Hampshire FA

# MEMBERSHIP RULES

These Membership Rules are made pursuant to Hampshire FA’s Articles of Association, where there is any inconsistency between these Rules and the Articles of Association, the provisions of the Articles of Association shall prevail.

1. Definitions and Interpretations

In the interpretation of these Rules the terms used shall have the same meaning as set out in the Articles of Association except that the terms shown below shall have the following meanings:

“the Football Association or FA” means The Football Association Limited;

“this Association or HFA” means the Hampshire FA;

“the Officers” means those persons elected from time to time to the positions of President, Chairman, Deputy Chairman, Finance Director and Chief Executive as defined in Article 40;

“the Board of directors” means the Board of directors of this Association assigned to manage the business and financial affairs of this Association;

“the County” means the area defined in Membership Rule 3;

“the Football Management means the Football Management Board of this Association

Board” assigned to manage the domestic football matters of this Association;

“the Secretary” means the Chief Executive of this Association or his appointed deputy;

“the League” means a league sanctioned by and affiliated to this Association;

“Divisional FA’s” means any Divisional Football Association of this Association;

“AGM” means the Annual General Meeting of this Association;

“Participant” means an Affiliated Association, League, Competition, League or Competition Official, Club, Club Official, Intermediary, Player, Official, Match Official, Member or Employee of an affiliated League, Competition or Club and all such persons who are from to time participating in any activity sanctioned either directly or indirectly by the Association;

“Player” means an individual in membership of an Affiliated Club;

“Manager” means an individual who is either the manager or head coach of a football team with responsibility for the team on the day;

“Selection Panel” means the selection panel appointed by the Board to recommend the election of Officers and consider the election of members to Board, Football Management Board, standing committees and sub groups;

Words denoting the singular number include the plural number and vice versa; words denoting the masculine gender include the feminine gender; and words denoting persons include bodies corporate (however incorporated) and unincorporated, including unincorporated associations of persons and partnerships.

2. Membership of this Association

All Associations, Leagues, Competitions, and Clubs playing football in accordance with the Laws of the Game and whose Headquarters are within the County must directly affiliate to this Association in accordance with the Articles of Association.

For the avoidance of doubt Affiliated Clubs (other than Senior Clubs) shall be Associate Members of this Association (as defined in the Articles) and as a result shall not be entitled to attend or vote at general meetings. The members of the Association entitled to vote at general meetings are the Divisional Associations, Sanctioned Leagues (11v11, youth and mini soccer), Senior Clubs (Grade A-D), elected directors and members of the Football Management Board. Life Vice-Presidents of the Association shall be entitled to attend and vote at general meetings. Honorary Life Members of the Association shall be entitled to attend general meetings in a non-voting capacity.

All elected members of the Board, Football Management Board, Standing Committee or Sub Group must reside in the County of Hampshire or the Isle of Wight or within 10 miles of the County Boundary (as defined on the 31st March 1974 – a copy of the map of which can be viewed at the H.F.A. Office). With the exception of Honorary Life Members and Life Vice-Presidents, any elected director or member of the Football Management Board upon the occasion of changing place of residence beyond the above limits as laid down shall be deemed to have resigned membership and the casual vacancy can be filled in accordance with Articles 68 and 39. No employee of this Association or its Divisional Associations, the Football Association or any other County Football Association shall be eligible to be a director or member of the Football Management Board, standing committee or sub group of this Association, excepting those who were in post as of 30 June 2018.

Affiliated Clubs and Players under the jurisdiction of this Association shall not play with, or against any club which is not affiliated to this or some other recognised County Association. All Affiliated Clubs shall be bound by the Association’s Articles of Association and the Rules and Regulations of The FA and this Association.

A breach of the provisions of either of the paragraphs under this section shall be deemed to be misconduct and dealt with as the Football Management Board may decide.

3. Divisional Football Associations

The County shall be divided into no more than six Divisions, which shall be called Divisional Football Associations. The Divisional Football Associations shall be the Associations of Aldershot, Bournemouth, Isle of Wight, North Hants, Portsmouth and Southampton, who shall pay an annual affiliation fee of £64.00 and the application for sanction must be forwarded to the Chief Executive of this Association by the 1 June in any year.

Divisional FA Boundaries are as follows:

ALDERSHOT – The area of this Association shall be that portion of Hampshire as bounded by a line from the West Sussex border at Hill Brow <Grid Ref: SU788263>, (south-east of Liss) to, but not including, Old/New Alresford <SU600345>, thence to east of Hook <SU741542> and northwards along the River Whitewater to just east of Riseley on the Berkshire border <SU741634>

BOURNEMOUTH – The area of this Association shall be that portion of Hampshire as bounded by a straight line from Pylewell Point <SZ356951> to Pipers Wait <SU246165> on the Hants/Wilts border (excludes Lyndhurst)

ISLE OF WIGHT – The area of this Association shall be the Isle of Wight

NORTH HANTS – The area of this Association shall be that portion of Hampshire as bounded by a line east of Riseley on the Berkshire boundary <SU741634> following the River Whitewater southwards to the east of Hook <SU741542>; thence to and including Old Alresford and New Alresford <SU600345 & SU600310>, thence to the M3 Junction 11 <SU470260> and including Winchester; thence to and including King’s Somborne <SU330315>, thence due west to the county boundary (Hants/Wilts) <SU259315>

PORTSMOUTH – The area of this Association shall be that portion of Hampshire enclosed by a line drawn from a point south of Warsash <SU495043>, east of Bishop’s Waltham <SU600227>, to, but not including Old/New Alresford <SU600345>, thence to the West Sussex border at Hill Brow <SU788263>

SOUTHAMPTON – The area of this Association shall be that portion of Hampshire as bounded by a line drawn from a point south of and including Warsash <SU495043>, to and including Bishop’s Waltham <SU600227>, to but excluding Old/New Alresford <SU600310>; then to a point south of, but not including, Winchester (M3 Junction 11) <SU470260>, to but excluding King’s Somborne <SU330315>, due west to the county boundary; thence to Pipers Wait <SU246165> (a point on the Hants/Wilts boundary); thence by a straight line to Pylewell Point <SZ356951> (including Lyndhurst) and from Pylewell Point along the coast to Calshot Castle <SU489024>.

No Divisional Football Association Council meeting/AGM/EGM shall take place on the same day as any Hampshire FA Board of Directors, Football Management Board or standing committee meetings without the consent of the Hampshire FA Chief Executive or their nominated deputy.

4. Football Management Board

These provisions should be read in accordance with the Terms of Reference for the Operation of the Football Management Board.

a) The Football Management Board will consist of the Chairman, Deputy Chairman, Finance Director, Chief Executive, FA Representative (if held independently to one of these positions), the appointed Chairman of each Standing Committee (or appointed deputy if unable to attend) and up to four further members appointed through an open recruitment process (managed by the Selection Panel).

(i) The Chief Executive shall by 1 May in each year, publically advertise on The Association’s website and social media channels (and in other such areas at the discretion of the Selection Panel) inviting applications to serve on the Football Management Board using a pro-forma approved by the Selection Panel.

b) The Operations Manager, Facilities & Investment Manager and the Football Development Manager will be invited to all meetings of the Football Management Board in a non-voting capacity.

c) All members of the Football Management Board will be elected for a three year term (subject to re-election).

d) Any casual vacancy arising during the course of the season will be filled at the discretion of the Football Management Board.

e) Any elected member who attains the age of 75 after election will be entitled to serve for the remainder of that particular season and will then retire from the Football Management Board.

