

The Amateur Football Alliance (AFA)
Rules of the Adult Male Cup Competitions

Unless otherwise indicated, these Rules apply to all Adult Male Cup Competitions.
Any changes to these Rules will be posted on the AFA website.

1. Custody of Trophies

- (a) The President and Chief Executive Officer of the AFA shall be the legal owners of all trophies in trust for the AFA. All Competition trophies shall remain the sole property of the AFA. No Competition trophy shall ever become the absolute property of any Club and in the event of the AFA's dissolution, the trophies shall become the property of the donors.
- (b) The winning Team shall be responsible for the custody of the trophy. The AFA will be responsible for the engraving. On or before 1st February in the year following, the trophy shall be returned in a presentable condition. Any Club failing to return a trophy in time and in a presentable condition, shall be fined daily in accordance with the Schedule. The Cup Committee reserves the right to request the return of the trophy at any time by giving seven days' written notice.
- (c) If a Club ceases to exist after winning the Competition, the trophy will be immediately returned to the Chief Executive Officer.

2. Control and Management of the Cup Competitions

- (a) The organisation, control and management of the Competitions and any rights associated with it of any nature shall be vested entirely and exclusively in the AFA Council who shall delegate their powers of organisation, control and management of the same to the Cup Committee.
- (b) Subject to the authority of the Board where such matters relate to financial or commercial matters, the Cup Committee shall have the power to exercise all powers of Council in relation to the Competition and to make decisions on all matters arising out of or in relation to the organisation, control and management of the Competitions (including as to eligibility and qualification of Players) which shall be deemed decisions of Council and shall be final and binding on all Participants in the Competition in relation to these and any other matters not specifically mentioned in these Rules.
- (c) The Cup Committee shall be empowered to rename any Competition for reasons of sponsorship or other marketing initiatives.
- (d) The Cup Committee shall have the power to appoint a sub-committee to exercise the powers of Council in order to expedite decisions to ensure the progress of the Competition(s).
- (e) All Teams participating in the Competitions shall be bound by and comply with the Rules and, as such, if the Cup Committee should subsequently discover that any Rule or spirit of the Rules has, in their opinion, been violated by mutual agreements or otherwise, it shall be in the power of the Cup committee to disqualify one or both Teams from further participation in the Competition, and/or order the Match(es) to be replayed and/or to impose such other penalty as it may think fit without any protest having been laid by either Team or another Participant.
- (f) The Club charged shall be given 7 days from the date of notification of the charge to reply. In such reply a Club may:
 - (i) accept the charge and submit in writing a case of mitigation for consideration by the Cup Committee on the papers; or
 - (ii) accept the charge and notify that it wishes to put its case of mitigation at a hearing before the Cup Committee; or
 - (iii) deny the charge and submit in writing supporting evidence for consideration by the Cup Committee on the papers; or

- (iv) deny the charge and notify that it wishes to put its case of mitigation at a hearing before the Cup Committee
- (g) Where the Club charged fails to respond within 7 days, the Cup Committee shall determine the charge in such manner and upon such evidence as it considers appropriate.
- (h) Where required, hearings shall take place as soon as reasonably practicable following receipt of the reply of the Club as more fully set out above.
- (i) Having considered the reply of the Club (whether in writing or at a hearing), the Cup Committee shall make its decision and, in the event that the charge is accepted or proven, decide on the appropriate penalty (with reference to the Schedule where applicable).
- (j) When setting any fine, the Cup Committee shall ensure the amount is proportional to the offence, taking into account any mitigating circumstances.
- (k) All decisions made by the Cup Committee are final and are not subject to appeal, save for a decision that a Team is expelled from a Competition.
- (l) If the Cup Committee decides to exclude a Club/Team from a Competition owing to a breach of these Rules, that Team's League shall exclude the Club/Team from participation in its own League cup competitions for the same length of time.
- (m) The Cup Committee shall be empowered to deal with any contingency which may arise or which there is no provision in these Rules.
- (n) The Competition and each Participant is committed to promoting inclusivity and to eliminating all forms of discrimination, and will abide and adhere to The FA Equality Policy and any legislative requirements (including those contained in the Equality Act 2010).
- (o) The Competition and each Participant will make every effort to promote equality by treating people fairly and with respect, by recognising that inequalities may exist, by taking steps to address them and by providing access and opportunities for all members of the community, irrespective of age, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief, ability or disability or otherwise. Any alleged breach of the Equality Act 2010 legislation will be referred to the AFA Council for investigation.
- (p) Clubs must comply with the provisions of any initiatives of The FA which are adopted by the Cup Committee including, but not limited to, Charter Standard and RESPECT programmes.

3. Laws of the Game

All Matches shall be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game as determined by the International Football Association Board.

4. Eligible Clubs and Teams

- (a) The Competitions shall be competed for annually and are open to Clubs who are affiliated to the AFA.
- (b) The Cup Committee may reject the application of any Club at its sole discretion.
- (c) The Competitions shall be open only to those Clubs who play their matches on Saturdays, although Matches may be played on other days with the agreement of both Teams, the Match Officials and the consent of the Cup Committee.
- (d) A Club which ceases to exist, or which ceases to be entitled to play in the Competition for any reason whatsoever shall thereupon automatically cease to be able to participate in the Competition.

