

# FA Learning

## A Guide to Misconduct Report Writing





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# Foreword and acknowledgement

The aim of this handbook is to assist and support you in your preparation and completion of misconduct reports and to do so in such a way as to provide a clear and accurate description of incidents for those who are obliged to read and act upon them.

The handbook lists each of the offences for which a player should be cautioned or sent off, offers comments on each and includes specimen examples which, it is hoped, incorporate those criteria and qualities sought by County Football Associations in reports submitted by their Match Officials.

The Football Association records its gratitude to individuals and County Football Associations who have readily granted access to working documents related to misconduct reports and have constructively contributed to this handbook. The Football Association Regional Managers (Referees) have all also contributed to this edition of the booklet and The Football Association similarly wishes to acknowledge, with thanks, the time, effort and expertise afforded this revision. Their work is greatly appreciated and can only further assist colleagues in the complete carrying out of match day obligations.

Ian Blanchard

Senior National Game Referee Manager  
July 2009

# A referee's duty related to misconduct

Law 5, the powers and duties of referees include:

- Takes disciplinary action against players guilty of cautionable and sending-off offences. They are not obliged to take this action immediately but must do so when the ball next goes out of play.
- Takes action against team officials who fail to conduct themselves in a responsible manner and may, at their discretion, expel them from the field of play and its immediate surrounds.
- Acts on the advice of assistant referees regarding incidents which have not been seen by the referee.
- Provides the appropriate authorities with a match report which includes information on any disciplinary action taken against players, and/or team officials and any other incidents which occurred before, during or after the match.

Therefore the Laws of the Game require TWO things of referees whenever they caution or send off a player or observe misconduct:

- They must report the incident.
- They must compile a report and send it to the appropriate authority within the stipulated time.

**Only a player or substitute or substituted player may be shown the red or yellow card.**

Referees have the authority to take disciplinary sanctions from the moment they enter the field of play until they leave after the final whistle.



# Report as a communication

The misconduct report communicates information. It gives the referee's account of an incident involving misconduct by a single person or a group of people and it can serve as a communication between:

- The Referee and a County Football Association.
- The Referee and a player/person reported for misconduct.

- The Referee and a club.
- The Referee and a discipline board of a County Football Association.
- The Referee and an Appeals board of The Football Association.

It is important, therefore, that the report is well written, accurate, brief and clear, leaving the reader of the report in no doubt about the alleged incident and as to

what action was taken as a result of the alleged misconduct by the persons concerned.

There may be actions and reactions as a result of a report and, therefore, the report should contain facts and not opinions.

## Advice

### Advice

In presenting these specimen examples for your consideration, it is not with the intention of producing for you a uniform set of facts that you can lay before the appropriate authority. Rather it has been the intention to show a variety of ways in which those

facts can be **ACCURATELY, BRIEFLY AND CLEARLY** put to those who have to read such reports and so enable them to build up a precise picture of the incident, always, of course, showing total accuracy in Law.



# Multi Caution match report form

A new Multi Caution match report form has been developed and approved by The Football Association that permits all cautions from a fixture to be reported on one form.

Referees will only be required to complete one form and send just one copy to the appropriate association giving details of the fixture, details of the player, substitute player or substituted player cautioned and code for the offence that has been committed (i.e. C1 to C7).

Referees are reminded that in using this form the following guidance needs to be taken into consideration:

1. This form is to be used for cautions only.
2. Players receiving two cautions in a game must be reported on the standard misconduct reporting form.
3. Players sent off or other reports of misconduct need to be reported individually on the standard misconduct report form.

4. A copy of the form needs to be sent to each County that is affected. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the referee to photocopy the form and send to each appropriate association. However, you are required to still include the details of all of the cautions on one form.
5. To assist associations in the administration of the misconduct, please include team details on the form (i.e. 1st, reserves, U18, U17, etc.).

This form is available from two main sources:

- Any County Football Association
- TheFA.com

A Microsoft Excel version of the form is available that enables the referee to complete the form electronically and submit to the appropriate association by email. The referee must have Microsoft Excel installed in order for this form to work.

## Online Reporting

All registered referees have the ability, through either the FA website or an approved County FA website, to enter the Multi Caution match report form online.