5. Standing Committees

A1 Composition of Standing Committees

The Association will operate five standing committees designated as:

* Football Regulation Committee
* Referee Recruitment & Development Committee
* Women & Girls Football Committee
* Disability Football Committee
* Charter Standard & Respect Committee

(i) In accordance with Article 76, the President, Chairman, Deputy Chairman, Finance Director, Chief Executive and FA Council Representative shall be ex-officio members of all Standing Committees, together with the Director appointed by the Chairman to each Standing Committee in accordance with Article 76, and the Chief Executive of the Association or his nominated Deputy, shall act as Secretary of all Committees. These members will also be ex-officio members of all Sub Groups appointed in accordance with Membership Rule 5 B1 (iii) to (iv). These members shall have full voting rights at each Standing Committee and Sub Group meeting they attend.

1. The Board of Directors will elect, on an annual basis, a Selection Panel, which shall be comprised in accordance with Article 66(e) for the purpose of overseeing the selection process of representatives to each Standing Committee of this Association.

The Selection Panel shall also be responsible for succession planning for key positions within the Association and making nominations to the Association where and when considered appropriate in terms of the constitution of Boards, Standing Committees and the appointment of members to key positions within the Association from time to time.

1. The Chief Executive shall, by 1 May in each year, publicly advertise on The Association’s website and social media channels (and in other such areas at the discretion of the Selection Panel) to apply to serve on a Standing Committee in the manner approved by the Selection Panel. Applications must be received back from applicants by 14 May in each year to enable the Chief Executive to present to the Selection Panel for consideration which may include a requirement for the applicant to attend an interview. The Selection Panel will ensure that a maximum of twelve elected members are appointed to each standing committee. The Selection Panel will then make a recommendation to the Football Management Board, which will be considered at their first meeting immediately following the AGM.

The Referee Recruitment & Development Committee shall ensure that at least a third of its elected membership is under the age of 24. Any member of the committee who attains the age of 25 after election will be entitled to serve for the remainder of that particular season.

(iv) Standing Committees will meet a maximum of four times each season and will elect its own chair and deputy chair who will serve a three year term (subject to re-election annually) and all members will have full voting rights (with the exception of the designated member of staff).

All members of standing committees will be elected for a three year term (subject to re-election).

No person shall be Chairman of a Standing Committee and Deputy Chairman of another Standing Committee or Chairman of more than one Standing Committee. No person may also occupy the position of Deputy Chairman on more than one Standing Committee.

No person shall serve on more than two Standing Committees, with the exception of Directors appointed to standing committees by the Chairman in accordance with Article 76 who shall be permitted to serve a third standing committee.

(v) Should the number of candidates elected be less than the number of vacancies on any Committee, then the Football Management Board shall decide if and how the vacancies shall be filled.

(vi) All nominations for the position of an Appointment Secretary must be made in writing by the appropriate LARC secretary to the County Referee Recruitment & Development Committee, by 1 June for consideration by that committee. These appointments will be on an annual basis.

Appointment secretaries for the Hampshire Premier League, Wyvern Combination League, Hampshire County Women’s League, Hampshire County Girls League and Hampshire County Youth League (and the appointment of Referee Academy co-ordinators) shall be nominated by the Referees Development Manager to the Referee Recruitment & Development Committee by the 1 June for approval. These nominations will be on an annual basis.

(vii) All Standing Committees will report in to the Football Management Board.

(viii) The Football Management Board may each year host one forum for adult leagues, two forums for youth leagues and one joint forum for adult and youth leagues with invitations extended to Divisional FA’s for all meetings.

B1 Other Committees (whose members shall be approved by the Football Management Board or where appropriate, the delegated standing committee)

1. Local Area Referees Committees (one for each Divisional FA)
2. Disciplinary Panel
3. Competitions Sub Group
4. Young Persons’ Forum

B2 Composition of Other Committees

(a) Local Area Referees Committee

(i) All members of the Hampshire FA Referee Recruitment & Development Committee will also be members of the Local Area Referees Committee (LARC) in the area in which they reside or represent.

(ii) The LARC Secretary for each division to be nominated by the LARC to the Referee Development Manager by 1 June for approval by the Referee Recruitment & Development Committee and these nominations will be on an annual basis.

(iii) One member from each Referees Society within the area.

(iv) All Appointment Secretaries may attend their Divisional LARC meetings.

(v) The Divisional Observer Co-ordinator, Mentor Co-ordinator and New Referee Co-ordinator are to be nominated by the LARC to the Referee Development Manager by 1 June and these positions together with the membership of each LARC shall be approved annually by the Referee Recruitment & Development Committee. These nominations will be on an annual basis.

(vi) All Referee Academy Co-ordinators are considered to be members of the local LARC where the Academy resides. These positions will be elected on an annual basis and are subject to the approval of the Referee Recruitment & Development Committee.

(vii) Each Divisional LARC will be required to elect a Chairman and Deputy Chairman from their respective Divisional LARC membership for the coming season and these nominations have to be sent to Hampshire FA Referee Development Manager by the 1 June for approval by the Referee Recruitment & Development Committee. These nominations will be on an annual basis.

Any member of the Hampshire FA Board, Football Management Board or Staff Member or such other person as requested to do so by the Chief Executive can attend LARC Meetings.

(viii) Each Divisional FA may nominate a representative to their LARC on an annual basis.

(b) The Disciplinary Panel shall comprise of:

(i) The Hampshire FA Officers.

(ii) The Disciplinary Manager shall by 1 May in each year, publicly advertise on The Association’s website and social media channels (and in other such areas at the discretion of the Selection Panel) inviting applications to serve on the Disciplinary Panel using a pro-forma approved by the Football Management Board. The Chief Executive and Disciplinary Manager will then make a recommendation to the Football Regulation Committee, which will be considered at the first meeting immediately following the AGM.

(iii) All applications to serve the Disciplinary Panel must be willing to travel throughout the County to sit on disciplinary commissions.

(iv) The appointed members of a Disciplinary Commission shall have no previous personal knowledge of the events or involvement with any of the participants concerned.

(c) Sub Groups listed in Membership Rules 5 B1 (iii) and (iv) shall be subject to the same application process as details for Standing Committees in Membership Rule 5 A1 (iii) and will be limited to a maximum of twelve members together with the designated member of staff.

Sub Groups will meet a maximum of four times each season and will elect its own chair and deputy chair who will serve a three year term (subject to re-election) and all members will have full voting rights (with the exception of the designated member of staff). All members of sub groups will be elected for a three year term (subject to re-election).

The Officers of the Association will also be ex-officio members of Sub Groups listed in Membership Rule B1 (iii) and (iv) in accordance with Membership Rule A1 (i).

Sub Groups shall report into the Football Management Board unless determined otherwise by the Football Management Board.

(d) Attendance and Quorum

A record of attendances of members for Standing Committee and Sub Groups meetings, shall be kept and reported on an annual basis to the Selection Panel and Football Management Board. The quorum necessary for the transaction of committee business shall be five for Standing Committee meetings and 3 for Sub Group meetings. There shall be no smoking or use of e-cigarettes at all meetings of the Association. Unless determined otherwise by the Association Chairman, the dress code for meetings shall be collar and County tie, trousers and shoes for Gentlemen (blazer optional) and blouse and County scarf, skirt or trousers and shoes (blazer option) for Ladies or any other dress code which is deemed appropriate for the occasion.

(e) Minutes

(i) Board / Football Management Board

A written record shall be kept of all business and all reports should be presented to their next respective meeting.