- (e) Any Club withdrawing from its League or who is expelled mid-Season from its League shall not be eligible to compete in the Competition unless agreed by the Cup Committee.
- (f) All Clubs must be free of suspension from the FA or any other County Football Association at least five clear days before the date fixed for the Match.
- (g) It is the Club's primary responsibility to ensure their Team selection follows generally accepted footballing principles and represents the full playing strength of the Club (i.e., each Club shall play its strongest Team in the Senior Cup, its second strongest Team in the Intermediate Cup and so on) with any movement of promoted and demoted Players throughout the Club based solely on their respective playing strengths and standards. Any Club found to be flouting the spirit of this Rule may, in addition to being fined in accordance with the Schedule, be expelled from the Competition.
- (h) The Competition in which each Team shall compete shall be determined by the Cup Committee who shall meet annually in August to review the entries and thereafter place every Team in a Competition which it deems best reflects their playing strengths taking into account the standard of football played within their respective Leagues and, if necessary, after consultation with the Team's League representative.
- (i) Subject to the Cup Committee's determination in Rule 4(h), Teams will be included in the Competitions listed below whose order of seniority is as follows:
 - (i) Senior Challenge Cup: To be competed for by 1st teams of Clubs (excluding those Clubs in their probationary year).
 - (ii) Middlesex/Essex Senior Cup: To be competed for by 1st teams of Clubs (excluding those Clubs in their probationary year).
 - (iii) Surrey/Kent Senior Cup: To be competed for by 1st teams of Clubs (excluding those Clubs in their probationary year).
 - (iv) Challenge Cup: To be competed for by 1st teams of Clubs deemed by the Cup Committee not to be strong enough to compete in the Senior Cup.
 - (v) Intermediate Cup: To be competed for by 2nd Teams of Clubs participating in the Senior Cup or 1st Teams of Clubs who are considered by the Cup Committee to be of suitable standard.
 - (vi) Middlesex/Essex Intermediate Cup: To be competed for by 2nd Teams of Clubs participating in the Senior Cup or 1st Teams of Clubs who are considered by the Cup Committee to be of suitable standard.
 - (vii) Junior Challenge Cup: To be competed for by 3rd Teams of Clubs participating in the Senior Cup (but may include 2nd Teams pursuant to Rule 4(h)).
 - (viii) Minor Challenge Cup: To be competed for by 4th Teams of Clubs participating in the Senior Cup (but may include 3rd Teams pursuant to Rule 4(h)).
 - (ix) Senior Novets Challenge Cup: To be competed for by 5th Teams of Clubs participating in the Senior Cup (but may include 4th Teams pursuant to Rule 4(h)).
 - (x) Intermediate Novets Challenge Cup: To be competed for by 6th Teams of Clubs participating in the Senior Cup (but may include 5th Teams pursuant to Rule 4(h)).
 - (xi) Junior Novets Challenge Cup: To be competed for by 7th Teams of Clubs participating in the Senior Cup (but may include 6th Teams pursuant to Rule 4(h)).
 - (xii) (Over 40) Veterans' Challenge Cup: To be competed for by Veterans Teams of any Club affiliated to the AFA irrespective of the Club's parent County, whose Players must be over 40 years of age on or before 1st October in the current Season of the Competition.

- (xiii) W.E. Greenland Memorial Cup: To be competed for by such Teams as the Cup Committee may invite on a date and at a venue as the Cup Committee shall decide at its sole discretion.
- (j) Where two (or more) Teams from the same Club are eligible to be in the same Competition, both or all Teams shall be permitted to compete, however no Player may play for more than one Team in the same Competition in any one Season.
- (k) Apart from Teams who are eligible to compete in the AFA Senior and (one of) the M/E Senior or S/K Senior Cup and in the Intermediate and M/E Intermediate, no Team shall be eligible to participate in more than one Competition in any Season.
- (l) In addition to the requirements of Rule 4(a), eligibility for the Middlesex/Essex and Surrey/Kent Competitions shall be determined by location of the Team's primary registered Ground.

5. Entry Fees and Dates

- (a) Entry for all Competitions closes on 31 July in each year, unless otherwise determined by the Cup Committee. The Cup Committee may accept late entries received prior to the draw of the first-round Ties but in such cases may impose a fine upon the Team making the late application in accordance with the Schedule.
- (b) The Entry Fees for all Competitions shall be as set out in the Schedule and shall accompany the entry application.

6. Eligibility of Players

- (a) Subject to the following, every Player must be a registered playing member of the Team for whom he plays (and been registered as such by the Club on Full Time, WGS or in such other manner permitted by the League in which the Club participates) for at least 7 days prior to the date originally arranged for the Match.
- (b) In the Vets Cup, as well as satisfying the eligibility requirements in 6(a), Players must be over 40 years of age on or before 1st October in the current Season of the Competition.
- (c) It is the responsibility of each Club to ensure that any Player registered to the Club has, where necessary, the required International Transfer Certificate. Clearance is required for any Player aged 10 and over crossing borders including Wales, Scotland and Ireland.
- (d) No Player shall play for more than one competing Club in the same Competition in the same Season and, in the case of a postponed or replayed Match, only those Players qualified on the original date of the Match shall be eligible to participate.
- (e) A Player who was suspended on the original date for a Cup Match may play in the replayed Cup Match provided the term of his suspension has been served.
- (f) Save for the Vets Cup, a Player must have attained the age of 16 to participate in any Competition. If a Player is in full-time secondary education, priority must always be given to school and school organisations activities. The availability of children must always be cleared with the Head Teacher. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (g) Contract Players are not permitted in the Competition except for those Players who are registered under Contract with the same Club who have a Team operating at steps 1 to 6 of the National League System.
- (h) A player (including a substitute) who has played in any Match may not then, in the same season, except in the case of a goalkeeper in the first two rounds of any competition, appear in any subsequent tie which is of lesser ranking without the prior written permission of the Cup Committee at least 3 working days before the date of the Match. For the purpose of this rule the ranking of competitions shall be - from the most senior – Senior Cup and County Divisional Senior Challenge Cups, Challenge Cup, Intermediate Cup and County Divisional Intermediate

Challenge Cups, Junior Challenge Cup, Minor, Challenge Cup, Senior Novets Challenge Cup, Intermediate Novets Challenge Cup, Junior Novets Challenge Cup.

