



**FOR
ALL**

TheFA

Charter Standard.

COVID-19

Leagues and Clubs

FAQs



COVID-19: CLUBS AND LEAGUES' FREQUENTLY-ASKED QUESTIONS

To support grassroots clubs and leagues' volunteer workforce in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, here are some questions and answers to help guide you through this unprecedented time.

Firstly, your health and wellbeing and that of your families and friends is paramount, so please follow all [Government](#) and [NHS advice](#). The situation and guidance is changing rapidly so please keep up to date with the latest advice. Our thoughts and best wishes are with everyone affected by COVID-19.

Here are a list of the questions and main audiences/topics. Click on any of them to go to the relevant answer:

For clubs *and* leagues:

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- 25. Is re-certification for safeguarding children still available online?
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If the information on [TheFA.com](https://www.thefa.com), or the answers to these FAQs, does not answer your specific question, you should contact your local County FA. But please be aware that a number of County FAs have furloughed staff and many are working remotely with reduced numbers.

FOR CLUBS AND LEAGUES:

1. Is all grassroots football cancelled for the 2019/20 season?

Yes. This includes all fixtures, friendlies and training.

2. What will happen to conclude the 2019/20 season?

The FA and National League System (NLS) Steps 3 to 6 have reached consensus that their 2019/20 season will now be brought to an end, and all results will be expunged. This will mean no promotion or relegation of clubs between NLS Steps 3 to 6, and no promotion to NLS Step 2. These decisions will also apply to the Leagues and clubs who play at NLS Step 7.

The FA will continue to assist and support the National League (NLS Steps 1 and 2] to determine the outcome of its 2019/20 season as quickly as possible.

The planned implementation of the restructure of the NLS will also now be deferred until the start of the 2021/22 season.

Furthermore, we can confirm that The FA has decided that all grassroots football is concluded for the 2019/20 season. This will allow the game to move forward and to commence planning for next season. Our County Football Associations (CFAs) will be supporting grassroots leagues over the coming days to determine how to close out their current competitions.

For a full copy of The FA's press statement please see [here](#)

3. What will happen to our FA Charter Standard accreditation?

Accredited clubs that have submitted their Annual Health Check (AHC) and had this awarded by their County FA will retain their accreditation for the 2020/21 season. Clubs that are 'In-progress' and have yet to submit their AHC will have until the extended deadline of April 30 2020 to do so. We recognise there may be coaches and others who cannot attend coaching, first aid and safeguarding courses etc. but AHCs should still be submitted. The County FAs will award your AHC and the action plan to complete any required criteria will be addressed. Please also see the answer to question 9.

Accredited leagues who are in the process of league development plan renewal with their County FA will keep their accreditation.

4. Can clubs and leagues still apply to become FA Charter Standard-accredited at this time?

Yes. You can find information on how to apply by visiting www.TheFA.com/charterstandard or by contacting your County FA. You should still apply even though you may not be able to fulfil all the criteria at this time (see questions 18 and 19). Your application for FA Charter Standard accreditation will still be reviewed by your County FA, who will create an action plan for you to complete the missing criteria, with the subsequent award of FA Charter Standard accreditation an option.

5. Will The FA provide help with the technology to hold a AGM/SGM/EGM for our club/league?

The FA Technology Adoption Team is available to explain to County FAs how to set up a video conference/WebEx/Microsoft Teams call for the purposes of an AGM/SGM/EGM or simply to set up online meeting between clubs and their respective league and voting on motions etc.

You can download the guidance by visiting The FA.com here <http://www.TheFA.com/get-involved/player/the-fa-charter-standard/clubs-and-leagues>

6. Is there any funding available for clubs and leagues?

Sport England have announced funding that will help clubs and leagues cope with the short- and long-term impact of the pandemic. <https://www.sportengland.org/news/195-million-package-help-sport-and-physical-activity-through-coronavirus>

Away from the current crisis, IT grants are also available to leagues. To find out more, visit: Fundingfor.leagues@TheFA.com

The Govt has also released a range of support packages that may support clubs and leagues especially those with facilities, paid employees or self employed coaches. These can be found at <https://www.businesssupport.gov.uk/coronavirus-business-support/>

7. Is legal support available if needed around staff we employ and other issues we face?

FA Charter Standard clubs and leagues can access legal assistance from The FA's specialist contracted law firm Muckles LLP. Each enquiry can last for a maximum of 30 minutes and for one issue.