These reports are submitted to the appropriate County Association on completion.

It is hoped that referees will benefit from these developments and realise an improved efficient reporting process.

# Multi Caution match report form

## THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

### CAUTION MISCONDUCT REPORT FORM FOR 11v11 FOOTBALL



The Disciplinary Secretary,

The

Match  Home Club  Team Versus  Away Club  Team

Competition  Date

I have to report that I cautioned the following players:

REF	Surname	First Name	Club	Caution Code	FA Code (FA Cases Only)
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					

Caution Codes	
C1	Unsporting Behaviour
C2	Shows dissent by Word or Action
C3	Persistently infringing the Laws of the Game
C4	Delays the restart of play
C5	Fails to respect the required distance at a restart
C6	Enters or re-enters the Field of Play without the Referee's permission
C7	Deliberately leaves the Field of Play without the Referee's permission

FA Codes (for unsporting behaviour)	
AA	Adopting an aggressive attitude
DI	Simulation
DP	Dangerous Play
GC	Goal Celebration
HB	Handball
RP	Reckless Play
SP	Pushing or Pulling an opponent
TR	Tripping
UB	Unspecified Behaviour
Please ensure that cases of unsporting behaviour being sent to The Football Association are also categorised using the above codes	

#### Referees' Details

Name

Address

Date  NPD Number  FAMOA Number

This form has been sent to the following Association/County Association

Notes:	
1	Please note that this form is to be used for Cautions only.
2	Referees may use either this form to report Cautions or the standard misconduct report form to report individually.
3	Players receiving 2 Cautions in a Game should not be reported on this form.
4	Players Sent Off or other reports of misconduct need to be reported individually on the standard misconduct report form.
5	A copy of this form needs to be sent to each County that is affected or The Football Association if appropriate.
6	Please indicate Team details above (i.e. 1st, Reserves, U18, U17, etc.).
7	If submitting by email, unless otherwise specified by the County, the email address is <a href="mailto:discipline@countyfa.com">discipline@countyfa.com</a>



# Standard Misconduct report form

You must ensure that all the information required is provided on the form in precise detail.

Use this form to report players, substitute players and substituted players:

1. Receiving two cautions in a game and therefore dismissed from the field of play.
2. Sent off or other reports of misconduct need to be reported individually on the standard misconduct report form.

An electronic version of the Standard Misconduct report form has been created in Microsoft Excel and is available on The FA Website. This will enable the referee to complete the form electronically and submit to the appropriate association by email (see details on form). The referee must have Microsoft Excel installed in order for this form to work.

Again, this will enable the referee to complete the form electronically and submit to the appropriate association by email.

*A copy of your report will be forwarded to the player concerned via his club. Therefore, any inaccurate reporting may cause an adverse reaction when you are appointed to any further matches of the club concerned.*

*The Laws of Association Football require you to submit misconduct reports. Your County Football Association may require reports in duplicate if submitted by post and within two working days (Sundays and Bank Holidays excluded). When in doubt, seek help from more experienced colleagues.*

# Standard Misconduct report form

## THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

### OFFICIAL REPORT FORM FOR REFEREES



Reports must be submitted by First Class Mail or via email attachment to the Association within two days of the match (Sundays not included). email reports need only be submitted as single reports. However, if sent by post, reports must be submitted in duplicate and only sent via First Class Mail.

Home:   Away:

Competition:

Played at:  On:

I have to report that

(Full Name):  Of:

Names of Assistant Referees (where neutral and involved in the Report), or Name of Referee if Assistant Referee report:

Under Law 12 section:  incident which came under my notice was as follows:

Please use the (Alt+Enter) keys on the keyboard, to move onto a new line in this area:

Referee's Name:

Date:

NPD Number:

County:

FAMOA Number:

If submitting by email, unless otherwise specified by the County,  
the email address is [discipline@countyfa.com](mailto:discipline@countyfa.com)  
e.g. [discipline@essexfa.com](mailto:discipline@essexfa.com) or [discipline@thefa.com](mailto:discipline@thefa.com)

-----  
*Please complete your address below, you will receive a receipt acknowledgement of your report, either by email or by post (please include your postcode)*

Address, please use the (Alt+Enter) keys on the keyboard, to move onto a new line in this area:

email Address:

File Ref:

(For FA use only)

# Description of the offences

Law 5 requires that a Referee shall provide the appropriate authorities with a match report which includes information on any disciplinary action taken against players, and/or team officials and any other incidents which occurred before, during and after the match. This must be sent to the appropriate Association within 2 days of the match taking place (Sundays and Bank Holidays excluded).