(ii) Standing Committees

A written record shall be kept of all business, and all reports shall be presented to the Football Management Board at its next meeting, and a note of their reception shall be made in the minutes of the Football Management Board meeting. A copy of all such standing committee minutes, shall be furnished to each Football Management Board Member. Any special recommendations, from a committee shall be specifically noted, and the decision of the Football Management Board recorded.

(ii) Sub Groups and Other Committees

A written record shall be kept of all business, a copy of which shall be forwarded to the Chief Executive and forwarded to either the Board or Football Management Board as and where required.

(f) Finance

The Football Management Board and Standing Committees will be responsible for achieving their individual budgets set annually by the Board of Directors.

6. Powers of the Football Management Board [and/or Board of Directors] to Deal with Cases of Misconduct

The Football Management Board, the Board of Directors and the Chief Executive, acting on behalf of the Association shall have power to deal, by suspension from taking part in football or football management, fine or otherwise, as they may decide, any participant, club or organisation charged with violations of the Laws of the Game, the Rules and Regulations of the Football Association or of this Association or of any Divisional Association, League or Competition, or with misconduct on the part of any participant, Divisional Association, League or other Competitions, Organisation or Affiliated Club or on the part of their members, players or officials, and deciding all disputes that may arise, including the determination of such actions, which may be deemed to have brought the game and/or this Association into disrepute.

7. Constitution of Divisional Associations, Leagues and Other Competitions

(a) All Divisional Associations, Leagues and other bodies, affiliated to this Association shall consist of properly constituted Affiliated Clubs. In the event that a Sanctioned League has in membership, Clubs/Teams affiliated to a neighbouring County Association, it shall be a requirement of sanction that the said League shall produce from its records when requested by this Association complete information as to the Officers of the said Club/Team and any other relevant information such as the address of, and, of the addresses of its headquarters, which shall be deemed to be the ground on which they play their home fixtures. Failure to comply with the foregoing shall be deemed to be misconduct and offenders are liable to be charged with the offence in accordance with the provisions of this Association’s Membership Rule 6. They shall cover a defined area, and shall neither extend nor alter such area, nor shall Divisional Associations or Leagues alter their constitution or rules, without having first obtained the consent of the Football Regulation Committee of this Association. Divisional Associations and Leagues desiring to alter their rules, must submit such proposed alterations to this Association by 1 April each year for approval or otherwise, and until approval is given no such alteration must be put to any AGM or EGM called for the purpose. Failure to carry out the foregoing will result in offenders being fined and/or dealt with as this Association sees fit.

It shall be the duty of this Association to inform all Divisional Associations and Leagues who have submitted such proposed alterations of their acceptance or otherwise within 28 days of the date of their submission. Divisional Associations and Leagues must make the necessary provisions in their Rules to allow the foregoing procedure to be carried out.

All Divisional FA’s are required to comply with the Association’s Standard Code of Rules for Divisional FA’s and any amendments made by the Association from time to time.

All Leagues and Competitions are required to comply with The FA Standard Code of Rules (or The FA Standard Code of Rules for Youth Competitions) and any amendments made by The FA from time to time.

(b) Without at least seven days’ written notice to a Competition, a Participant (FA Rule A2) may not make an approach to or have contact with a club and/or team still in membership of that Competition with regard to the club becoming a member of another Competition. The approaching Participant (A) may not approach the same Club a second time in the same playing season; (B) may approach only one Club within the same Competition at any time; and (C) may not approach another Club in the same Competition within 28 days of an earlier notice of approach or acknowledgment.

(c) Any sanctioned competition that is planning to extend its constitution must first seek permission from the County FA and consult with all other sanctioned competitions within its Divisional FA and any other sanctioned competition that may be directly affected.

This process will also apply to any new competition that is making an application for sanction for the first time.

Decisions reached by the County FA relating to this rule will be final and binding on all parties, subject to the right of appeal to The FA in accordance with FA Regulations.

Failure to comply with this rule shall be deemed as misconduct and will be dealt with in accordance with Membership Rule 6.

(d) All Divisional FA’s and sanctioned leagues and competitions shall ensure that their officers and elected members sign the designated Respect Code of Conduct, with the exception of development competitions and flexible leagues.

8. Powers of Divisional Associations, Leagues and Competitions

(a) Divisional Associations, Leagues, and Competitions, shall have power to deal with matters of a domestic nature, concerning their own rules and competitions, e.g. non-fulfilment of fixtures, incomplete teams, ineligible players, late starts etc.

(b) All Affiliated Clubs shall be members of the Divisional Association in whose area they are situated at the discretion of the Divisional Association, and they shall pay nominal membership, the amount of which shall be decided by the Divisional Association (and approved by the Board of Directors).

Development Competitions and clubs are the only exemption to the above. For the avoidance of doubt development competitions are considered to be faith based competitions and its member clubs, a new competition and its member clubs that have not been in membership with a County FA or a competition where the majority of players do not play affiliated football elsewhere.

Development Clubs are exempt from Divisional FA membership for a term of between one and three seasons to be set by the Football Regulation Committee. When the development competition is established, membership of the Divisional FA will apply with the agreement of the Football Regulation Committee.

The Divisional Association shall make provision in their Rules to ensure representation on their Council as follows:

1. Up to three representatives from each sanctioned 11-a-side and Mini-Soccer competition within the area who must be a member of that competition.

(ii) One representative from each Referees’ Society within the area.

(iii) One representative from Member Clubs competing in Competitions outside the area.

1. One representative from Senior Clubs (step 6 and above) within the area.
2. One representative from Intermediate Clubs (step 7) within the area.
3. One representative from Women’s Clubs within the area.
4. One representative from Disability Clubs within the area.
5. One representative from Walking Football Clubs within the area.
6. One representative from each Local Authority within the area.
7. One representative from each appropriate Schools FA.
8. The Board of Directors and Members of the Football Management Board of this Association shall be members of the Council of the Divisional Association in whose area they reside.

(viii) In addition to the above, the Divisional FA Council shall have the power to co-opt other members to limit of which their Rules prescribe who may have specialist knowledge to assist the Divisional FA Council. All such co-opted members credentials shall be vetted by the full Divisional FA Council and shall be subject to re-appointment annually.

(ix) The Divisional Associations shall have power to control and conduct their own approved Cup Competitions, and be responsible for ensuring that all Sanctioned Competitions and Affiliated Clubs in their Area conform to the Rules and Regulations of The Football Association and the Hampshire Football Association.

(x) All Divisional Associations, Leagues and Competitions shall hold their Annual General Meetings no later than 15 June in any year, prior to this Association’s AGM held on the fourth Saturday in June.

9. Sanctioned Leagues and Competitions

(a) This Association recognises the Leagues and Competitions, listed under their respective Divisional Association areas who are in compliance with Association Rule 7. Any other proposed Leagues or Competitions (Cup, Charity or match), except as may be directly sanctioned by The Football Association, shall not be allowed without the consent of the Football Management Board of this Association. Every Cup, League, Charity or other Competition in Hampshire shall be affiliated to, and pay an annual fee to this Association, which shall include the affiliation of a Representative Team which shall comprise of members who are players registered with the League or Competition. The fee payable by a Sanctioned League or Competition shall be £64.00 and the application Form D must be forwarded to the Chief Executive by the 1 June in any year or be liable for a fine of £60.00. This fee must accompany every application for sanction, and shall be returned in the event of sanction being refused. The League/Competition must forward their constitution for the coming season by 1July in any year or be liable to a fine of £60.00. Where a League or Cup Competition are conducted separately in accordance with Football Association Rules, but by the same Management Committee, only one sanction fee shall be payable. The fee shall not be paid for a charity Competition where the whole of the net proceeds of which are devoted to recognised charitable purposes.

