Not Permitted*
The signing of a second registration form before The Association has declared the first invalid is an offence.
- (i) *Registered Players to Play for One Club Only*
- (i) A Player registered with The Association can play only for the Club holding the registration unless:
 - (A) in the case only of benefit, testimonial and charity matches, the Player obtains by written request special permission of The Association; or
 - (B) is temporarily transferred in accordance with Rule C1(g)(vi); or
 - (C) is registered under a Scholarship in accordance with Rule C3; or
 - (D) has the written permission of the Club, copied to The Association, to play not more than two trial matches for another Club, provided that such matches are not for the first team of that Club in a Competition Match and are both within a period of one month from the date of such permission, which shall not be repeated in the same playing season for the same Player to the same Club.
 - (ii) Where a Club has a Nursery Club (as defined in Rule A3(i)), a Player registered with the Club to which it is under obligation may also play for the Nursery Club without further registration.
- (j) *Agreements Between Club & Players³*
- (i) Clubs must enter into a written contract of employment with their Players on the relevant form approved by The Association, known as a "Form of Agreement" (Rule C1), with or without an option. Such contracts must clearly indicate all the terms and conditions of employment, be of stated duration and signed at the same time as a relevant registration Form "G" (in such form as shall be published by The Association from time to time). A copy of the contract of employment must be handed to the Player at the time of signing both documents. Contracts of employment signed by Players who are under the age of 18 at the time of signing must also be signed by a parent or guardian.

³ The provisions of Rule C1(j)(ii) to C1(j)(xii) inclusive and Rule C1(j)(xiv) and Rule C1(j)(xv) do not apply to Clubs in The FA Premier League and The Football League.

- (ii) There shall be no right to a compensation or transfer fee by the previous Club of a Player who has attained the age of 24 years on or before 30th June and whose contract with that Club has expired. If a Club wishes to offer re-engagement to a Player or exercise an option contained in the agreement the following practice shall prevail.
- (iii) Within 7 days of the first Saturday in May, or the date of the last competitive Match of the Club's first team, whichever is the later, the Club must give notice in writing to the Player indicating that either the Club offers a re-engagement or, if appropriate, exercises any option contained in the agreement.
- (iv) If the notice offers re-engagement it must specify the period which the Club is prepared to agree and the terms and conditions to apply, which must be the same or not less favourable overall than those which applied during the initial period of employment – or the option period (if applicable).
- (v) The Player must notify in writing the Club holding the registration within 28 days of receipt of the said notice whether or not the offer of re-engagement is accepted.
- (vi) If the offer is rejected the Player is immediately free to negotiate with another Club.
- (vii) If the Player does not reply in writing to the offer of re-engagement then at the expiry of a period of 28 days, the Player is free to negotiate with another Club.
- (viii) In either of the instances as set out in Rules C1(j)(vi) and (vii) above, the Club holding the Player's registration has the right to receive compensation. The Player's registration for the new Club will not be accepted until such time as the Club has confirmed in writing to The Association that it will negotiate a compensation fee with the former Club failing which it will abide by any decision taken by an appeal committee comprising those persons pursuant to Rule C1(j)(xii) (a "League Appeals Committee").
- (ix) An existing agreement shall continue and have full force and effect between the parties on the terms and conditions as those pertaining prior to the expiration of the initial period of employment, or the option period if appropriate, and the Player will continue to train and play as instructed by the Club until 31st August, or the date on which the Player registers for another Club, whichever is the sooner.
- (x) In the event of the Player continuing to play for the Club after the 31st August, a week-to-week agreement must be completed and submitted to The Association under which the Player will continue to be paid in accordance with the terms of the existing agreement.
- (xi) In the event of the Player signing for another Club which is unable to reach agreement on the payment of a compensation fee to the Club holding the Player's registration in pursuance of the existing agreement then such fee shall be dealt with by a League Appeals Committee.
- (xii) A League Appeals Committee shall comprise one nominated representative from each of the following:
 - (A) Council (to act as an independent chairman);
 - (B) the management committee of the appropriate league or leagues; and

(C) the Professional Footballers' Association.

The committee may, at its discretion, order either the Club or the Player to pay all or part of the costs involved in an appeal. The same committee also applies to Rules C1(k), (l) and (m).

- (xiii) If the notice to exercise any option contained in the agreement on the same or not less favourable terms and conditions overall, as in the agreement but excluding the option provision, and that such further period shall not be for longer in extent than that of the initial period of employment, the agreement can continue in full force and effect, as between the parties hereto and shall terminate on the last day of the option.
- (xiv) All notices required to be given to Players under this Rule must be sent either by registered mail or recorded delivery or a written acknowledgement otherwise obtained;
- (xv) By 1st June in each calendar year all Clubs must notify The Association of Players who have been offered re-engagement or on whose agreement the option has been exercised.