The report must contain details of misconduct relating to:

- A. Sending-off offences — see Law 12 S1 to S7.
- B. Other misconduct by players, officials, spectators, etc. — see Law 5.

## Notes

1. A separate report must be submitted for EACH player involved, whether in the same or separate incident.
2. Some County Football Associations require that when a report of misconduct relates to a contravention of Law 5, a separate plain piece of paper is used rather than the official report form.
3. Remember to distinguish between the Law 12 Section and the INCIDENT (i.e. a description of what actually happened) which is included in the section 'The incident which came under my notice was as follows'.
4. If the same player is cautioned and then later sent off for a second cautionable offence, Law 12 (S7), make sure you do not submit these on the Multi Caution match report form.

However, if the same player is cautioned and then sent off for an offence under Law 12 (S1) to (S6), then **both the Multi Caution match report and the Standard Misconduct report form must be submitted as appropriate.**

5. Since the offences for which a player may be cautioned or sent off are clearly stated in Law 12, no variation is permitted.

# The report itself

First of all you must ensure that the introductory section of the 'Report Form' is completed in full.

Describing the incident is probably the most difficult part and the following advice is offered for your consideration.

1. Whenever you caution or send off a player, you **MUST** report the matter, you have **NO** discretion.
2. Such a report **MUST** be submitted within 2 days (Sundays and Bank Holidays excluded) to the appropriate County or Services Football Association.

Referees are reminded that . . .

**FAILURE TO SUBMIT  
REPORTS RENDERS THE  
REFEREE LIABLE TO  
DISCIPLINARY ACTION.**

3. You are the "eyes and ears" of the Disciplinary Committee and your report must reflect only information related to the incident.
4. Be accurate in your reporting of the incident — avoid confusing or conflicting statements.
5. Be brief — you are required to report only the incident leading to the sending-off. Information about the state of the playing surface or climatic conditions should be included **ONLY** if you feel they play a part in the incident described.
6. Be clear — stick rigidly to a description of the incident; it is not for you to pass judgement. The Disciplinary Committee will make a judgement from the information you provide.
7. In the presentation of your report, try to make sure that what you write is clear, legible, correctly spelt and punctuated. It is often wise, particularly in the early days of your career, to seek approval of what you have written from a more experienced colleague.



# The cautionable offences

These offences are reported on the Multi Caution Match Report Form using the Caution Code (C1–C7) as appropriate.

1. **Unsporting behaviour** (Law 12, C1)  
This includes a multitude of offences, contrary to the spirit of the Law. It includes examples of deliberately tripping, pushing, charging or impeding; indeed, the committing of any of the penal offences, time wasting (not time consuming) kicking the ball away or into goal after play has been stopped, etc.
2. **Shows dissent by word or action** (Law 12, C2)  
You should consider 2 possibilities:
  - (a) the spontaneous reaction of disappointment by a player for which a word of advice may be sufficient;
  - (b) open, hostile disagreement by word ("that was rubbish referee") or by action (sarcastic clapping) against your decision for which a caution **MUST** be issued.

**Note:** If offensive, insulting or abusive language is used in dissent, then the player **MUST** be sent from the field of play.

3. **Persistently infringes the Laws of the Game** (Law 12, C3)  
A player who persistently infringes the Laws of the Game is one who continues to offend and who will previously have had this matter drawn to his/her attention.\*  
  
\* It is often advised, as a useful guide, that persistent infringement could imply a number of offences (3 or 4) committed in a short space of time. However, a higher number of offences committed over 90 minutes could result in the same sanction being applied. Referees are advised to also consider the timing between the offences when invoking this element of Law 12.
4. **Delays the restart of play** (Law 12, C4)  
A player who deliberately delays the restart of play, e.g. preventing an opponent from taking a free kick by standing in front of the ball, **MUST** be cautioned.