All Divisional Associations and Sanctioned Leagues and/or their Members/Officials shall submit to the Association, when instructed, all books and records for viewing and examination. Failure to comply shall be deemed as misconduct and subject to a penalty as laid down in Rule 6.

A bank account shall be opened and maintained in the name of the Sanctioned League/Competition. Designated account signatories shall include the Sanctioned League/Competition Chairperson, the Secretary and the Treasurer. No sum shall be drawn from the Sanctioned League/Competition Account except by cheque signed by two of the designated signatories. All monies payable to the Sanctioned League/Competition shall be received by the Treasurer and deposited in the Sanctioned League/Competition Account.

All Leagues and Competitions, affiliated to this Association shall ensure that all youth clubs have a Club Welfare Officer associated with their Club, who must hold a valid safeguarding certificate and FA CRC/DBS disclosure and who must have attended the appropriate Welfare Officer Workshop, and all Leagues/Competitions must have a League Welfare Officer, who must hold a valid safeguarding certificate and FA CRC/DBS disclosure and who must have attended the appropriate Welfare Officer Workshop. It is also a requirement for all youth and mini soccer team managers to hold a valid FA CRC/DBS disclosure. In addition, all Leagues and Competitions must ensure that their member clubs are insured for Public Liability in the sum of £10million indemnity and produce proof of compliance on their Form ‘D’ if so required. All other Affiliated Clubs, in membership with Leagues and Competitions sanctioned by other Associations, shall produce proof of their Public Liability Insurance at least 14 days, prior to their playing in any Competition in the current playing season if so required. Ad hoc teams formed for Charity matches or any other reason shall produce such proof at the time of application, for sanction if so required. All Divisional FA’s, Leagues and Competitions (including small sided) shall ensure that the League or Competition is insured for Public Liability in the sum of £10million indemnity and produce proof of compliance on their Form ‘D’ if so required.

Every Sanctioned Competition, shall make provision in its rules for the attendance of a Member of the Council of its Divisional Association at meetings of its Committee of Management for the purpose of giving guidance and instruction. Such representatives, have no voting power by right of their appointment.

All Divisional FA’s and Sanctioned Leagues/Competitions including their members and officials must reply, to all written communication from this Association, within 14 days (or any other stipulated date beyond 14 days) of the date of said communication when said document indicates, the need for reply. Failure to comply will be with dealt with by a fine of £40.00.

Divisional Associations and Sanctioned Competitions, shall forward to the Association Office, prior to the commencement of each season, 5 hard copies of their current Rules and an electronic copy.

Divisional Associations and Sanctioned Competitions shall forward a Certified Statement of Accounts for the last financial year within 14 days of their AGM in accordance with FA Standard Code of Rules 8(c) verified by some suitable person(s) who is not an Officer or a member of the Management Committee and shall be elected annually at the Divisional Association or Sanctioned Competition Annual General Meeting. Failure to comply shall result in a £60.00 fine. Divisional Associations and Sanctioned Competitions are required to retain financial records for a period of a minimum of 6 seasons if VAT registered or a minimum of 3 seasons if not VAT registered. Divisional Associations and Sanctioned Competitions are also required to retain administration records for a minimum of 3 seasons.

Every Sanctioned Competition, shall have a requirement in their Rules, that Players Registrations shall include the full name and date of birth. All youth leagues must ensure that they record any known serious medical conditions of registered players and emergency contact details for the player’s parents or guardians.

It shall be a condition of sanction that no match in any competition shall bear relation to a match in another competition, i.e. a match shall not count for the purpose of more than one sanctioned competition.

Any Divisional Association or Sanctioned League or Competition failing to comply with any of the foregoing provisions of this Membership Rule will risk possible withdrawal of sanction and any further penalties imposed at the discretion of the Football Regulation Committee.

(b) Dissolution of a Sanctioned League/Competition shall be by resolution approved at a Special General Meeting by a majority of three quarters (3/4) of the members present and shall take effect from the date of the relevant Special General Meeting.

In the event of the dissolution of the Sanctioned League/Competition, the members of the Management Committee are responsible for the winding up of the assets and liabilities of the Sanctioned League/Competition.

The Management Committee shall deal with any surplus assets as follows:

1. Any surplus assets, save for a Trophy or any other presentation, remaining after the discharge of the debts and liabilities of the Sanctioned League/Competition shall be transferred only to another Competition or Affiliated Association or The Football Association Benevolent Fund or to such other charitable or benevolent object in the locality of the Competition as determined by resolution at or before the time of winding up, and approved in writing by the sanctioning Association.
2. If a Sanctioned League/Competition is discontinued for any reason a Trophy or any other presentation shall be returned to the Donor if the conditions attached to it so provide or, if not, dealt with as the sanctioning Association may decide.

Within a month of the decision being taken by the Special General Meeting the Management Committee shall provide to this Association the minutes of the Special General Meeting including verified statement of accounts and an explanation of the disposal of any assets etc in accordance with the clauses above.

10. Small Sided Tournaments

(a) With the exception of the Competitions that are required to seek sanction under Association Rule 9, all other applications for the sanction of Small Sided Tournaments and Leagues shall be made under this Rule to this Association. (A copy of the Competition Rules must accompany all applications.)

(b) All Competitions seeking sanction must complete Form ‘D’, which shall be sent to the Association’s Secretary at least 14 days prior to the commencement of the Competition, together with the appropriate sanction fee of £64.00.

(c) All clubs participating in Small Sided Leagues, and not already affiliated to Hampshire FA shall pay an annual fee as laid down in the schedule of fees and must also complete Form ‘A’, fees and forms to be collected and forwarded to the Association Office by the Competition Organisers.

(d) The names, addresses and dates of birth of players, participating in the Competitions must be registered with the organising Secretary of the Competition, the list of registered players shall be retained by the Competition for a period of 12 calendar months.

(e) All matches to be played in accordance with the FA Standard Code of Rules and Regulations, of the Football Association for Small Sided Competitions, no mixed matches (male/female) are permitted save only that the players are six or older and under eighteen.

(f) Officials and players, must be reported to this Association for any misconduct, that may occur and this will be dealt with under the normal disciplinary procedures unless specified in FA Disciplinary Regulations.

(g) All decisions of a Competition’s organising committee shall be binding subject to the right of appeal to this Association, in accordance with Membership Rule 15.

11. Additional Awards and Presentations

Each Affiliated Club winning a Cup, League or other Competition sanctioned by this Association, shall be empowered in addition to the seventeen souvenirs supplied, to award not more than two extra souvenirs to members, who have taken part in such Competitions in a reasonable number of games. This number may be increased if in the opinion of the League or Competition concerned there are exceptional circumstances.

12. Rules concerning Affiliated Clubs

(a)

i. All Affiliated Clubs shall satisfy this Association that they are properly constituted football clubs, and playing football according to the Laws of the Game, Rules and Regulations of the Football Association.

ii. Each Affiliated Club shall keep a register of players, club officers and committee together with other non-playing members, proper Books of Accounts in which shall be entered all incoming payments coupled with the retention of all receipts, invoices and claims and records of stock, assets and liabilities.

iii. Financial records and minute books of all meetings to be retained for a minimum period of six years in compliance with FA Rules I 1 and 2 and their respective sub-sections and in compliance with Article 6 (c) of the Association, and each Affiliated Club shall complete and forward annually to the Chief Executive of this Association, a return on Form ‘A’ giving such information as is required therein.

iv. Audited financial statements for the last financial year shall be submitted by Senior Clubs (Grade A) to the Chief Executive of this Association by 1 June in each year, unless they are exempt from audit under the Companies Act 2006 or are not constituted as limited companies.

v. Senior Clubs (Grade B-D and Grade A clubs exempted from the foregoing provision) shall submit, as a minimum, unaudited financial statements for the last financial year, including a balance sheet and detailed income and expenditure account, to the Chief Executive of this Association by 1 June in each year. These financial statements shall be verified by an independent, appropriately qualified accountant and shall be approved by members at a general meeting.

vi. All Charter Standard, Step 7 (or equivalent) and Youth ~~other~~ clubs shall prepare an annual financial statement, in such format as shall be available from Hampshire FA from time to time. This financial statement shall be verified by an independent person with appropriate financial experience and submitted to the Chief Executive of this Association by 1 June in each year.