(k) *Cancellation of Agreement*

- (i) Agreements may provide that payment shall be only for each match in which the Player actually plays or attends as a substitute.
- (ii) Should a Player not be selected to play or attend as a substitute for a period of four weeks, the Player may apply to the Club to cancel the agreement and registration. If refused, the Player is free to apply to the most senior league of which the Club is a member for the cancellation of the agreement upon such terms as may be desirable. If either the Club or Player is dissatisfied with the decision of that league, each shall be entitled to appeal to a League Appeals Committee.
- (iii) Where conditions form part of an agreement other than payment of wages for playing football, in dealing with claims, a league or a League Appeals Committee, will restrict its investigations and decisions solely to the question of wages for playing as stipulated in the agreement.
- (iv) Except by mutual consent, a Club or Player is not entitled to determine an agreement between them without the written consent of The Association or in accordance with Rule C1(l).
- (v) When an agreement has been determined by mutual consent, notice signed by the Club and the Player shall at once be sent to The Association who will cancel the registration.
- (vi) In the case of last-minute cancellation of a Player's registration, a signed notice must first be sent to The Association by facsimile transmission, and then the original documents to follow by first-class mail. Additionally, electronic mail may also be transmitted to indicate the time of posting, which will also be accepted as the time of receipt if the mailed documents are found to be in order.
- (vii) When an agreement has been determined by mutual consent the Player shall not be permitted to re-register for the original Club within three months at the date of determination except with the written consent of The Association.
- (viii) The Association has power to cancel the registration of a Player at any time upon application of the Player or the Player's Club. In the event of a Club ("the Former Club") ceasing to be a member of a league within the

National League System, other than by reason of promotion, relegation or expulsion, as set out in Regulation 4 of the National League System, all contract players and scholars of the Former Club may from the date of cessation elect to terminate their registration with the Former Club by advising the Former Club and The Association in writing of their intention.

The Association shall provide to such players and scholars written confirmation that their registration has been terminated, which shall stipulate the date on which such termination takes effect.

From that stipulated effective date of termination, such players and scholars shall be free agents and may sign for another Club without a transfer fee becoming payable to the Former Club.

(l) *Termination of Agreement*

Where an agreement between Club and Player in any league or other Competition provides for either the Club or Player terminating by 14 days' notice, the following practice shall prevail:

- (i) a Club or Player has the right to appeal to the management committee of the appropriate league or other Competition and a further right of appeal to the appeals committee of that body;
- (ii) a Club, on giving 14 days' notice to a Player to terminate the agreement, must state in the notice the name and address of the secretary of the appropriate league or Competition to which the Player may appeal, and must at the same time give notice to the league or Competition of which the Club is a member;
- (iii) a Player, on giving 14 days' notice to a Club to terminate the agreement, must at the same time give notice to the league or Competition of which the Club is a member.
- (iv) the notice terminating the agreement must inform the Club or Player of the grounds for such notice;
- (v) a copy of the notice sent to the Club or Player must at the same time be forwarded to the Secretary;
- (vi) either Club or Player shall have the right of appeal to the league or other Competition, but such appeal must be made within seven days of the receipt of a notice; and the management committee must hear such appeal within 14 days of receipt of the notice of appeal;
- (vii) if either party is dissatisfied with the decision, there shall be a further right of appeal to the appeals committee of the appropriate league or other Competition but such appeal must be made within seven days of the receipt of the decision of the management committee, and must be heard by the appeals committee within 14 days of the receipt of the notice of appeal;
- (viii) the appropriate league or other Competition must report to The Association when the matter is finally determined, and the agreement and registration shall be cancelled by The Association where necessary;
- (ix) agreements between Clubs and Players shall contain a clause showing the provisions made for dealing with such disputes and for the cancelling of the agreements and registration by The Association; and
- (x) Clubs belonging to any league or other Competition may make similar regulations which provide for a right of appeal by either party to the Affiliated Association or to The Association.