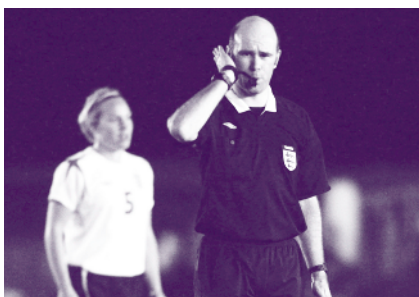
5. **Fails to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick or free kick** (Law 12, C5)  
A player who approaches too close to the ball or fails to retire the correct distance from the ball at the taking of such kicks must be cautioned.
6. **Enters or re-enters the field of play without the referee's permission** (Law 12, C6)
7. **Leaves the field of play without the referee's permission** (Law 12, C7)  
These offences are, comparatively speaking, rare and it is emphasised that the referee should only punish deliberate breaches of this clause. A player who wishes to leave the field of play, in order to receive treatment, should first request permission from the referee.

# The cautioning procedure

The Football Association recommends that the following actions be adopted by the referee when cautioning a player:

1. State that the player is being cautioned.
2. Enquire the player's full name and confirm the spelling.
3. Inform the player that if a second cautionable offence is committed, then a sending off will take place.
4. Show the yellow card, clearly raised aloft and in a non-threatening manner.

Remember that the mandatory use of a card is merely a simple aid to better communication. You should not use the card in an aggressive or provocative manner likely to inflame an already emotive situation.



# The sending off offences

These offences are reported on the Standard Misconduct report form.

1. Serious Foul Play (Law 12, S1)
2. Violent Conduct (Law 12, S2)
3. Spits at an opponent or any other person (Law 12, S3)
4. Denies the opposing team a goal or an obvious goal scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball (this does not apply to a goalkeeper within his own penalty area) (Law 12, S4)

5. Denies an obvious goal scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick or penalty kick (Law 12, S5)
6. Uses offensive or insulting or abusive language and/or gestures (Law 12, S6)
7. Receiving a second caution in the same match (Law 12, S7)  
A player who receives a second caution during a match **MUST** be dismissed following the second cautionable offence. This also applies to any players guilty of misconduct whilst receiving a first caution, i.e. refusing to give their names to you.





# The sending off procedure

The Football Association recommends that the following actions be adopted by the referee when sending off a player:

1. Enquire the player's full name and confirm the spelling.
  2. State that he/she is being dismissed from the field of play.
  3. Show the red card\* clearly raised aloft in a non-threatening manner.
- \* If a player is being sent off for a second cautionable offence in a match, you must show first the **YELLOW CARD** and immediately afterwards, the **RED CARD**, thus making it obvious that the player is being sent off for a second cautionable offence and not for an offence requiring immediate expulsion.

Please remember the advice previously given relating to the cautioning of players, i.e. the card is an aid to communication and the red card, in particular, should NOT be shown in an aggressive or provocative manner.

## Responsibility of Assistant referees who advise referees of misconduct

It is a duty of assistant referees to indicate to the referee if misconduct or any other incident has occurred out of the view of the referee (Law 6). They may also need to advise the referee of a player who uses offensive or insulting or abusive language and/or gesture. In such

circumstances, the assistant referee will be required to submit a Misconduct Report to the appropriate authority and sample reports are included later in this booklet for reference.

# Definitions of serious foul play and violent conduct

## Serious foul play

Serious foul play can only occur when the ball is in play and when a player unfairly challenges for the ball against an opponent using excessive force.

## Violent conduct

Violent conduct occurs when a player is guilty of aggression towards an opponent even if not challenging for the ball. The ball can be in or out of play. If the ball is in play the sanction shall be a direct free kick in favour of the team of the player who was attacked, from the place where the offence was committed, or with a penalty kick if it took place within the penalty area. If the ball is out of play, the game shall be resumed at the stage where it was interrupted prior to the offence (throw in, free kick, etc.).