All other clubs must prepare a financial statement at their financial year end, which may be requested by the Association at any time. Failure to comply will result in a general suspension being applied in accordance with Membership Rule 6.

vii. Any existing club which registers, after 1 June may be liable to pay a fine of £60.00 and any existing club failing to submit financial information by the prescribed date or when instructed to do so may be liable to pay a fine up to £60.00.

viii. All youth clubs must have a Club Welfare Officer associated with their Club, who must hold a valid safeguarding certificate and FA CRC/DBS disclosure and who must have attended the appropriate Welfare Officer Workshop, and all Leagues/Competitions must have a League Welfare Officer, who must hold a valid safeguarding certificate and FA CRC/DBS disclosure who must have attended the appropriate Welfare Officer Workshop. It is also a requirement for all youth and mini soccer team managers to hold a valid FA CRC/DBS disclosure.

ix. All youth clubs must ensure that they record any known serious medical conditions of registered players and emergency contact details for the player’s parents or guardians on the player registration form provided by the Affiliated League and that this information is held at matches in which the player is involved.

(b) No Affiliated Club shall be allowed to compete in Cup, League, Charity or other Competition unless the sanction of this Association shall have been obtained by the Club or Competition promoting the Competition. An Affiliated Club having membership with a League or Cup Competition, must, if required, enter one of this Association’s Cup Competitions, provided it is suitable, and such Competition shall take precedence of League or other Competitions in accordance with the Precedence List. An Affiliated club shall as a condition of its being allowed to compete in a Competition not under the jurisdiction of this Association, enter and play in at least one of this Association’s Cup Competitions suitable for its best team.

(c) Affiliated Clubs shall not allow matches to be played at their grounds in which clubs engaged are not in membership with this or some other recognised Association, unless previous consent of the Association has been obtained. Affiliated Clubs whose grounds are used by other clubs, for matches of any kind shall notify the Chief Executive of such arrangements, when made, and at least seven days, before the date of the match whenever possible. Affiliated Clubs, Officials, Players and Registered Referees shall not take part in any match in which an unaffiliated club is playing or which has not been sanctioned by this Association.

(d) The registered Secretary of an Affiliated Divisional Association, League or Club is the only official recognised by this Association, for the purpose of correspondence, result cards, registration forms etc. All of which must be submitted in his or her name, and for which his Affiliated Divisional Association, League or Club will be deemed responsible. The Secretary of this Association shall not be required to communicate with any other official on Affiliated Divisional Association, League or Club matters except as may be required in respect of other matters such as Enquiries, Investigations and Disciplinary actions.

(e) All Affiliated Clubs shall be bound to place their players at the disposal of the Hampshire FA for all levels of representative football that the Association decides to participate in. A player selected to play for the County, shall not play for his Affiliated Club on the date of the County Match for which he is selected, without the permission of the Chief Executive.

(f) (i) For Clubs that occupy a clubhouse, the consumption of alcohol in the ground or premises during the period of a match shall be subject to the terms of the Club licence agreement and the Sporting Events (Control of Alcohol) Act 1985 and/or any successor legislation. Glasses, glass bottles or cans containing alcohol are not permitted outside of the clubhouse and must not be brought into grounds.

(ii) For clubs without a clubhouse (including clubs playing at council pitches), the consumption of alcohol shall not be consumed at the ground, or premises during the period of any match (includes the touchline and changing area). Any affiliated League, Competition, Club member, player or other officials and participants in breach of this Rule and the clause above shall be liable to a charge of Misconduct.

(g) All Affiliated Clubs and their members and officials must reply, to all written communication from this Association, within 14 days (or any other stipulated date beyond 14 days) of the date of said communication when said document indicates, the need for reply. Failure to comply will be deemed as Misconduct and dealt with in accordance with Membership Rule 6. Minimum fines for such failures shall be £40.00 per each occurrence.

(h) All Clubs and/or their Members/Officials shall submit to the Association, when instructed, all books and records for viewing and examination. Failure to comply shall be deemed as misconduct and subject to a penalty as laid down in Membership Rule 6.

A bank account shall be opened and maintained in the name of the Club (the "Club Account"). Designated account signatories shall be the Club Chairperson, the Club Secretary and the Treasurer. No sum shall be drawn from the Club Account except by cheque signed by two of the three designated signatories. All monies payable to the Club shall be received by the Treasurer and deposited in the Club Account.

(i) Merger, Winding-up and Dissolution

It is essential that clubs must firstly send written notice to this Association of the intention to undertake winding-up or merger procedures before implementing such action.

Any Club or Clubs wishing to Merge, Wind-Up or Dissolve must comply with Football Association and Hampshire Football Association Rules and Regulations.

An information booklet containing the required procedures are available from the County Office upon application.

(j) Affiliation to this Association may be subject to adherence to other specific additional requirements as may be laid down by The Football Association or this Association of which prior notice shall be served upon the affiliated club.

(k) No player, including the goalkeeper, shall be permitted to wear black or very dark shirts in accordance with the FA Standard Code of Rules for Leagues/Competitions set by The Football Association.

(l) All clubs competing at Step 6 and above in the football pyramid must ensure that they have appropriate Personal Accident Insurance for players in accordance with National League System Rules and Regulations.

All clubs at Step 7 and below (including youth clubs) must ensure that they have appropriate Personal Accident Insurance for players at the level determined by the Board of Directors on an annual basis.

Any Club must have the required level of insurance - public liability and personal accident - prior to any scheduled match. Failure to comply will be deemed as misconduct and dealt with in accordance with Membership Rule 6.

13. Affiliation, Registration and Other Fees

On or before 1 June (or such other date as the Board of Directors shall prescribe) in each year, each Affiliated Club shall pay an affiliation fee to this Association as per the schedule of fees.

All additional teams of Adult Affiliated Clubs in the schedule shall pay a Registration Fee for each Team of £30.00. All additional teams of Youth Affiliated Clubs in the schedule shall pay a Registration Fee for each Team of £15.00. All additional teams of Mini-Soccer Affiliated Clubs in the schedule shall pay a Registration Fee for each Team of £9.00. Small Sided Clubs shall pay £5.00 (+VAT) per Team. All clubs affiliated to other Counties, playing in a Competition Sanctioned by this County shall pay a fee of £10.00 per Team (£5.00 for Mini Soccer) which shall be collected by the Sanctioned Competition at the same time as the collection of the competition entry fee. Sanctioned Competitions must forward to the County FA a list of all clubs affiliated to other Counties together with a breakdown of teams and the fees collected by 1 August in any year. Failure to comply with this Rule will be considered as misconduct and dealt with in accordance with the provisions of Membership Rule 6. Youth Clubs who are affiliated to other Counties but wish to participate in a Hampshire FA Cup Competition will pay an additional fee of £14.00 per team in accordance with the provisions of Hampshire FA County Cup Competition Rule 9. For one day tournaments see Membership Rule 10.