- (i) Failing a satisfactory explanation being given to the Cup Committee by the Team, the Cup Committee shall be empowered to disqualify the Player, remove the Team from the Competition and impose such other penalty as it thinks fit.
- (j) In the event of the Final of any Competition being held over to the following Season, a Player who has played for his Club in the previous Season may be eligible to play for that Club in the Final so long as he has not played for his new Club before the date of the re-arranged Final notwithstanding that he may be registered with another Club in the current Season subject to that Club making a written appeal to the Cup Committee and the Cup Committee giving its written consent (which may be withheld at its entire discretion) 28 days before the Final is due to take place.
- (k) In the event of the Final of the Veterans Cup being held over to the following Season, only those Players who were qualified on the original date of the Match shall be eligible to participate in the postponed Final.
- (l) A Team must keep a list of the Players it registers and a record of all matches in which those Players have played for the Team on WGS/the FA's Full-Time system and shall produce such records upon demand by the Cup Committee. Any Club failing to comply with this Rule shall be liable to a fine in accordance with the Schedule and, shall, if the Club repeatedly fails to comply and the Cup Committee deems this is justified, be removed from the Competition. For the avoidance of doubt, it is not necessary that the breach of this Rule be brought to the Cup Committee's attention by another competing Team or Club.
- (m) If the Cup Committee has any doubt as to the qualification of any Player taking part in the Competition, it has the power to call upon the Club to prove that he is qualified according to these Rules.
- (n) Failing a satisfactory explanation being given to the Cup Committee by the Team, the Cup Committee shall be empowered to disqualify the Player, remove the Team from the Competition and impose such other penalty as it thinks fit.
- (o) In addition, the Cup Committee shall have a discretion (but not an obligation and it shall not go back more than one round) in exceptional circumstances to reinstate the beaten opponents or award a bye to the Team they were due to meet in the following round (except in the Final).
- (p) In the event of a Team being removed from a Competition after winning the Final, the Cup Committee is empowered to award the trophy and player souvenirs to the beaten finalists. The cost of any replacement Player souvenirs shall be met by the defaulting Team. The Cup Committee may also request the return of trophy and player awards for the beaten finalists, if subsequently removed from the Competition or found to have broken the Rules.

7. Organisation of Competitions (Drawing and Playing of Matches)

- (a) All Competitions shall be played on a knock-out basis unless otherwise agreed by the Cup Committee. At the discretion of the Cup Committee, early rounds of a Competition may be played on a league basis rather than a straightforward knock-out basis. Should a Competition not be played on a knock-out basis, Clubs will be issued with appropriate instructions as to the format and rules of that Competition.
- (b) The early rounds of a Competition may be played on a geographical basis at the discretion of the Cup Committee.
- (c) The Committee may grant exemptions (byes) to Clubs in the early rounds. In the event of any Team(s) receiving a bye, priority shall firstly be given to the previous Season's finalists and semi-finalists and thereafter such other Teams as the Cup Committee shall decide at its sole discretion.
- (d) As soon as possible after the annual closure of entries, and thereafter, as soon as possible after the date of each round, the Ties in the Competitions shall be drawn by lot in pairs to be played

on such dates and times as determined by the Cup Committee. All draws will be published on the AFA website www.amateur-fa.com and confirmation will be sent via email to the designated Team contact utilising the FA Full Time software.

- (e) Immediately after each draw, the Cup Committee shall advise each competing Team of its opponents, and the date and time at which the Ties are to be played. Unless the Cup Committee has agreed otherwise, Ties are to be played on or before the date advised by the Cup Committee. A Tie may only be played after the date advised by the Cup Committee with the consent of the Cup Committee.
- (f) In the event of a clash of dates with another County Association's cup competition, the Cup Committee must be notified immediately as fixtures of the parent County Association shall take precedence.
- (g) Unless mutually agreed and with the prior written consent of the Cup Committee and Referees Appointments Officer, the first-drawn Team shall have the choice of Ground. If the home drawn Team requests that the Match be switched to their opponents' grounds (or a Ground on which they do not normally play), that Team shall remain responsible for all Match expenses including Ground hire, Match Officials fees and the post-Match refreshments that provided.
- (h) Should any Team have 3 or more Players selected for a County Association/League Representative squad playing in a competition sanctioned by The FA on a Saturday which clashes with the date of a Match, then permission may be granted by the Cup Committee to bring forward (but not delay), the date of that Match.
- (i) Requests for closed dates with Leagues will not apply to Cup Matches unless 3 weeks' advance notice is given to the Cup Committee and the date brought forward. Any Team that whose Match is brought forward under this Rules must also notify its League's Match/Fixture Secretary of the same.
- (j) The home Team must, at least 6 days prior to the date arranged for the Match, contact their opponents and the Match Officials by phone, fax or email (contact via SMS/text messaging/social media/relying solely on the FA Full Time system is not acceptable) and ensure their opponents and the Match Officials are in confirmed receipt of full details of:
 - (i) the Ground's location.
 - (ii) means of access to the Ground (and any bespoke parking arrangements that may be in place).
 - (iii) any time constraints which may affect the kick off or duration of the Match.
 - (iv) the Team colours (if there is, or appears to be, a clash of colours, the **home** Team shall change as set out in Rule 8(b)).
 - (v) the location for post-Match hospitality.
 - (vi) any other relevant details.

In the event of the away Team or Match Officials not being notified 3 days before the Match, it is their responsibility to ascertain the details and report the lack of provision of the same to the Cup Committee. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.

- (k) Artificial Football (**3G**) Pitches are allowed in the Competitions providing they meet the required performance standards and are listed on the FA's Register of 3G (Third Generation) Football Turf Pitches. To meet the criteria a 3G pitch must pass a test every three years as defined in the FIFA Quality Concept for Football Turf. If requested, a Team shall be required to provide written confirmation of the same to the Cup Committee. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (l) If a Match is taking place on a 3G pitch, the home Team must advise the visiting Team and Match Officials of footwear requirements and any limitations or recommendations regarding the type of boot or stud that may be used on the surface as well as any time constraints which may affect the duration of the Match when confirming match arrangements in accordance with Rule 7(j). Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.