Moreover, if a player attacks a teammate, the referee, an assistant referee, a spectator, etc. this shall also be considered violent conduct. As mentioned above, this offence can arise when the ball is in or out of play. If the ball is in play, the player shall be sanctioned with an indirect free kick against his/her team from the spot where the violent conduct occurred or with a dropped ball taken at the place where the ball was situated at the time of the offence, if this occurred beyond the boundaries of the field of play. If the ball is out of play the game shall be resumed at the stage where it was interrupted prior to the offence (throw in, free kick, etc.).

# Sending off offences — specimen reports

## Example 1 — Violent conduct

In the 61st minute of this game, a goal by Farmhouse United was disallowed because the above player had clearly impeded the opposing goalkeeper. The above player, showed dissent against my decision, placed his hands on my right shoulder and violently pushed me to the ground.

## Example 2 — Violent conduct

In the 40th minute of this game, the ball had gone out of play for a goal kick when I saw the above-named player deliberately and violently kick a teammate on the right leg with her left foot following an exchange of words. At the time of the incident I was about 10 metres away and I had a clear and unobstructed view. I sent off the player and showed her the red card and I restarted the game with a goal kick.

## Example 3a — Violent conduct

In the 19th minute of this game, I had my attention drawn to an incident by assistant referee, Mr Trevor Pilkington. He informed me that whilst the ball was out of play for a throw-in, the player named above had deliberately head-butted the opposing goalkeeper within the goalkeeper's own penalty area. I did not witness the incident personally. I immediately dismissed the offending player

from the field of play, showed him the red card and restarted play with a throw-in.

## Example 3b — Assistant Referee Pilkington's report

In the 19th minute of this game, whilst the ball was out of play for a throw-in, I noticed the above player deliberately head-butting the opposing goalkeeper in the penalty area. I had a clear and uninterrupted view of the offence committed and I immediately drew this incident to the attention of referee Mr Karl Shepherd who summarily dismissed the player from the field of play.

## Example 4 — Violent Conduct

In the 24th minute of this game, the above player deliberately struck an opponent in the face with his elbow when making an aerial challenging for the ball in the centre circle some 10 metres from my position and from where I had a clear and uninterrupted view. I took the appropriate action.

## Example 5 — Denying the opposing team a goal or an obvious goalscoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball

In the 89th minute of this game, the above-named player deliberately handled the ball on her own goal line and prevented a goal-bound shot from entering

the goal, thereby denying an obvious goal to her opponents. I dismissed her from the field of play, showed her the red card and restarted play with a penalty kick to opposing team. I was approximately 10 metres from the incident and I had a clear and uninterrupted view of the offence committed.

## Example 6 — Denying an obvious goalscoring opportunity to the opposing team

In the 43rd minute of this game, the above-named player deliberately held back, by his shirt, an opponent who had a clear and uninterrupted run to his opponent's goal. The incident took place just outside the penalty area and an obvious goal scoring opportunity was denied, so I took the appropriate action. I was approximately 15 metres from the incident and I had a clear and uninterrupted view of the offence committed.

## Example 7 — Serious foul play

In the 89th minute of this game, the above-named player was guilty of a high and very late tackle in the vicinity of the opponent's thigh and in my opinion he endangered the safety of an opponent. I was only 15 metres away from the incident and I had a clear and uninterrupted view of the offence

# Sending off offences — specimen reports

committed. I dismissed him from the field play and showed him the red card.

## Example 8 — Serious foul play

In the 2nd minute of this game, the above-named player was guilty of committing a very late foul tackle on an opponent using excessive force and in my opinion he endangered the safety of an opponent. I was approximately 10 metres from the incident and I had a clear and uninterrupted view of the offence committed. I dismissed him from the field of play and showed him the red card.

## Example 9 — Offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures

Note: In the case of offensive, insulting or abusive language, referees **must quote the actual words used** in their report. Please indicate if the language was directed to you or any other Match Officials.

If posted the report should be placed in an inner sealed envelope marked on the outside either "Private and Confidential" or "This report contains offensive, insulting or abusive language", and then place this in an outer envelope

before sending the whole report to the County or National Football Association.

## Incident

In the 33rd minute of this game, the above-named player appealed for a free kick following a challenge by an opponent which, in my opinion, was fair. Realising that no free kick had been awarded, the player shouted at me "Referee, you're nothing but a blind c•••", so I dismissed him from the field of play.