The fees quoted shall include the supply of County FA Handbook and Directory in electronic format and/or access to the Hampshire FA App.

In cases where an Affiliated Club has teams playing on different days of the week, the Affiliation Fee payable shall be calculated on the basis as that which is payable by an Affiliated Club with more than one team playing on the same day of the week, but in every case the Association must be satisfied that only one Affiliated Club is involved.

Note: Affiliated Clubs, who shall be Associate Members, shall not be allowed to take part in any Sanctioned Competition unless and until the Affiliation Fee has been paid to this Association. Sanctioned Competitions shall satisfy themselves that their member clubs are property affiliated (have paid their affiliation fee). No Match played by an Affiliated Club previous to the date of its affiliation fee having been paid shall be deemed a Competition match. Clubs which are not subsequently elected into membership of a Sanctioned Competition shall have their affiliation fee refunded.

14. Procedure for dealing with Referees Reports not related to Domestic Matters covered by Rule

(a) All referees reports, other than those covered by Membership Rule 8(a) (which should be sent direct to the Honorary Secretary of the Divisional Association or Competition concerned), shall be sent to the Chief Executive, except those involved with clubs whose first teams compete in the Premier League, EFL, National League, the Isthmian League, the Southern League, which shall be sent direct to The FA, Wembley Stadium, PO Box 1966, London, SW1P 9EQ. All clubs and/or players must reply to correspondence from the Association Office on disciplinary matters within 14 days of the posting. Failure to do so may entail a fine of £~~4~~0.00, and a General Suspension being imposed.

All fines and costs relating to Disciplinary cases, shall be paid to the Association, who will in turn meet the expenses of the Panel and the costs of the hearing.

A person deemed to be responsible for any physical injury to another person at a match which necessitates police action or Court Proceedings, shall have his registration held in suspense pending the result of the Court action.

15. Appeals - Constitution of Appeals Board and Powers

Appeals from the decisions of Divisional Associations, Hampshire FA Sanctioned Leagues and Competitions may be made to this Association, whose decisions shall be final. No appeal can be lodged against a decision taken at an Annual or Special General Meeting unless this is on the ground of unconstitutional conduct in accordance with FA Standard Code of League Rule 7(f). An Appeals Board consisting of three (3) members of the Football Regulation Committee, shall be appointed.

The Chief Executive of this Association, or his nominated Deputy, shall be the Secretary of the Appeals Board. He shall select members for the Appeals Board from those members who are not involved directly or indirectly with the appellant or respondent.

The Appeals Board shall have power to re-hear any case referred to them, and to vary or reverse a decision appealed against and to order the payment of any expenses incurred in connection with an appeal as they may decide. The Appeals Board shall also have discretionary power to suspend, fine or otherwise deal with Competitions, Affiliated Clubs, Players, or others deemed to have lodged a frivolous appeal. Notice of appeal must be submitted within 14 days of the posting of the written notification of the decision appealed against, and by registered letter, one copy being lodged with the Chief Executive and the other with the Secretary of the Competition whose decision is challenged. The appeal must set out fully the grounds upon which the appeal is lodged, without which the appeal will not be entertained. The Appeals Board shall have the power to extend the time for giving notice, if in their opinion, a manifest injustice would be suffered by not considering the matter. Every appeal must be accompanied by a deposit of £50.00, which may be forfeited if, the appeal is not successful. Unless otherwise ordered, fines or expenses ordered to be paid in connection with decisions of the Appeals Board shall be paid within 14 days of the date, upon which the decision is made. Failing such payment within the specified time, the Football Management Board shall have power to suspend or otherwise deal with the defaulting Affiliated Club or Official or Player.

16. Appeals to The Football Association

For procedures relating to Appeals to The Football Association, please refer to “FA Regulations for FA Appeals” contained in Section 5 of this handbook.

17. Publication of Decisions

This Association shall be entitled to publish in the public press, or in any other manner it shall think fit, reports of its proceedings, decisions, acts and resolutions or those of any committee or group representing the Association at the discretion of the Chief Executive.

18. Alterations to Rules

(a) These Membership Rules may only be altered in accordance with Article 5 and 6.

(b) Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions of Sub-Rule (a), alterations to the Membership Rules of this Association shall be made at the EGM of the Association in January in any year, and with the exception of any alteration that has been processed and carried under the conditions of Article 6, that can be effective once passed, shall become effective on the day before the next AGM. Notice of proposals to alter the Membership Rules of this Association under this Sub-Rule shall be received in writing by the Secretary not later than 1 November in any year which will then be reviewed by the Football Regulation Committee or its appointed Sub Group. Upon receipt of any such proposals the Chief Executive shall and not later than the 14 November send to all members who are entitled to vote at the meeting, copies of the proposals received. Notice of any amendments to the proposals shall be received by the Chief Executive not later than 14 December which will then be reviewed by the Football Regulation Committee or its appointed Sub Group. At least 14 days prior to the date of the meeting, the Secretary shall send to all members with the notice of the January EGM, copies of all proposals and amendments received.

(c) Such proposed alterations must be supported by at least two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast at such meeting, but any amendment to such proposition shall require a majority vote only to become the substantive proposition which shall then require the two-thirds majority.

19. Privileges of the Board and members of the Football Management Board

(a) The Board of Directors and members of the Football Management Board together with Honorary Life Members and Life Vice Presidents shall be furnished with a pass signed by the Chief Executive (which shall not be transferable) and all Affiliated Clubs, League, Competitions, belonging to this Association or an Affiliated Association, shall admit the holder to their grounds and stands upon production of such pass without requiring any other authority.

(b) Passes may be issued to other Association representatives and such passes shall only be used whilst on approved business.

However, please note that there are procedures that must be adopted when using the pass as follows:

• Early indication to attend a match to the club secretary would be appreciated where possible

• The pass does not include hospitality unless invited by the club, league, competition concerned

• The pass must not be used as a substitute season ticket

• In relation to Premier League and EFL clubs – applications for tickets for these matches should be sent through to the Hampshire FA CEO or appointed deputy who will establish the availability of tickets with the clubs concerned, and if these are available, the Hampshire FA member will be required to meet any costs involved.

20. The Board of Directors may in each year apportion such money as it may deem necessary to the Hampshire FA Benevolent Fund and/or the Hampshire FA Community Trust to be distributed by the Trustees in accordance with the powers given to them by the Trust Deed.

21. The Playing Season

(a) The Association shall determine annually the date on which the playing season shall commence and the season shall terminate not later than the following 1 June. Each Competition shall within the limit laid down by The Football Association determine the length of its own playing season. Any amendment to alter the playing season of a Sanctioned League or Competition may only be made with the prior consent of the Football Regulation Committee.

(b) The Close Season

The Close Season shall be defined as the period between 1 June and 30 June inclusive each calendar year save where The Football Association makes an order to the contrary.

(c) Matches which may be played in the Close Season

No matches other than the following may be played during the Close Season:

(i) Small side matches as specified in FA Rule B7, Mini-Soccer matches or matches played according to “The Laws of the Game: 9 v 9”;

(ii) Matches between Army, Navy, and Royal Air Force teams and teams of the auxiliary forces in competitions whilst in camp. Such competitions shall be strictly confined to the units concerned and gate money shall not be taken;

(iii) Matches involving members of Boys Brigades, Scouts and kindred organisations in Competitions whilst in camp;

(iv) Matches for National Representative teams or Clubs played under the auspices of FIFA or UEFA;

(v) Matches between Clubs in the FA Premier League and The Football League for the following season, and between Clubs in The FA Women’s Super League. This sub paragraph (v) shall also apply to any successor in title to any of the Leagues specified;

(vi) 11v11 matches in sanctioned leagues or competitions that meet the criteria in accordance with the “Regulations for the Sanction and Control of Competitions” and are approved by The Association or sanctioning Association;

(vii) Single day, weekend and bank holiday competitions and festivals meeting the criteria and receiving sanction; and

(viii) Pilot projects granted dispensation by The Association or sanctioning Association.