- T: 0191 2 11 77 99;
- E: CSLegalHelp@TheFA.com

Specific legal guidance and practical actions to take on numerous relevant topics including membership subscriptions, contractual rights and obligations with suppliers, overseas tours, facility hire and many more topics can be found at: <https://www.muckle-llp.com/what-we-do/sports/the-football-association/>

8. Where can I find any additional support for our club or league at this time?

You can visit TheFA.com here <http://www.TheFA.com/get-involved/player/the-fa-charter-standard/clubs-and-leagues> where we will be proactively updating this page with information, guidance and resources over the coming weeks and months.

If the information on TheFA.com, or the answers to these FAQs, does not answer your specific question, you should contact your local County FA. But please be aware that a number of County FAs have furloughed staff and many are working remotely with reduced numbers.

FOR CLUBS:

9. How should we complete our Annual Health Check at this time?

The annual health check is a three-step process and is completed via [the FA Whole Game System](#).

- **Step 1** – Manage clubs and teams;
- **Step 2** – Manage team officials;
- **Step 3** – Club action plan.

At **Step 1** clubs shouldn't fold any current teams. Instead, move straight to Step 2.

At **Step 2** clubs should submit their AHC without adding or removing any officials currently named against teams.

No new individuals should be added to youth teams without a valid in-date FA-accepted DBS Check for all youth teams (under-18 and below). This is crucial to safeguard the game when football returns. It's also key to the way in we will carry your AHC action plan into the 2020/21 season, with direction from The FA's safeguarding team.

However, if a team official is vacating their role then a club can and should remove them from the AHC.

At **Step 3** clubs should leave comments against any criteria you do not satisfy and state your action plan to satisfy them before you submit your application.

Tip: At **Step 3** it would be beneficial for clubs to screenshot action plan comments and save them in readiness for the 2020/21 season. This will help, alongside your club officials' qualification report, to identify what criteria need satisfying when football commences. If you are unable to screenshot your action plan your County FA will hold a record for you.

10. Given that renewing expired DBS Checks for AHCs is not possible, how can we submit our AHC?

Due to the unprecedented circumstances, clubs will be able to submit their AHC with volunteers who have an expired DBS Check. This will only apply up to **April 30 2020** – and only for those with an expired DBS Check within the AHC. All new volunteers will still require a DBS Check.

11. Can we add new club and team officials when completing our Annual Health Check?

Yes, you can add new club and team officials at **Step 2** of the AHC process. However, if this is a role that comes into contact with youth players, or is the role of manager or coach against a youth team, then this individual **must** have an in-date FA-accepted DBS Check. We highly recommend that clubs completing the AHC do so without adding or removing any individuals. Only remove individuals that have vacated their role for the 2020/21 season.

12. Will clubs receive their rewards for renewing or becoming FA Charter Standard?

Yes, for digital rewards and no for physical rewards.

Like all the UK's non-essential workforce, our fulfilment companies (Vesey and Kitlocker) are adhering to government guidance and either currently not working or working with reduced remote staff.

Digital rewards include a digital certificate and digital promotional assets. Where possible, Vesey and Kitlocker will continue to distribute digital rewards to clubs via email.

Physical rewards, such as kit/equipment and a physical certificate, will be sent to clubs when the government position has changed. You will get your fulfilment entitlement – we just don't know when yet.

13. As an FA Charter Standard club, what is my 2019/20 entitlement, even if I can't receive some of it yet?

The FA Charter Standard club entitlement for 2019/20 is:

- Certification;
- Football kit and equipment;
- Access to promotional resources and guidance;
- Tailored support from The FA.

New clubs will receive:

- **Adult club:** Welcome pack (including digital and physical certificate), digital promotional assets, £120 worth of Nike Strike footballs (10 x size 5) and a £100 kit and equipment voucher to be redeemed at: <https://www.faadultkitscheme.com/>
- **Youth club:** Welcome pack (including digital and physical certificate), digital promotional assets and £120 Nike Strike footballs (10 in total, comprising: 2 x size 3, 4 x size 4, 4 x size 5);
- **Development club:** Welcome pack (including digital and physical certificate), digital promotional assets and £180 worth of Nike Strike footballs (15 in total, comprising: 5 x size 3, 5 x size 4, 5 x size 5);
- **Community club:** Welcome pack (including digital and physical certificate), digital promotional assets and £240 worth of Nike Strike footballs (20 in total, comprising: 6 x size 3, 7 x size 4, 7 x size 5).