## Example 10 — Offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures

In the 27th minute of this game, I penalised a colleague of the above-named player for an offside offence as T Smith scored a goal which was promptly disallowed. At the decision T Smith shouted "You ginger headed p••••" at his teammate. I was some 10 metres from the incident and I clearly heard the words that Mr T Smith shouted. I immediately dismissed him from the field of play.

## Example 11 — Offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures

In the 55th minute of this game, I penalised a colleague of the

above player for an offside offence as Mr Brown scored a goal which was promptly disallowed. At the decision he shouted at me "You bald-headed t•••" He was about 15 metres away from me and I clearly heard the words the player said. He was immediately dismissed from the field of play.

## Example 12 — Offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures

As we walked from the field of play for the half time interval, I distinctly heard and saw one of the defenders, Clive Jones, say to the scorer, "You f•••••g cheat. You're nothing but a cheat." I immediately asked the player for his name, showed him a red card and informed him that he would not be allowed to take any further part in this match.

## Example 13 — Offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures

Having disallowed a goal following an offence by the above player on the opposing goalkeeper, he turned towards me and clearly made a two fingered gesture and said "Up yours, referee". I immediately asked the player for his name, showed him a red card and sent him from the field of play.

# Sending off offences — specimen reports

## Example 14 — Receives a second caution in the same match

Note: Both reports should be made on the Standard Misconduct report form and an indication given that the player was dismissed for a S7 offence. (If, however, a player who has been cautioned already and then is sent off for a later separate offence of serious foul play or violent conduct, then the caution is to be reported on the Multi Caution match report form and the sending off on the Standard Misconduct report form).

Please note a player at County FA level has the right to challenge one or both cautions at a Personal Hearing. Therefore, full details of both cautions must be submitted.

## Example 15 — Spits at an opponent or any other person

In the 23rd minute of this game, the above-named player reacted to being tripped by an opponent inside the centre circle by spitting in his opponent's face. I was about 8 metres from both players and I had a clear and uninterrupted view of the incident. I immediately took the appropriate action.

### General Notes

In these examples, it has not been the intention to produce a uniform set of facts which every referee can lay before the appropriate body. It has been the intention to show a variety of ways in which the relevant facts can be clearly and concisely put to those who have to read such reports and to enable them to build up a precise picture of the incident, bearing accurate relation to the requirements of Law.

On a practical note, it is advisable for you to inform players, when cautioning them, that they are, in fact, being officially cautioned **BEFORE** requesting their full name. At least players know, at the outset, that they are not being sent off and, at what is often a time of tension and/or frustration for the player concerned, may prevent subsequent misconduct taking place.

# Other misconduct by players, officials, spectators, etc.

## Law 5

The Standard Misconduct report form is so designed as to allow the reporting of such incidents to be incorporated on that form.

### Example 16 — Misconduct after a match

At the end of the game, the trainer of Downtown Rovers approached me and said "That's the worst f•••••g exhibition of refereeing I've ever seen, you're a disgrace, referee." I made no response whatsoever, enquired his name and informed him that this incident would be reported to the County FA.

### Example 17 — Misconduct during a game

I have to report that during the second half of this game I had cause to inform the trainer of Firebeacon Athletic, Marie Smith, that she would be reported to the County Football Association, since she chose to ignore my advice not to suggest vicious actions to her players. For example, that they should "break her bl•••y leg". Despite being warned, Marie Smith continually advised her players to adopt vicious actions that would endanger their opponents' safety. She also continually challenged my authority by commenting in a loud manner "never in this world" and "you must be joking".