(m) *Disciplinary Suspension*

- (i) In the case of breach by a Player of the training or disciplinary rules or orders of the Club, a Club not wishing to use the larger powers contained in Rule C1(l) shall have the right to suspend such Player for a period not exceeding 14 days or impose a fine not exceeding two weeks' wages and shall state whether or not the Player shall receive his basic wage during the period that the Player is ordered not to attend at the Club.
- (ii) The Club shall, within two days, notify The Association and the league(s) in which the Club's first team competes of such suspension or fine.
- (iii) Within seven days of receipt of such notice of a fine or suspension the Player has the right to lodge an appeal to the management committee of the more senior league of which the Club is a member who shall hear the appeal within 14 days of receipt of the notice of appeal.
- (iv) If either the Club or Player is dissatisfied with the decision of the league each is entitled to appeal to a League Appeals Committee within seven days of receipt of the decision, and be heard within 14 days of receipt of the notice of further appeal. The Player may request that an appeal made in accordance with this Rule shall be dealt with at a personal hearing.
- (v) In any event the suspension or fine shall not operate as a termination or cancellation of the agreement between the Club and Player.

(n) *Re-engagement of Players*

- (i) On or after 1st April of the year in which an agreement or any renewal of it expires, a Player under written contract may enter into a new agreement with and again be registered for the Club.
- (ii) Until the existing agreement or any renewal of it has terminated:
 - (A) a Player may not enter into any agreement with any other Club in membership with The Association, or an Affiliated Association, or of any other national football association; and
 - (B) the Player may not be approached by any other Club, or Club Official of any other Club, or any person with a view to inducing the Player to leave the Club for which the Player is registered, except with the written permission of that Club.
- (iii) If, by the time specified for such notice to be served, the Player has not received notice exercising an option or offering a further re-engagement under paragraph C1(j) of this Rule, the Player is free to make such enquiries or approaches as thought fit to secure employment when the agreement or renewal of it terminates.
- (iv) A Player under suspension may be re-signed by the Club, or any option conferred on the Club may be exercised, subject to the terms of the suspension.
- (v) In the event of a Player registered with a Club in membership with The FA Premier League or The Football League being offered re-engagement terms in accordance with the regulations of the appropriate league but wishing to accept an engagement as a Player with a Club not in membership with either league, and the Clubs not being able to reach agreement on the payment of a compensation fee, providing the Club concerned has complied with the appropriate league's regulations relating to right to a compensation fee, such compensation fee shall be determined by an appeals committee comprising one nominated

representative of each of The Association (who shall act as chairman), The FA Premier League or The Football League, the Professional Footballers' Association and the other league involved.

- (vi) In the event of a Player registered with a Club not in membership of The FA Premier League or The Football League not having accepted re-engagement terms in accordance with the Rules C1(j)(ii) to C1(j)(xv) inclusive and having negotiated terms with another Club, and the Clubs not being able to reach agreement on the payment of a compensation fee, then provided the Club holding the Player's registration has complied with the Rules, such compensation fee shall be determined by an appeals committee comprising one nominated representative of each of The Association (who shall act as chairman), the Professional Footballers' Association and the appropriate league or leagues involved.
- (vii) When a case is referred to an appeals committee as referred to in this Rule C(n), it will be necessary for both Clubs involved to pay before adjudication a non returnable administration fee of three hundred pounds (£300).

PLAYERS WITHOUT WRITTEN CONTRACTS

2 (a) *Regulations Concerning Approaches*

Players who are not under written contract to a Club may be registered with a number of Clubs at any time, subject to the following provisions and those of the Competitions in which they play:

- (i) Competitions sanctioned by The Association under regulation 3 of the "Regulations for the Sanction and Control of Competitions" may make their own regulations for the approach of Players between Clubs of the Competition;
- (ii) during the current season⁴ any Club wishing to approach a Player known to be registered with or having played for any other Club must give to the secretary of each such Club, seven days' formal written notice of the intention to approach the Player;
 Formal written notice of approach need be given by:
 - (A) a Saturday Club only to all Saturday Clubs;
 - (B) a Sunday Club only to all Sunday Clubs; and
 - (C) a midweek Club only to all midweek Clubs;
- (iii) the written notice must be sent by special delivery or recorded post, or a written acknowledgment otherwise obtained from the secretary or chairman of the Club approached. Facsimile or e-mail transmission may be used provided a receipt of acknowledgment is also obtained;
- (iv) following the date of posting of the written notice of approach, or receipt of an acknowledgment:
 - (A) the Player may be registered on or after the eighth day; and
 - (B) the Player must have been registered on or before the 21st day;
- (v) the approaching Club: (A) may not approach the same Player a second time in the same playing season; (B) may approach only one (1) Player at a Club at any time subject to Rule C2(a)(ix) below; and (C) may not approach another Player at the same Club within 28 days of an earlier notice of approach or acknowledgment;

⁴ A current season runs from 1 July to the following 31 May.