Renewing clubs (i.e. who have completed the Annual Health Check) will receive:

- **Adult club:** Welcome pack, digital promotional assets, £50 worth of Nike Strike footballs (4 x size 5) and a £100 kit and equipment voucher to be redeemed at: <https://www.faadultkitscheme.com/>
- **Youth club:** Digital and physical certificate, digital promotional assets, Nike strike footballs, number of footballs TBC* and the potential of a £100 kit and equipment voucher**
- **Development club:** Digital and physical certificate, digital promotional assets and Nike strike footballs, number of footballs TBC* and the potential of a £100 kit and equipment voucher**
- **Community club:** Digital and physical certificate, digital promotional assets and Nike strike footballs, number of footballs TBC* and the potential of a £100 kit and equipment voucher**

* Footballs for renewing Youth, Development and Community clubs is TBC due to the recent impact of COVID-19. Footballs for these clubs do not arrive until the summer of 2020 and are due for delivery from August 2020 in readiness for the 2020/21 season. However, this will be dependent upon government advice in the coming months.

**** All Youth, Development and Community clubs that completed their AHC before January 31 2020 and run affiliated adult teams playing within an FA or County FA-sanctioned league will have received an email offering you a £100 kit and equipment voucher to be redeemed at: <https://www.faadultkitscheme.com/>.**

Note: Due to the recent impact of COVID-19 we do not know if we will be able to offer the same reward to clubs running such teams and who completed their AHC between February 1 and April 30 2020.

For more information regarding the kit and equipment voucher or any of the above rewards please contact your County FA.

14. As an FA Charter Standard club receiving a £100 kit and equipment voucher how do I redeem it?

New clubs entitled to the £100 kit and equipment voucher will have had an email sent to their club secretary, as named in their records on The FA Whole Game System, upon successful awarding of FA Charter Standard status.

Renewing clubs entitled to the £100 kit and equipment voucher will have had an email sent to their club secretary, as named in their records on The FA Whole Game System, upon successful 'awarding' of the Annual Health Check.

Clubs redeem their kit and equipment voucher at <https://www.faadultkitscheme.com/>.

When visiting the site, clubs can shop or pick from one of the one of the pre-costed packages. Clubs can add more than their voucher cost to their basket and their voucher amount will be deducted at the checkout.

At the checkout you will be prompted to enter your voucher code. Here the voucher amount will be deducted from your basket total.

For **new** Adult clubs 10 x size 5 Nike Strike footballs will be added to your basket.

For **renewing** Adult clubs 4 x size 5 Nike Strike footballs will be added to your basket.

For **renewing** Youth, Development or Community clubs entitled to the voucher, no footballs will be added to your basket as you will receive them from August 2020.

Any delivery to the UK mainland is free. There is a delivery charge to clubs not on the UK mainland, e.g. on the Channel Islands, Isle of Man, Isle of Wight etc.

At present clubs who are eligible for the £100 kit and equipment voucher can redeem their order. However, delivery of your kit and equipment will not be possible whilst Vesey are following government guidance for businesses amid COVID-19.

15. What is the deadline to redeem my voucher?

We strongly encourage all clubs to act quickly on redeeming their voucher to ensure the product you want is stocked and available. The final deadline to redeem vouchers for renewing clubs is Friday June 19 2020.

16. When do I receive my footballs as an FA Charter Standard club?

Every new FA Charter Standard-accredited club will receive its footballs within three weeks of a successful application. It is worth checking with your County FA on the date they processed your application. County FAs are also able to check the date of when your rewards were dispatched to you.

Every renewing FA Charter Standard Adult-accredited club will receive its footballs in line with the delivery times given on the site. Understandably, delivery times may not be as quick as usual during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Every renewing FA Charter Standard Youth, Development or Community club will receive their footballs from August 2020 in readiness for the 2020/21 season. In some cases, the footballs are delivered to the relevant County FA, who will distribute them to clubs in the region they serve.

17. To whom will our rewards be delivered?

FA Charter Standard awards are delivered to the club's appointed FA Charter Standard Co-ordinator (CSCo). If an individual is not named against this role then the named club secretary on The FA's Whole Game System will receive the club's rewards. It is worth clubs checking if they have a named CSCo that this individual is still present and active at the club.

18. If applying for FA Charter Standard accreditation what criteria must clubs satisfy?

The criteria is covered here on TheFA.com: <http://www.TheFA.com/get-involved/player/the-fa-charter-standard/about-the-accreditation>

Alternatively, download the criteria document from the resources and guidance section here <http://www.TheFA.com/get-involved/player/the-fa-charter-standard/resources>.

Clubs can work with their County FA to satisfy 'off-pitch' criteria and put in place an action plan to satisfy 'on-pitch' criteria.

It is at the discretion of the County FA to accept a club's application and make the award dependent upon what is outlined and agreed within the action plan.