(d) Matches which may be played prior to the commencement of the Season

After 30 June and prior to the commencement of the Season matches may be played between teams of the same club or between teams of different clubs.

(e) Eligibility of Players

Players who have not previously been registered or recognised playing members of clubs, or who have not been engaged for the following Season may play in matches after 30 June and prior to the commencement of the playing season.

(g) Special Provisions

(i) The appropriate sanctioning association, whether it be the association and/or affiliated association may grant special permission for Competition and other Matches to be played preceding the dates fixed by the Association for the opening of the playing season and shall attach to the granting of such permission whatever conditions it may deem expedient.

(ii) Notwithstanding the provisions of this Rule, affiliated associations shall determine the dates on which County Cup Matches shall be played.

22. Inducing Players to Leave

All Affiliated Clubs and Players shall comply strictly with the requirements of the Rules of The Football Association regarding Players Without Written Contracts, which provides as follows:

(a) Regulations Concerning Approaches

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

(i) Competitions sanctioned by The Association under Regulation 3 of the “Regulations for the Sanction and Control of Leagues and Competitions” may make their own regulations for the approach of Players between Clubs of the Competition.

(ii) During the current season any Club wishing to approach a Player known to be registered with or having played for any other Club must give to the Secretary of each such Club seven days’ formal written notice of the intention to approach the Player.

Formal written notice of approach need be given by:

(a) a Saturday Club only to all Saturday Clubs

(b) a Sunday Club only to all Sunday Clubs

(c) a Midweek Club only to all Midweek Clubs

(iii) The written notice must be sent by Special Delivery or Recorded Post, or a written acknowledgement otherwise obtained from the Secretary or Chairman of the Club approached. Facsimile or e-mail transmission may be used provided a receipt of acknowledgment is also obtained.

(iv) Following the date of positing of the written notice of approach, or receipt of an acknowledgement: (A) the Player may be registered on or after the eighth day; and (B) the Player must have been registered on or before the 21st day.

(v) The approaching Club: (A) may not approach the same Player a second time in the same playing season: (B) may approach only one (1) Player at a Club at any time subject to Rule (ix) below; and (C) may not approach another Player at the same Club within 28 days of an earlier notice of approach or acknowledgment.

(vi) If an approach is made by a Player to another Club during the current season\*, that Club shall give the Club(s), for which the Player is known to be registered or has played, seven days’ notice of approach as set out in (i) to (v) above before registering the Player.

(vii) A Club which is the subject of a complaint alleging failure to give notice in accordance with this Rule may be subject to a charge of misconduct pursuant to FA Rule E1(b).

(viii) A Club proved to have breached the provisions of this Rule may have its current registration of the Player cancelled and be subject to such other penalty as The Association or appropriate Affiliated Association deems appropriate, in accordance with the relevant regulations of The Association from time to time in force; and

(ix) During the current season a maximum of two Players may be approached in the manner described above if invited to trial at a licensed academy or “Centre of Excellence” of The Association, The Premier League or The EFL.

(b) Conditions

(i) All payments made to players must be made by the Club and fully recorded in the accounting records of the Club.

(ii) All salaried payments must be subject to PAYE and National Insurance.

(iii) Any players paid expenses must be reimbursed via an expense claim form. The Club must retain all expense records in a format acceptable to the HM Revenue and Customs.

(iv) A currently registered Player shall not be allowed to register with another Club without first satisfying the Club Officials of the intended Club that all reasonable financial and other liabilities have been discharged to the Club or Clubs with which the Player is or was known to be registered in the current and previous playing seasons subject to FA Football Debt Recover Regulations being applied.

(v) A player approached on or after the 1 May in the current season\* may not play in competitive football for the Club making the approach until the commencement of the following season.

(c) Service Players

Whilst serving in any branch of Her Majesty’s Regular Forces, a Player may not hold a contract of employment with any club under the jurisdiction of The Association and/or an affiliated Association.

(d) (i) Every protest must be accompanied by a deposit of £50.00, which may be forfeited if the protest is not sustained and costs may be charged.

\*a current season runs from 1 July to the following 31 May

23. Age Groups and Provisions Relating to Players Under 18 Years of Age

(a) Children Not Registered as Academy Players.

The following provisions apply to any child not registered as an Academy Player. All matches must be played in accordance with the correct version of the Laws of the Game appropriate for the format specified:

*(i) Children Under 6 Years Old*

A child who has not attained the age of six shall not play, and shall not be permitted or encouraged to play, in a match of any kind.

*(ii) Children Over 6 Years Old – Age Groups, Formats and Related Provisions*

For the purposes of (a) and (b) below,

1. the relevant age for each player is determined by his or her age as at midnight on 31 August of the relevant playing season. i.e. Children who are aged 6 as at midnight on 31 August in a playing season (together with those who attain the age of 6 during the playing season) will be classed as Under 7 players for that playing season. Children who are aged 7 as at midnight on 31 August in a playing season will be classed as Under 8 players for that playing season, and so on.
2. Notwithstanding the above, a child is permitted to “play up” in the age group above his or her chronological age group, irrespective of any difference in format or competition structure, save that a child who attains the age of 6 after 31 August is permitted to play only in the Under 7 age group, and may not play in the Under 8 age group for that playing season.

The age groups that children are eligible to play in are set out in the table below, along with the permitted football formats for each of those age groups. Children shall not play, and shall not be permitted or encouraged to play, in a match between sides of more than the stated number of players, according to their age group:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Age on 31 August of the relevant playing season** | **Eligible**  **Age Groups** | **Maximum Permitted Format** |
| 6 | Under 7 | 5v5 |
| Under 8 |
| 7 | Under 8 | 5v5 |
| Under 9 | 7v7 |
| 8 | Under 9 | 7v7 |
| Under 10 |
| 9 | Under 10 | 7v7 |
| Under 11 | 9v9 |
| 10 | Under 11 | 9v9 |
| Under 12 |
| 11 | Under 12 | 9v9 |
| Under 13 | 11v11 |
| 12 | Under 13 | 11v11 |
| Under 14 |
| 13 | Under 14 | 11v11 |
| Under 15 |
| 14 | Under 15 | 11v11 |
| Under 16 |
| 15 | Under 16 | 11v11 |
| Under 17 |
| Under 18 |
| 16 | Under 17 | 11v11 |
| Under 18 |
| Open Age |

(c) A child under the age of 15 as at midnight on 31 August in a playing season, shall not be permitted to play in a match during that playing season where any other player is older or younger than that child by two years or more.

(d) However as exceptions to (c) above, The Association may in using its discretion: (i) only in respect of disability football, disapply the two year age band restriction; or

(i) Enable disabled children to play football in an age group other than the groups dictated by their birth date, including “playing down”;

(ii) In accordance with a current FA dispensation policy, grant dispensation to enable a child to play football in an age group other than the groups dictated by their birth date, including “playing down”.

(e) To play in an Under 18 competition, a child must have attained the age of 15 as at midnight on 31 August of the relevant playing season.

(f) To play in an open age competition a child must have attained the age of 16.