- (m)** The home Team shall welcome the visiting Team and Match Officials to the Ground and show them the changing accommodation and Ground and (re)confirm the post-Match hospitality venue. The home Team shall act as hosts whilst the visiting Team and Match Officials are at the Ground and at the post-Match hospitality venue. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (n)** Subject to any mandatory restrictions (or FA guidance) in place as a result of the Coronavirus Act 2020, the home Team shall provide separate and adequate dressing rooms, washing and toilet facilities for the visiting Team and Match Officials. It shall also be a responsibility of Teams playing on their own Ground to ensure that the dressing rooms for its opponents and Match Officials are locked and secure for the duration of the Match.
- (o)** All Matches, except the final, will be played at 1.30 pm. The time may not be altered without the mutual agreement of the Clubs, the Match Officials and the consent of the Cup Committee. Should there be a dispute over the kick-off time; the Cup Committee shall be the sole arbiter. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (p)** In the event of a Team being unable to kick off 30 minutes or more after the scheduled kick-off time for a Match, the Referee shall be the sole arbiter as to whether there is sufficient time to play the Match, depending on the prevailing conditions. If the Match does not take place due to insufficient time being available, the Cup Committee will take such action as it deems appropriate (which may include a fine in accordance with the Schedule and/or expelling the defaulting Team from the Competition and/or ordering the defaulting Team to pay the reasonable expenses of its opposition and the Match fee together with the reasonable travelling expenses of the Match Officials).
- (q)** When a Match is played at a Ground where there are benches and technical areas, the number of Players and Team officials in the technical area must not exceed 8 per team. Only named substitute Players, managers, coaching and medical staff shall be permitted in the technical area. No person under 16 years of age shall be permitted in the technical area. Misconduct by occupants of the technical area will be reported by the Referee to the Cup Committee, who shall have the power to impose sanctions as it deems fit. Except for the Team Coach/Manager and any substitutes who are warming up or warming down, all other Participants are to remain seated on the bench. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (r)** In Matches where dug-outs are not provided and a technical area not defined, the Coach/Manager may convey tactical instructions to Players during the match, however the Coach/Manager must always conduct themselves in a responsible manner. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (s)** In Matches where assistant referees are appointed, or when instructed by the Cup Committee, Teams must provide barriers or roping to ensure there is no encroaching on the field of play or the impeding of the assistant referees. Fluorescent tape is not considered a satisfactory replacement for rope and all posts or stakes used must be of material considered satisfactory for Players' safety. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (t)** In accordance with the Laws of the Game, the minimum number of Players that will constitute a Team for a Cup Match is seven (7). In the event of a Team playing with less than nine (9) Players, the Referee must report this shortfall and the Team may be fined in accordance with the Schedule.
- (u)** The home Team must provide water, tea/coffee or fruit squash at half-time for the Match Officials and, subject to any mandatory restrictions (or FA guidance) in place as a result of the Coronavirus Act 2020, suitable food and refreshments for all Players and Match Officials after the Match to a standard equivalent to a home match in their own League. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (v)** The away Team must stay and accept the post-Match hospitality provided by the home Team. If a minimum of 7 players from the away Team fail to return to the home Team's clubhouse or

notified venue to accept the post-Match hospitality, in addition to being liable to a fine in accordance with the Schedule, the away Team will be required to reimburse the home Team for their reasonable hospitality costs. Any dispute(s) on the reasonable costs will be subject to determination by the Cup Committee whose decision shall be final and binding on both Teams.

- (w) Any Team who consistently refuses to provide/accept post-Match hospitality to/from its opposition without providing a satisfactory explanation to the Cup Committee shall be dealt with in such manner as the Cup Committee deems appropriate.
- (x) The home Team is responsible for supplying a First Aid Kit which meets current FA guidelines and shall ensure that they are aware of the nearest Accident & Emergency Department.
- (y) Teams entering the Competition are responsible for the actions of their Players, officials and spectators. Any Team whose conduct is found to be not in keeping with the AFA's values of fair play and respect to the Competition, the opposition and Match Officials alike will be dealt with at the discretion of the Cup Committee and may, if the Cup Committee deem it appropriate after taking all circumstances into consideration, be expelled from the Competition.

8. Team Colours and Match Balls

- (a) Teams must play in colours registered with the AFA or its parent County Association. Any Team wishing to change its colours during the Season must obtain written permission from either the AFA or the relevant parent County Association.
- (b) If, in the opinion of the Cup Committee (or the Referee on the day of the Match), the two Teams have the same or similar colours, the home Team shall make the change unless mutual arrangements are made to the contrary. Should a Team delay the scheduled time of kick off for a Competition Match by not having a change of colours it will be fined in accordance with the Schedule. In the event of a Match being played on a neutral Ground, the Team drawn first shall have the choice of colours.
- (c) Players' shirts must be uniquely numbered, and the numbers must correspond exactly with a (complete, legible and accurate) team-sheet which must be handed to the Referee at least 20 minutes before the Match. Referees may not prevent Players from playing in shirts without numbers but should note the facts on their report card. Any Team not having uniquely numbered shirts or who alters its selection or numbering after the team sheet has been provided to the Referee without providing the required notification in 8(d) may be liable to a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (d) A Player who is named on the team sheet may be replaced if he is injured warming up after the team sheet has been handed to the Referee provided the alteration has been formally notified to the Referee and made on a replacement team sheet before the commencement of the Match. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (e) There must be no change of numbers during the Match except on a change of goalkeeper or where a Player has been instructed by the Referee to change his shirt due to blood injury. Teams failing to comply with this Rule shall be reported by the Referee and are liable to be fined in accordance with the Schedule.
- (f) No Player, including the goalkeeper, shall be permitted to wear black or very dark shirts. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (g) Goalkeepers must wear colours that distinguish them from the other Players and the Match Officials. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (h) The captain of each Team shall wear a distinguishing armband to indicate his status and has a responsibility to offer support to the Match Officials in the on-field discipline of their Players. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (i) Advertising which complies with current FA Regulations may be worn on Players' clothing.

- (j) The home Team must provide to the Referee for his approval prior to kick-off of the Match at least two (2) size 5 footballs that conform to the Laws of the Game. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.

9. Provision for Substitutes and Temporary Dismissals

- (a) A Team may at its discretion and in accordance with the Laws of the Game nominate and use up to 3 substitutes at any time in a Match, except to replace a player who has been suspended from the game by the Referee after play has commenced.
- (b) A Player who has been substituted during a match himself becomes a substitute and may, in turn, replace another player at any time subject to the substitution being carried out in accordance with Law 3 of the Laws of the Game.
- (c) The names of the substitutes must be listed on the team-sheet handed to the Referee at least 20 minutes prior to the scheduled kick-off time. Any Player or substitute not named on the team-sheet shall not be allowed to participate in the Match.
- (d) In all Cup Matches temporary dismissals (sin bins) will be imposed by Referees for all cautions for dissent in accordance with the guidelines issued under the FA Pilot scheme.