**Remember . . . Only a player or substitute player or substituted player may be shown the red or yellow card. The referee has the authority to take disciplinary sanctions from the moment he enters the field of play until he leaves the field of play after the final whistle. This includes the half time interval.**

# Summary of report writing procedure

1. Quote the **FULL** name of the player and his club and the competition.
2. Clearly indicate the **OFFENCE** for which the player was cautioned or sent off under the provisions of Law 12, as detailed in the "Laws of Association Football".
3. Report the **INCIDENT** accurately, briefly and clearly. Do not confuse the **OFFENCE** and the **INCIDENT**.
4. The following points may be of relevance and help build up a general picture:
  - the time at which the incident took place
  - the position at which the incident took place
  - as referee, your position and distance from the incident.
5. Present your report in the most legible manner. If your handwriting is difficult for others to read, then please print it or type it up if at all possible.
6. Do, please, check your spelling! Almost every important word that you will need to use is in the "Laws of the Game". Remember, a copy of your report is sent to the player and club concerned.
7. Remember, your reports may be required to be submitted in duplicate if submitted by post. However, check the quality of the duplicate copy. Save a copy for your own future reference.
8. Don't forget to sign the report, date it and submit it, **within two days of the match taking place (excluding Sundays and Bank Holidays)**. When submission is by post the envelope must have a **first class stamp** attached.
9. Please check that the postage paid on the envelope is enough to ensure it is delivered first class as an overweight or large sized envelope may be underpaid and delayed by going second class, resulting in the County FA not receiving it in the due time.
10. Remember to report the facts
  - Accurately**
  - Briefly**
  - Clearly**



# Checklist for misconduct reports



In order to assist a referee in ensuring that he meets all his obligations satisfactorily in connection with after-match action, following the cautioning or sending off of players, or reporting other misconduct to the appropriate authority, it is suggested that he asks himself the following questions and checks that the action necessary has been taken in each case.

## A. HAVE I ENTERED CORRECTLY:

- (i) The full and correct names of the competing teams?
- (ii) The complete title of the Competition?
- (iii) The venue and date of the match?
- (iv) The full name of the player/club being reported?
- (v) The team for which he played (full title) as appropriate?
- (vi) The correct Caution Code on the Multi Caution match report form

In addition, if completing the Standard Misconduct Report Form:

## B. IS MY REPORT OF THE INCIDENT BRIEF, LEGIBLE, TO THE POINT AND UNQUESTIONABLY ACCURATE?

The description given should contain ALL THE FACTS and it should relate ONLY to the INCIDENT BEING REPORTED.

## C. IS MY REPORT FOR THE USE OF OFFENSIVE OR INSULTING OR ABUSIVE LANGUAGE AND/OR GESTURES?

IF 'YES':

- (i) HAVE I COMPLETED THE LAW 12 SECTION CORRECTLY?
- (ii) HAVE I QUOTED THE ACTUAL WORDS USED?
- (iii) HAVE I INDICATED THAT THE WORDS WERE DIRECTED TO ME OR ANOTHER MATCH OFFICIAL?

## D. HAVE I:

- (i) Entered my name in BLOCK CAPITALS?
- (ii) Signed my Report?
- (iii) Entered my address in BLOCK CAPITALS?
- (iv) Dated the Report?
- (v) Checked the spelling of each word in the completed Report?

# Checklist for misconduct reports

- E. HAVE I RETAINED A COPY OF THE REPORT FOR MY OWN FUTURE REFERENCE?  
*(The copy should be filed, with all relevant notes, for possible use in connection with any Disciplinary Commission.)*
- F. HAVE I:
- (i) Submitted by electronic means the correct match report forms to the appropriate disciplinary authority? If submitted by post have I addressed the envelope to send the Report to the correct Disciplinary Secretary, of the correct Association?
  - (ii) Enclosed in the envelope the Report in **duplicate**?  
For two or more players involved in an incident, a separate Report in duplicate must be submitted in connection with each player.
  - (iii) Used a FIRST CLASS stamp and arranged to ensure that the Report is sent within two days of the match (Sundays not included)?
  - (iv) Ensured that the postage paid on the envelope is enough to ensure it is delivered first class, as an overweight and underpaid envelope is delayed by going second class, resulting in the County FA not receiving it in the due time?

This Self Checklist is designed to help referees in checking that each step has been completed correctly using The Football Association's Multi Caution or Standard Misconduct report form. It may also be helpful to note, at a later stage, the date of acknowledgement of receipt of the Report by the appropriate authority.

# The Disciplinary Commission

Misconduct reports must be sent to the appropriate authorities (County FA or The FA only) within the stipulated time and will be dealt with in accordance with laid down procedures. Upon receipt of the referee's report, the County Football Association sends an acknowledgement to the referee — usually by email — and a copy to the Secretary of the player's club.