- (vi) if an approach is made by a Player to another Club during the current season⁵, that Club shall give the Club(s), for which the Player is known to be registered or has played, seven days' notice of approach as set out in Rule C2(a)(i) to (v) above before registering the Player;
 - (vii) a Club which is the subject of a complaint alleging failure to give notice in accordance with this Rule may be subject to a charge of Misconduct pursuant to Rule E1(b);
 - (viii) a Club proved to have breached the provisions of this Rule may have its current registration of the Player cancelled and be subject to such other penalty as The Association or appropriate Affiliated Association deems appropriate, in accordance with relevant regulations of The Association from time to time in force; and
 - (ix) during the current season⁶ a maximum of two Players may be approached in the manner described above if invited to trial at a licensed academy or "Centre of Excellence" of The Association, The FA Premier League or The Football League.
- (b) *Conditions*
- (i) All payments made to Players must be made by the Club and fully recorded in the accounting records of the Club.
 - (ii) All salaried payments must be subject to PAYE and National Insurance.
 - (iii) Any Player's paid expenses must be reimbursed via an expense claim form. The Club must retain all expense records in a format acceptable to the HM Revenue and Customs.
 - (iv) A currently registered Player shall not be allowed to register with another Club without first satisfying the Club Officials of the intended Club that all reasonable financial and other liabilities have been discharged to the Club or Clubs with which the Player is or was known to be registered in the current⁷ and previous playing seasons.
 - (v) A Player approached on or after 1st May in the current season⁸ may not play in competitive football for the Club making the approach until the commencement of the following season.
- (c) *Service Players*
- (i) While serving in any branch of Her Majesty's Regular Forces, a Player may not hold a contract of employment with any Club under the jurisdiction of The Association and/or an Affiliated Association.
 - (ii) Neither a Club nor any person may attempt to induce a Player of a Club of any branch of Her Majesty's Regular Forces to play for another Club during the current season⁹ without at least 14 days' written notice of approach – in the case of the Army to the Secretary of The Army Football Association, the Royal Navy to the Secretary of The Royal Navy Football Association, and the Royal Air Force to the Secretary of The Royal Air Force. The notice must be forwarded by special delivery or recorded post, or a written acknowledgment otherwise obtained. Facsimile or e-mail transmission may be used provided a receipt of acknowledgment is also obtained.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

- (iii) Players are required to inform civilian Clubs of their rank and service number, which information must be stated on league or other registration forms.

SCHOLARSHIPS

3 (a) *Scholarships*

- (i) Players on or after their 14th birthday may be offered a scholarship to commence no earlier than the last Friday in June in the academic year in which they will reach the age of 16 provided they are not receiving full-time education (a "Scholarship"). The registration of a Player on a Scholarship shall be made on Form "G(4)" (in such form as shall be published by The Association from time to time). Each form, after completion of all particulars, including dates and signatures, must be signed at the same time by the Player on a Scholarship and by a parent or guardian and returned to The Association within five days of such signatures accompanied by a copy of the agreement entered into by the Club and the Player on a Scholarship and also a copy of the birth certificate.
- (ii) On or after a Player on a Scholarship's 17th birthday, the Player may remain on a Scholarship or may sign as a Player under written contract subject to the regulations of the league or combination of which the Club is a member, and to the Rules with reference to Players under written contract.
- (iii) A Player on a Scholarship shall not play for a Club until such Club registering the Player has received acknowledgement of the registration from The Association.
The Association will from time to time publish the names of Players registered on Scholarships.
- (iv) Neither a Club nor any person shall induce or attempt to induce such a Player on a Scholarship to leave the Club for which the Player is registered.
- (v) A Player who is registered on a Scholarship may play for another Club subject to the written approval of the Club for which the Player is registered. A copy of the written permission must be received by The Association, the league or combination of which the Club is a member, the Player and the Club for which the Player is to play. A Club may not play more than two such Players in any match at first team level.
- (vi) If a Player on a Scholarship wishes to become a Player under written contract, the Club for which the Player was registered on a Scholarship shall be entitled to the registration of such Player as a Player under written contract. If the Club does not wish to exercise its entitlement the Player shall be free to register for any other Club.
- (vii) The provisions of Rules C1(l) and C1(m) shall apply in the case of Players on a Scholarship.

AGE RANGES AND PROVISIONS RELATING TO PLAYERS UNDER 16 YEARS OF AGE

- 4 (a) Children Not Registered in the Programme for Excellence
The following provisions apply to children not registered in the "Programme for Excellence":

Children Under 6 Years Old

- (i) A child who has not attained nor will have attained the age of six as at midnight on 31st August in a playing season shall not play, and shall not be permitted or encouraged to play, in a match of any kind in that playing season.