10. Duration of Play

- (a) The duration of each Match shall be 90 minutes consisting of 2 equal halves of 45 minutes. The half time interval shall be 10 minutes, which may only be altered with the Referee's consent.
- (b) The Referee shall allow for time wasted or lost through accident or other cause. The Referee is the sole judge of allowance of time and his decision on this matter shall be final and not subject to appeal or protest.
- (c) If the score is level at the end of normal time (plus any additional time allowed by the Referee for time lost or wasted by accident or other cause), then extra time of 30 minutes (15 minutes each half plus any additional time allowed by the Referee for time lost or wasted by accident or other cause) shall be played. If the score is level at the end of extra time, the winner shall be determined by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with the procedure adopted by procedure adopted by the International Football Association Board.
- (d) The Referee is entitled to reduce normal time to 60 minutes, extra time to 20 minutes or to dispense with extra-time and go straight to penalties if the prevailing conditions (which includes the allotted time for the hire arrangement of the Ground) make this necessary to obtain a decision. In this case the Referee shall decide at the end of full time and prior to the commencement of extra time and shall notify both Teams. All Matches in the Competition must be concluded at the first meeting.

11. Provision for Postponed and Abandoned Matches

- (a) If a Match is postponed for any reason, the home Team must inform their opponents, the Match Officials, the Cup Committee and Referees' Appointment Officer without delay. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (b) In the event of a Match being postponed it shall be re-arranged for the following Saturday unless the Cup Committee decides otherwise.
- (c) In the event of a Match being postponed on 1 (or more) occasions due to circumstances over which neither Team has control, both Teams should have an alternative Ground available in case a change of Ground is required.
- (d) If a Match is postponed on 1 (or more) occasion due to circumstances over which neither Team has control, the Cup Committee shall be empowered to switch the venue (either to another Ground supplied by the home Team, or to the away Team's Ground) if the Cup Committee considers such action appropriate and beneficial to the progress and running of the Competition.

- (e) Subject to the consent of the Referees' Appointment Officer, if a Match in any Competition is switched to the Ground of the away Team by mutual consent, the fixture shall be reversed – i.e. the away Team becomes the home Team and bears the cost of the Ground, Match Officials and refreshments. Kick Off times may be delayed to enable last minute switches on the day of a Match.
- (f) The Cup Committee shall be empowered to determine whether a pitch and/or facilities are suitable for Matches in the Competition and to order the Club concerned to play its Matches at another ground. In the event of this happening, the cost of the Match shall be met by the Team so directed.
- (g) In the event of a Match being postponed due to circumstances over which neither Team has control, the Match Officials, if present, shall be entitled to the full Match fee if they attend the Ground. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (h) Where a Match is postponed owing to one Team being in default, the defaulting Team shall pay the Match Officials the full Match fee if they attend the Ground together with the reasonable expenses of the non-defaulting Team. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (i) When a Match has been abandoned before the completion of 90 minutes due to circumstances over which neither Team has control it shall be re-arranged for the following Saturday at the same Ground unless the Cup Committee decides otherwise.
- (j) The Cup Committee shall review all Matches abandoned in cases where it is consequent upon the conduct of either or both Teams. Where it is to the advantage of the Competition and does no injustice to either Team, the Cup Committee shall be empowered to order the score at the time of the abandonment to stand. In cases where the Cup Committee is satisfied that a Match was abandoned owing to the conduct of one Team or its Player(s) it shall be empowered to award the Match to the opponent.
- (k) In cases where a Cup Match has been abandoned owing to the conduct of both Teams or their Player(s), the Cup Committee shall be empowered to take such further action as it deems appropriate (including expelling both Teams from the Competition).
- (l) In the event of a Match being declared void and ordered to be replayed, the Cup Committee shall decide on how the Match expenses are split and shall inform both Teams and the Match Officials.
- (m) The Cup Committee shall review any Match that has taken place where either or both Teams were under a suspension imposed upon them by the FA or an Affiliated Association. In each case the Team that was under suspension would be dealt with in the same manner as if they had participated with ineligible players in accordance with Rule 6. Where both Teams were under suspension the Match must be declared null and void and shall not be replayed.

12. Provision for Withdrawal from Competitions

- (a) Teams wishing to withdraw from a Competition after the draw has been made must give at least 14 days' notice in writing to their opponents, the Referees Appointment Officer and the Cup Committee. The defaulting Team may not play in any other competition under the jurisdiction of the AFA on the date originally fixed for the Match. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (b) Any Club who has more than one Team entered in the Competition and who wishes to withdraw a Team, must withdraw the Team entered in the lowest ranking Competition as set out in Rule 4(h) or the lower Team if more than one Team is entered in the same Competition. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (c) A Team withdrawing from a Competition after the draw has been made and who gives less than 14 days' notice shall, in addition to being liable to be fined in accordance with the Schedule, shall also be liable for any reasonably unavoidable expenses incurred by their opponents and, where applicable, the Match fees and reasonable travelling expenses of the Match Officials. Any

dispute(s) on the reasonable expenses will be subject to determination by the Cup Committee whose decision shall be final and binding on both Teams.

- (d) A Club wishing to withdraw a Team after an abandoned game must give notice to their opponents immediately following the match and must then inform the Cup Committee in writing within 24 hours. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (e) Any Team withdrawing (i) shall have the Match awarded to its opposition; and (ii) may be barred from entering the Competition for the following Season(s) if it fails to provide a satisfactory explanation to the Cup Committee as to the reason for its withdrawal.
- (f) Notwithstanding the foregoing, should any Team be unable to fulfil a fixture due to it having participants who returned a positive Covid-19 test, the Team will be deemed to have withdrawn from the Competition with no penalty.