19. What if a club with youth teams doesn't satisfy safeguarding and welfare officer criteria?

Then the application for FA Charter Standard accreditation will be reviewed by your County FA, who will create an action plan for you to complete the missing criteria, with subsequent awarding an option.

All committee members will have needed to complete The FA's 'Safeguarding for Committee Members' course.

Coaches/managers named against youth teams will need to hold an in-date accepted FA-accepted DBS Check* and have completed 'The FA Playmaker' course online (see question 23).

For clubs with youth teams, welfare officers will need to hold an in-date FA-accepted DBS Check* and will be placed on an individual action plan by the County FA's Designated Safeguarding Officer to prioritise completion of The FA's 'Safeguarding Children' workshop and the welfare officers' workshop.

* More information and guidance on DBS Checks for the 2020/21 season will be communicated by The FA's Safeguarding team to your County FA and via them to you in due course.

20. Does this mean clubs do not currently need a minimum FA-qualified Level 1 coach with each youth team for the Annual Health Check or an FA Charter Standard club application?

Correct. With all face-to-face courses and qualifications currently postponed, youth teams will not need a named FA-qualified coach with a minimum of Level 1. But they must have someone named who has an in-date FA-accepted DBS Check.

FOR LEAGUES:

21. If applying for FA Charter Standard what criteria must leagues satisfy?

Leagues should work with their County FA to understand the process and the criteria they need to satisfy to apply for FA Charter Standard league accreditation.

Alternatively, you can find out more on TheFA.com under our FAQs for FA Charter Standard accreditation here: <http://www.TheFA.com/get-involved/player/the-fa-charter-standard/faqs>.

22. Should league refund fees to clubs given the current season will not completed in full?

It's the individual leagues decision to make. However, we have seen many leagues are considering reducing fees for the 2020/21 season to support teams financially.

RELATED TO COACH EDUCATION AND OTHER FA EDUCATION COURSES/CERTIFICATION:

23. What should individuals who will be looking to manage/coach a team next season do until coach education courses start up again?

All new coaches/managers with youth teams should undertake 'The FA Playmaker' course, which launches soon. It is a free online course for anyone over the age of 14 and can be used as a coach's first step towards completing an FA Level 1 coaching certification.

The course also includes elements of safeguarding children and emergency aid. Both contribute towards an individual's learning in readiness to manage or coach in youth and/or adult football.

You can find out more about 'The FA Playmaker' by visiting TheFA.com here: <http://www.TheFA.com/learning/courses/fa-playmaker> To be first to hear about when the course is live, you can sign up to email updates [here](#).

24. Are all face-to-face courses and qualifications currently postponed?

Yes. The delivery of every medical, safeguarding (including welfare officer workshops) and coach education course is currently postponed until further notice. This is due to the social contact/close proximity required for course delivery. FA Education is shaping plans on mitigating possible lapsing of licences if coaches cannot undertake compulsory courses.

25. Is re-certification for safeguarding children still available online?

Yes. This free course is available for online for anyone who needs to renew their safeguarding children training. More information and how to access the course can be found on TheFA.com here: <http://www.TheFA.com/learning/courses/online-safeguarding-children-re-certification>.

26. What medical courses can I take at home?

The FA offers two courses that are highly recommended for anyone with a role within football who's involved in training sessions or matchdays. These are:

- [The FA's concussion guidelines](#)
- [The FA's sudden cardiac arrest](#)

Just click on either course above to find out more on TheFA.com.

27. What is the medical course I need to take to satisfy FA Charter Standard criteria?

The FA's Level 1 'Introduction to First Aid in Football' (IFAiF) is the qualification we ask individuals to hold as a minimum to satisfy FA Charter Standard criteria.

For adult teams, there should be one named individual should with an in-date IFAiF qualification present at training and on a matchday. If this named individual is a player, then another individual also needs to hold the qualification.

For youth teams, the named coach must hold an in-date IFAiF, as well as The FA 'Safeguarding Children' certification and a minimum FA Level 1 coaching qualification.

For more information on the FA's IFAiF qualification please visit TheFA.com here: <http://www.TheFA.com/learning/courses/the-fa-level-1-introduction-to-first-aid-in-football>.

Please note, as per the answer to question 4, we encourage you to still apply for FA Charter Standard accreditation, even they you may not be able to fulfil all the criteria at this time.

28. Does the FA accept non-FA medical courses?

Yes. Throughout 2016/17 and 2017/18 seasons, The FA undertook a full and comprehensive review of its medical training provision.

For more information and to find out which other qualifications are currently accepted please visit TheFA.com here: <http://www.TheFA.com/learning/courses/accepted-non-fa-medical-courses>



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