Children permitted to play Mini-Soccer only

- (ii) A child who has not attained nor will have attained the age of ten as at midnight on 31st August in a playing season shall not play, and shall not be permitted or encouraged to play, in a match between sides of more than seven players in that playing season. Such children shall only play in a match according to the 'Laws of the Game - Mini-Soccer' or in other formats of small-sided football expressly approved by The Association from time to time. The particular age ranges for such activity are subject to amendment by the Council from time to time.

Children permitted to play Futsal

- (iii) Any child who has attained the age of six as at midnight on 31st August in a playing season may play Futsal according to the "Laws of the Game – Futsal". The particular age ranges for such activity are subject to amendment by the Council from time to time.

Children permitted to play Eleven-a-Side or Nine-a-Side

- (iv) Any child may play in a match between sides of eleven players according to the Laws of the Game or between sides of nine players according to the "Laws of the Game – 9 v 9", save for those specifically prohibited from doing so pursuant to this Rule.

Sanction Provisions

- (v) The written consent of The Association or of the relevant Affiliated Association or Associations shall be required pursuant to Rules B1 and/ or B7 as appropriate for any Competition involving children who have not attained nor will have attained the age of 14 as at midnight on 31st August in that playing season. Such Competitions (whether for Mini-Soccer, nine-a-side or eleven-a-side matches) shall only be allowed where participants are restricted by age range, such age ranges being "Under 7", "Under 8", "Under 9", "Under 10", "Under 11", "Under 12", "Under 13" and "Under 14". The age ranges shall be defined to include all children (subject to Rule C5(i) above) who have not attained nor will have attained the ages of 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 or 14 respectively as at midnight on 31st August in the relevant playing season.

Age Brackets

- (vi) (A) A child in the age ranges Under 7, Under 8, Under 9, Under 10, Under 11, Under 12, Under 13, Under 14 and Under 15 must not play and shall not be permitted, or encouraged to play, in a match where any other player is older or younger by 2 years or more than that person.
- (B) The Association may in its absolute discretion:
 - (i) only in respect of disability football, disapply the two-year age band restriction prescribed at C4(a)(vi)(A); or
 - (ii) only in accordance with a current Dispensation Policy, grant a dispensation in order to enable a child to play outside the age range prescribed at C4(a)(v).

- (C) To play in an Under 18 age bracket competition the player must have achieved the age of 15 by midnight on 31st August of the playing season.
- (D) To play in an open age competition a player must have achieved the age 16, (to come in to effect from the 2007-08 season).

Gender of Players in Under 7 to Under 13 Matches

- (vii) A child in the age ranges Under 7, Under 8, Under 9, Under 10, Under 11, Under 12 and Under 13 may play in a match involving boys and girls.

Priority for School Activities

- (viii) Priority must at all times be given to school or school organisation's activities in accordance with the recommendations of the "Memorandum: Children of School Age and School Games" whilst a pupil is receiving full-time education.
- (ix) All Clubs and Competitions, excluding those whose matches are played on Sundays, shall include in their rules a provision to the effect that the availability of a pupil must be consented to by the head teacher.

(b) *Players of School Age Registered in the Programme for Excellence*

- (i) Players who reach the age of nine years during the academic year and who are in full-time education may register with a recognised and licensed Centre of Excellence through the procedures established by The Association's regulations.
- (ii) It shall be a breach of the Rule for a Centre of Excellence without a valid licence to coach and train players of school age who are in full-time education, and registered through the registration scheme or for a licensed Centre of Excellence to play against any centre which is not licensed apart from a school. The licensing authority for Centres of Excellence shall comprise representatives as determined by The Association and which shall lay down regulations and guidelines by which the Programme for Excellence is run.
- (iii) It shall be deemed to be Misconduct for any Club or Club Official to induce any player of school age registered with a separate Club or Centre of Excellence to leave school for the purpose of signing a contract of employment.

D. INTERNATIONAL AND OTHER REPRESENTATIVE MATCHES AND CALL-UPS

INTERNATIONAL MATCHES

- 1 A Player selected for an international or other representative team, tour, squad or other call-up arranged by The Association shall attend at the time and place notified to the Player and comply with the arrangements of The Association in every respect, save where there is good and sufficient cause not to do so.
- 2 A Club shall do all things necessary to ensure that a Player referred to in Rule D1 above complies with the arrangements of The Association.
- 3 Illness or injury shall constitute good and sufficient cause for the purposes of Rule D1 above by where The Association is satisfied, following receipt of medical evidence, that such illness or injury is of sufficient seriousness. The Player shall, in any event, submit to assessment by a medical adviser appointed by The Association.