13. Dimensions of the Field of Play

- (a) The dimensions of the field of play for Grounds in the Competition shall be:

Length: maximum 120 m (130 yards); minimum 90m (100 yards).
Width: maximum 90m (100 yards); minimum 45m (50 yards).

but in any event the dimensions must (i) conform to the Laws of the Game and (ii) conform to the stipulated dimensions of the League of which the Team participates in and upon which the Team's entry to the Competition is based.

- (b) Goal nets and corner flags must be used in all Competitions. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.

14. Fitness of Ground for Commencing Play

- (a) Except in instances where local authorities, schools, colleges or private commercial entities declare a blanket postponement over Grounds under their control, all Grounds must be inspected by a Referee before a Match is postponed. Failure to have the Ground inspected by a Referee before postponing a Match shall result in the matter being referred to the Cup Committee, who shall deal with the matter at their entire discretion (which may include a fine in accordance with the Schedule and/or expulsion from the Competition).
- (b) Each Team must take every precaution to ensure that its Ground is in a fit playing condition. In the event of any doubt as to the condition of the Ground (irrespective of whether the Ground is under the Team's control), the Match Referee or a local Referee (who has been approved by the Referees' Appointment Officer) should whenever possible examine the Ground and decide as to its fitness for play in sufficient time to save the expense of unnecessary journeys being incurred by Teams.
- (c) Subject to the above, the Referee shall have power to decide as to the fitness of the Ground in all Matches and shall have the power to abandon or postpone the Match if he believes conditions are detrimental to the welfare of the Participants.
- (d) The Referee must report to the ground 45 minutes before the time of kick-off. If necessary, the Referees Appointment Officer may, by written notice, require the Referee to visit the Ground more than 60 minutes before the time of kick-off any time during the Season.
- (e) Where some but not all Grounds under the home Team's jurisdiction and allocated to Matches become unfit for play, the order of precedence set out in Rule 4(i) must be applied to determine which Matches are played on the Ground(s) which remain fit.
- (f) Any objections relating to the Ground, goal posts or bars, or other appurtenances of the Match shall not be entertained by the Cup Committee unless an objection has been lodged with the Referee by the captain of the complaining Team in the presence of the captain of the opposing Team before the commencement of the Match and no later than 20 minutes before the scheduled

time of kick-off. The Referee shall require the responsible Team to remedy the objection where practicable to do so without unduly delaying the kick-off of the Match. When an objection has been lodged with the Referee, a protest must be made by the complainant Team to the Chief Executive Officer within 3 days (Sunday included) of the date of the Match. The Referees' Appointments Officer shall be notified of the protest by noon on the Sunday following the Match or by 9am on the following day if the Match took place on any other day.

- (g) If the Ground of a home Team is considered unsuitable, its opponents may complain to the Cup at least seven days before the scheduled date of the Match. The complaint must be accompanied by a deposit (the amount of which is set out in the Schedule) which may be forfeited in whole or in part in the event of the dispute or protest not being upheld or being judged to be frivolous. If the complaint is upheld, the Cup Committee may order the Match to be played at the Ground of the complaining Team or at a neutral ground. If the complaint is not upheld (or judged to be frivolous), the complaining Team may be called upon to pay the expenses incurred in dealing with the complaint.

15. Reporting Results

- (a) Each Team must submit its Match result by SMS text message to the AFA's FA Full-Time system by 6pm on a Saturday, or within 2 hours of the completion of a Match played on any other day. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (b) Where a text has not been received, both Teams must ensure that the result is confirmed by sending an e-mail to cups@amateur-fa.com with full details of the Match - i.e.
 - (i) the name of the Competition.
 - (ii) the identity of the competing Teams.
 - (iii) the names of the Match Officials.
 - (iv) the score (including penalties if necessary).
- (c) Teams must also communicate the result to their respective Leagues. Failure to comply with this Rule (and 15(b)) will result in a daily fine in accordance with the Schedule (which shall be increased in the case of repetition).
- (d) Each Team (whether home or away) playing in a match in the Competition must also notify the result of the match by using the AFA's online form. This must be accurate and complete and indicate which substitute Players participated in the Match by entering the field during the duration of the Match. Non-playing substitutes should also be named on the form. Each Team must include an assessment of the Referee by allocating a mark out of 100. Any Team awarding a Referee a mark of 60 or less must send a covering letter to the Referees' Appointment Officer giving a valid reason for the low marking. The completed form must be submitted to the Cup Committee and Referees' Appointment Officer within 24 hours of the date of the Match. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule (which shall be increased in the case of repetition).

16. Provision for the AFA Senior Semi-Finals

- (a) The Cup Committee shall arrange the Grounds for the semi-finals of the AFA Senior Cup (**Semi-Finals**) and shall have direct control of all arrangements, receipts and disbursements in connection with these Matches.
- (b) Details of the dates and venues of the Semi-Finals shall be sent to all participating Teams and shall only be changed with the consent of the Cup Committee.
- (c) In both Semi-Finals, the Team drawn first shall have the choice of colours and shall also use the designated home dressing room. Both Teams shall notify their opponents and the Cup Committee of proposed colours at least seven days before the Semi-Finals are due to take place.
- (d) In both Semi-Finals, a Respect handshake must be carried out by both Teams and the Referee prior to the kick-off.