In competitions that are governed by match-based discipline, a player has no right to a Personal Hearing for a standard sending-off, but does have a right in a misconduct charge. In all other cases a player is not permitted to request a Personal Hearing in respect of an individual caution, except in the case of a claim of mistaken identity. However, a player has a right to a Personal Hearing in respect of all other sending-off offences, and if sought, the date, time and venue are then fixed and you will be informed of the arrangements.

The following advice is offered to Referees who are asked to attend a Personal Hearing:

- If you, as Referee, are under 18 years of age arrange for a parent/guardian or Referee Development Officer to accompany you and inform your County Disciplinary Secretary.
- Take a copy of your Misconduct Report and your 'Match Record Card' with you. Recall match incidents from memory.
- Your 'Personal Appearance' is important and will provide the Disciplinary Commission with a 'first impression' of your credibility as to a witness for the Personal Hearing. Be a credit to yourself and to your Referee colleagues.
- Arrive in plenty of time and use the room provided for you on arrival. Normally, separate refreshment and toilet facilities are provided to ensure you do not make contact with players/persons also attending the Commission.
- Make yourself known to the Disciplinary Secretary; inform him of your mileage to enable him to pay your expenses.
- Where you have been requested to attend a case of 'Assault' the Disciplinary Secretary will ensure your safety and, should there be the need, ensure you are safely escorted from the premises. This also applies to any Personal Hearing where you feel you may have a problem with an individual or club.
- When you are in front of the Disciplinary Commission answer all questions 'factually'. DO NOT over elaborate or change the content of your report if you feel 'under pressure'. You and your report are the main evidence against the player/person.
- Remain co-operative throughout the Hearing. The final decision taken by the Disciplinary Commission will be their judgement of the evidence presented and NOT your ability as Referee on the field of play. You are a witness for The Football Association and NOT on trial.

# Personal Hearing procedures

The date, time and venue for a Personal Hearing will be notified to both the player's/person's Club and to the Referee. If, for some reason, the Referee is unable to attend on a specific date, or a specific time, the County FA Disciplinary Secretary must be informed immediately and confirmation is required in writing, for non-attendance, stating the reasons why. It should be noted that when the County FA Disciplinary Secretary arranges a Personal Hearing the Referee's 'closed dates' are checked. Hence, it is important to ensure that your County FA is always aware of your availability.

If you are attending your first Personal Hearing contact the Disciplinary Secretary who will explain procedures.

Failure to carry out this procedure and/or not attend a Disciplinary Commission may result in the Referee being called before the Committee and/or Disciplinary Commission having been charged with misconduct under FA Rules.

When they are involved, all neutral Assistant Referees are required to send a report to the County Association indicating misconduct by players, Clubs and officials, this includes sending off but not cautions (details of which

should be recorded, noted and kept because there is a claim of mistaken identity still available for players and cautions). It is up to the County if such reports are issued with the charge and the Assistant Referee called to a hearing. The Referee is a witness for the association, as is an Assistant whose evidence is deemed to be relevant. If a referee reports to the Association that another participant has witnessed an incident, such person must report the matter to the Association so the County can decide if they require such to be called to attend. The report **MUST** have been forwarded to the person(s) reported, to allow them to be aware of the evidence against them at the hearing.

Referees may ask the Chair of a Commission if they can have somebody with them — as long as that person takes no part in the Commission.

If you require any guidance, always contact your County FA's Referee Development Officer. Full details of procedures can be downloaded from [TheFA.com](http://TheFA.com).

# Conclusion

We stated in our introduction that it was our aim "to assist and support you in your preparation and completion of misconduct reports and to do so in such a way as to provide a clear and accurate description of incidents" which you see, either as referee or assistant referee.

If you succeed in presenting your report in a manner acceptable to The Football Association or County Football Association, then you will have performed a service to the whole refereeing movement, you will have minimised the likelihood of an appeal by the player and you will have acted in an efficient manner that will stand you in good stead throughout your career.

Ian Blanchard

Senior National Game Referee Manager

July 2009

# Notes

# Notes





# Notes



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**LEARNING**

# A Guide to Misconduct Report Writing