*(iii) Children 6 Years Old and Over – Competition Structure*

(a) *Under 7 and Under 8 Mini-Soccer*

Leagues may organise a maximum of three trophy events per season, each to be played over a maximum period of two weeks, and may publish the results of such events. The remainder of the season may consist of organised development fixtures only, for which leagues and clubs may collect the results and compile league tables, but must not publish either.

(b) *Under 9 and Under 10 Mini-Soccer*

Leagues may organise a maximum of three trophy events per season, each to be played over a maximum period of four weeks, and may publish the results of such events. The remainder of the season may consist of organised development fixtures only, for which leagues and clubs may collect the results and compile league tables but must not publish either.

(c) *Under 11*

Leagues may organise a maximum of three trophy events per season, each to be played over a maximum period of six weeks, and may publish the results of such events. The remainder of the season may consist of organised development fixtures only, for which leagues and clubs may collect the results and compile league tables but must not publish either.

(d) *Under 12 to Under 18*

There is no restriction on the structure of competitions.

*(iv) Sanction Provisions*

The written consent of The Association or of the relevant Affiliated Association or Associations shall be required pursuant to Rules B1 and/or B7 as appropriate for any Competition for Under 18 age groups and below.

*(v) Gender of Players in Under 7 to Under 18 Matches*

A child in the age ranges Under 7 to Under 18 inclusive may play in a match involving boys and girls.

*(vi) Priority for School Activities*

(a) Priority must at all times be given to school or school organisation’s activities in accordance with the recommendations of the “Memorandum: Children of School Age and School Games” whilst a pupil is receiving fulltime education.

(b) All Clubs and Competitions, excluding those whose matches are played on Sundays, shall include in their rules a provision to the effect that the availability of a pupil must be consented to by the head teacher.

(b) *Players of School Age Registered as Academy Players*

(i) Players who reach the age of nine years during the academic year and who are in full-time education may register as an Academy Player.

(ii) The licensing authority for Academies shall comprise the PGB which shall operate under such Professional Game Youth Development Rules as shall be adopted from time to time.

1. It shall be deemed to be Misconduct for any Club or Club Official to induce any player of school age registered with a separate Club or Academy to leave school for the purpose of signing a contract of employment.

24. General Suspension

(a) The Association shall be empowered to place on General Suspension from all Football activities participants who are in debt to their Sanctioned League, competition or club for outstanding accounts, fines and any other misconduct that is considered appropriate for a General Suspension to be imposed, and in addition, the said members and/or Players shall be liable to pay any administration charge involved in the recovery of any such outstanding debt in accordance with FA Football Debt Recovery Provisions.

(b) To avail themselves of this rule, Sanctioned Leagues, competitions and clubs should serve on the offending club, its Members and Players a notice in the following terms:

“We hereby apply to you for the immediate payment of the sum of   
£ being the amount of your indebtedness to the Football League as shown by the enclosed particulars. We have to give you notice that unless we receive full settlement of this claim within 14 days, we shall apply to HFA for a General Suspension to be placed upon your Club, its Members and Players who have failed to pay their share of the debt.”

(c) The notice should be sent by recorded or personal delivery to ensure that it has been served on all concerned.

(d) Unless the action as required under the foregoing Sub-Rules has been undertaken, no acceptance of the request for a General Suspension shall be considered.

25. A player who has been placed on suspension from all football activities by this or any recognised County Football Association (i.e. General Suspension), may not register with any club/team until his liabilities incurred in the suspension have been fully met. He must then produce proof of this by receipt or notice of his release from the said suspension when submitting a correctly completed registration form to a sanctioned competition or league. He will then be allowed to play upon submission of the registration form if he is otherwise eligible. Likewise a player who having been placed on an aforesaid suspension and is already a registered player with a sanctioned competition shall have his registration held in abeyance until such time he then produces proof of his release and can then re-commence playing if he is otherwise eligible. In all cases the proof must be presented to the Secretary/Registration Secretary of the competition concerned.

26. Matches against Foreign Opposition

Any Affiliated Club proposing to play matches against foreign opposition (home or away) must apply to the Association for the appropriate form at least six weeks before the date of the proposed match.

On completion, the form must be passed to the Secretary of the Competition of the Affiliated Club concerned, who will then forward it to the Secretary of the Association for onward transmission to The Football Association.

27. Youth Football and Mini-Soccer

Each youth league will be limited to a maximum number of 100 clubs and a total number of teams of no more than 400 (this equates a maximum number of 400 teams per youth league).

28. Referees/Assistant Referees

(i) Annual subscriptions payable by all Referees shall be £20.00. All subscriptions shall be paid to the Chief Executive of the Association on or before 1 June annually. Any Referee who fails either to register or to pay his subscription by 1 June may be liable to additional registration fee of £5.00.

(ii) Leagues and competitions shall fix fees to be paid to Referee/Assistant referees officiating in their matches within limits laid down by the sanctioning Authority. Officials shall neither ask for nor receive a larger fee than that fixed by the League or Competition.

(iii) The minimum fees payable by Clubs in all areas to Referees and Assistant Referees shall be:

For Senior or Divisional Association Matches - £16.00/£9.00 (R/AR)

For Junior Matches - £15.00/£8.50 (R/AR)

For Youth Matches - £14.00/£8.00 (R/AR)

For Mini-Soccer Matches - £4.00 (R)

In any match or tournament where no fee is stated the Chief Executive of the Association shall fix one.

(iv) Divisional Associations, Leagues and other Combinations of Clubs under the sanction or jurisdiction of the Association, may appoint Referees to their own matches provided they are from an Official List but such appointments must be notified to the appropriate Honorary Appointment Secretary immediately and be subject to any prior claims on the services of the particular Referee made by him or her. Any appointments so made will be at the expense of the League/Competition concerned. League Lists of Referees must show the County Association each Referee is registered with.

(v) Complaints by Clubs relating to the competence of Match Officials or their application of the Laws of the Game, must be submitted in writing to the Chief Executive of the Association to be received within 10 days from the match giving rise to the complaint. All such complaints must be accompanied by a deposit of £50.

(vi) The Association may order any Club to pay expenses incurred in an investigation and dealing with a complaint made by them against a Referee or Assistant Referee, which, after investigation, is considered to be either frivolous or unwarranted.

29. Other Procedures for Reports

(a) Field Offences

All reports (except those described in Membership Rule 14 here before) shall be sent to the Chief Executive of this Association.

(b) Competition Reports

The Football Regulation Committee may deem it desirable to refer any reports concerning competitions to a Commission.

(c) Commissions

The Chief Executive or his appointed deputy will appoint commissions to consider the outcome of any charges imposed as a result of alleged breaches of these Membership Rules.

(d) Fines and Costs

All fines and costs relating to these Membership Rules, FA Disciplinary Regulations must be paid to the Association within 14 days of date of notice of decisions, and the Association will in turn meet the expenses of the Panel or Commission and the costs of the hearing and or investigations.

30. Service Awards

The Association reserves the right to present Service Awards to any individual who meets the criteria of this rule subject to proof of service and confirmation that a Divisional Association Service Award has also been awarded at least one season prior.  The criteria for each category is as follows:

* Service to Football Award - for members who have served the County for 25 years.
* Referees Service to Football Award - for referees and assessors who have been registered and active in the County for 25 years.
* Certificate of Commendation - for members who have served an additional 10 years following the presentation of a Service to Football Award or Referees Service to Football Award.
* FA 50 Year Long Service to Football Award - for members who have served football for 50 years (subject to FA approval).

Nominations for awards must be submitted through the Divisional Association (or appropriate LARC for Referees Service to Football Awards) by the date specified by the Chief Executive and will be considered at a meeting of the Football Management Board or delegate to nominated working group.