17. Provision for the Competition Finals

- (a) The Cup Committee shall arrange the Grounds for the Finals of all Competitions and shall have direct control of all the arrangements, receipts and disbursements in connection with these Matches.
- (b) Details of the dates and venues of the Finals shall be sent to all participating Teams and shall only be changed with the prior written consent of the Cup Committee.
- (c) The Team drawn first in each Final shall have the choice of colours and shall also use the designated home dressing room. Both Teams shall notify their opponents and the Cup Committee of proposed colours at least 14 days before the Final is due to take place.
- (d) Each Team playing in the Final of a Competition must submit to the Cup Committee, at least 14 days prior to the date of the Final, details of the club history and pen pictures of every Player liable to be selected, together with a Team photograph and Club logo to be used in the match-day programme. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a daily fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (e) In all Finals, both Teams must provide to the Match Officials for their approval prior to kick-off of the Final three (3) size 5 footballs that conform to the Laws of the Game. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (f) In all Finals, both teams and the Match Officials must be ready and prepared to have pre and post-Match photographs taken. All Participants in Finals are deemed to have given their consent for their images to be used on the AFA's website and social media.
- (g) In all Finals, a Respect handshake must be carried out by both Teams and the Referee prior to the kick-off.
- (h) In addition to the trophy, the President of the AFA shall present a club memento to the victorious Team as well as 14 commemorative souvenirs to the Players of both Teams and the Match Officials at the Final. A Team may make an application to the Cup Committee to purchase additional souvenirs (at its own cost).
- (i) When a Player taking part in the Final is ordered to leave the field of play for misconduct, Members of the AFA Council and/or the Cup Committee who are present at the Final shall decide at their sole discretion whether the souvenir to which he is entitled shall be presented unless the misconduct is for violent conduct for an assault on a Match Official, Player, Team official or spectator (in which case the Player shall not be presented with an award). The Team may apply in writing for the souvenir to be sent to it thereafter.
- (j) Should any Player intentionally fail or refuses to attend the presentation ceremony at a final, he shall forfeit any right to receive a souvenir (or be presented with the Trophy if he is the Captain or vice-captain). The Cup Committee may take further action against any Team or Player who publicly undermines or disregards the AFA's values of fair play and respect to the Competition, the opposition and Match Officials alike.

18. Appointment of Referees and Assistant Referees

- (a) Match Officials will be appointed by the Referees' Appointment Officer for all Matches in the Competition. In the event of a Team being advised by the Referees' Appointment Officer that it is not possible to make an appointment, it shall be the responsibility of the home Team to provide a Referee who shall rank as an official appointment of the AFA. Subject to Rule 18(b), the provision of Assistant Referees shall be at the discretion of the Referees' Appointment Officer. Should Assistant Referees be appointed, the Referee is required to provide marks for the Assistant Referees to the Referees' Appointment Officer.
- (b) The Referee and Assistant Referees (where appointed) in all Matches shall be neither past nor present members of the competing Teams. Should a Referee receive an appointment he considers puts the appointment in breach of this Rule, he must immediately notify the Referees' Appointments Officer.

- (c)** In the event of (i) no Referee being appointed or (ii) the appointed Referee failing to arrive (on time), a Referee shall be chosen at the Ground and must be mutually agreed by both Teams.
- (d)** The individual appointed pursuant to Rule 18(c) will be considered as an official appointment by the Referees' Appointment Officer for (i) the duration of the Match or (ii) for such time until the appointed Referee arrives at the Ground. The absence of the appointed Referee shall not be deemed sufficient cause for the Match not being played. A Referee may not play in the Match. Teams failing to comply with this Rule will be fined in accordance with the Schedule and may be expelled from the Competition.
- (e)** In the case of postponed or abandoned Matches, the Match Officials appointed for the original Match shall be expected to officiate in the re-arranged Match unless otherwise directed by the Referees' Appointment Officer.
- (f)** Any Referee who refuses to accept an appointment shall not be permitted to officiate in another match in an AFA League or in a League or cup match under the jurisdiction of another County Association on the same day.
- (g)** A Referee not keeping his engagement and failing to give a satisfactory explanation to the Referees' Appointment Officer for his non-appearance may be reported to the AFA or County Association with which he is registered.
- (h)** Where 3 officials are appointed, if the match official is unable to continue the Assistant Referee designated *AR1* on Full-Time takes over as the referee.
- (i)** A 4th Official may be appointed and officiate if any of the three Match Officials is unable to continue. Unless specifically agreed prior to the start of the Match, if the Referee is unable to continue the 4th Official shall take over in place of the Referee.
- (j)** Whilst it is permissible for Match Officials to wear a coloured referee shirt in the Competition, should the colour of their coloured shirt(s) clash with the kit of either Team, the Match Officials (must not make a Team change its kit but) must wear traditional black shirts (either all black or black with white trim), black shorts and socks which are all black or black with white tops. If they are wearing a coloured shirt, all Match Officials must wear the same colour. If the Match Officials are unable to wear the same-coloured shirts, they must revert to black.
- (k)** All Match Officials should inform the Referees' Appointment Officer if details of the Match have not been supplied by the home Team not less than 4 days prior to the date arranged for the Match.
- (l)** The home Team shall be responsible for the fees of the Referee (details of which are set out in the Schedule), which must be paid either (i) when the team-sheet is handed in prior to the commencement of the Match or (ii) immediately (i.e., no later than 15 minutes) after the Match. If Assistant Referees are appointed, they must be paid on the same basis and their Match fees (details of which are set out in the Schedule) shall be shared equally between the home and away Teams. Teams failing to comply with this Rule will be fined in accordance with the Schedule.
- (m)** All Match Officials are expected to attend post-Match hospitality.
- (n)** In the event of a Match being postponed, Match Officials who have not been contacted and who travel to the Ground shall receive the applicable fee indicated in Rule 18(l).
- (o)** All Match Officials appointed to the Finals of any Competition shall be contacted by the Referees' Appointment Officer with details of the pre-Finals presentation evening.
- (p)** All Match Officials appointed to the Finals of any Competition shall be contacted by the Referees' Appointment Office in good time and must send brief biographical details to be used in the match day programme.
- (q)** In all Competition Finals, a Respect handshake should be carried out by both Teams and the Match Officials prior to the kick-off. The Match fee (together with reasonable travelling expenses)

for Officials shall be paid by the AFA whilst all Match Officials shall also be presented with a commemorative souvenir.

- (r) Upon written request to the Referees' Appointment Officer, Match Officials shall be supplied, with an electronic version of the Competition Rules free of charge.
- (s) No referee under 16 years of age shall participate either as a Referee or Assistant Referee in any Match.

19. Protests and Appeals

- (a) All questions relating to the qualification or eligibility of Players or interpretation of these Rules or any dispute or protest whatever shall be referred to the Cup Committee whose decision shall be final and binding. Protests from Clubs relating to player eligibility should be accompanied, where possible by (photographic) evidence of the Player's participation in the Match. Other evidence may be considered (e.g., team-sheets, social media posts) if they clearly indicate participation in the Match.
- (b) Any objections relating to the Ground, goal posts or bars, or other appurtenances of the Match shall not be entertained by the Cup Committee unless an objection was lodged with the Referee by the captain of the complaining Team in the presence of the captain of the opposing Team before the commencement of the Match and no later than 20 minutes before the official time of kick-off pursuant to Rule 7.
- (c) Any Team who raises an objection pursuant to Rule 14 and fails to follow up with written notification of the same to the Cup Committee shall be fined in accordance with the Schedule.
- (d) Except in cases where the Chief Executive Officer decides (at their discretion) that there are mitigating circumstances to do otherwise, any dispute or protest must be in writing and contain the particulars of the grounds upon which it is founded and sent to the Chief Executive Officer within 3 days of the Match to which it relates (Sundays included). The Chief Executive Officer may delegate the protest to the Cup Committee for consideration.
- (e) No protest of whatever kind shall be considered by the Chief Executive Officer unless the complaining Club has sent a deposit accompanying its protest in accordance with the Schedule. The deposit may be forfeited in whole or in part in the event of the dispute or protest not being upheld or being judged to be frivolous.
- (f) The Chief Executive Officer shall send a copy of the dispute/protest to the Participant protested against, who shall reply in writing to the Chief Executive Officer within 5 days of receiving the same. The Chief Executive Officer shall then send a copy of the answer to the complaining Participant and shall consider the submissions once both have been received.
- (g) If a hearing is required, at least 7 days' notice shall be given to each Club who may support their case with witnesses. If a Club prefers to state its case solely in writing then it should indicate as such when forwarding the written response. No Solicitor nor Barrister shall represent any Club unless he is the Chairman or Secretary of the Club concerned and appears as such on the Club register.
- (h) Any member of the Cup Committee who is a member of a Club involved in a dispute or protest shall not be involved (except as a witness or representative of his Club) when such protest or complaint is being considered and determined by the Cup Committee.
- (i) Once the Chief Executive Officer has finished their deliberations, they shall contact both Clubs with a written determination. The Cup Committee is empowered to order the defaulting Club or the Club making a losing or frivolous protest or complaint to pay the expenses of the inquiry or, if it is determined that both Clubs were at fault, to order that the costs be shared by the Clubs.
- (j) A Club that is expelled from the Competition may appeal in writing within 7 days against that decision to an appeal board comprising of 3 Council Members selected by the Cup Committee.
- (k) Any such appeal shall only be permitted on one or more of the following grounds:

- (i) The Cup Committee failed to give the Team a fair hearing; and/or
 - (ii) The Cup Committee misinterpreted or failed to comply with the Rules of the Competition relevant to its decision; and/or
 - (iii) The Cup Committee came to a decision to which no reasonable such body could have come; and/or
 - (iv) The Cup Committee imposed a penalty, award, order or sanction that was excessive.
- (l) The decision of the appeal board shall be final and binding on all Clubs.
- (m) Notwithstanding the foregoing, any breach of procedure or failure to follow any time limit by the Chief Executive Officer or Cup Committee shall not invalidate its decision unless the breach or failure is such as to seriously and irredeemably prejudice the position of the affected Participant.

20. General (Alteration of Rules, Payment of Fines)

- (a) The Cup Committee shall be empowered to alter, expunge or add to these Rules as it shall from time to time deem expedient, but such alteration, expunction or addition shall not come into force until the Season following that in which the Cup Committee shall have decided to take such action.
- (b) Notice of any proposed alterations to be considered by the Cup Committee shall be submitted to the Cup Committee by 1 January in each Season. The proposals shall be circulated to Committee Members by 21 February and any amendments shall be submitted to the Cup Committee by 28 March. The proposed amendments shall be circulated to Council members with the notice of the last Council Meeting prior to the AGM. Once proposed and seconded, a proposal to amend/alter a Rule shall be carried if a simple majority of those present and entitled to vote are in favour.
- (c) Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the Cup Committee has to adopt emergency measures to complete the Competitions in any Season, such alteration, expunction or addition shall come into force immediately if two-thirds of Cup Committee members present vote in favour of such action at a Meeting held to deal with an emergency. Details of any Rules amended or expunged in such circumstances shall be published on the AFA website.
- (d) Subject to a Team's right of appeal in accordance with Rule 19, all fines imposed under these Rules and such other payments as decided upon by the Cup Committee must be paid directly to the AFA not later than 7 days after the date of notification of the decision. Any Club failing to pay the required sum by the stipulated date shall have their fine doubled. If the original sum plus the fine for non-payment is not received within 7 days of that notification, an additional late fine, as determined by the Cup Committee, shall be imposed. If the amounts levied are still outstanding after a further 7 days the Club shall be suspended from all football activity.
- (e) Any Club who fails to comply with an order or instruction of the Cup Committee or fails to satisfactorily attend to the business and/or correspondence of the Competition when directed shall be liable to be fined in accordance with the Schedule or otherwise dealt with at the discretion of the Cup Committee.

Schedule

Fees Tariff

Rule		Fee (£)
	Annual Entry Fee	TBC
	Referee Fee	40
	Assistant Referee Fee	35
	Deposit for Protests/Appeals	100

Fines Tariff

Rule		Fine (£)
1(b)		25 per day
4(g)		25
5(a)		25
5(b)		25
6(f)		25
6(o)		25
7(j)		25
7(k)		25
7(l)		25
7(m)		25
7(o)		25
7(p)		25
7(q)		25
7(r)		25
7(s)		25
7(t)		25
7(u)		25
7(v)		25
8(c)		25
8(d)		25

8(e)		25
8(f)		25
8(g)		25
8(h)		25
8(j)		25
11(a)		25
11(h)		25
12(a)		25
12(b)		25
12(d)		25
13(b)		25
14(a)		25
15(a)		25
15(b)		25
15(c)		25
15(d)		25
17(d)		25 per day
17(e)		25
18(l)		50
19(d)		25
20(e)		25
	Breach of any other Competition rule(s) where is no fixed fine	Up to 250