

A female referee is shown in profile, running across a green football pitch at night. She is wearing a dark grey short-sleeved shirt and shorts, with a black watch on her left wrist and black socks. Her hair is tied back. The background is a blurred stadium with red and white seating.

**TRAINEE**

**REFEREE GUIDE**

**WORCESTERSHIRE FA AND HEREFORDSHIRE FA**

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## Am I ready to become a referee?

Reading this booklet is the first step to qualifying as a match official and will tell you everything that is involved. It will also answer most questions you may have about becoming a referee.

Across Worcestershire and Herefordshire we have around 450 referees and we look forward to supporting you at the start of your journey towards joining our team of match officials.

There are some important things you need to know before you think about becoming a referee:

1. Refereeing is a great way to be involved in football and can be really **fun and enjoyable**
2. You must be **aged 14 or over** to start the process of becoming a referee
3. We have **high expectations** of all of our referees, whether they are aged 14 or 40
4. You must be very **committed and have excellent communication** on and off the field
5. You need to be **willing to learn and develop yourself** throughout your career
6. Refereeing is not easy – you need to be **up for the challenge**

This is a fantastic time to get into refereeing with some amazing opportunities to progress to a higher level on the refereeing pathway. Similarly, a number of our referees enjoy a long career in grassroots football and are happy at that level giving something back to the game.

If you think you have what it takes, carry on reading to find out more about how to become a referee.

*This booklet is to support learners who want to become a referee. Once you have qualified, you will be sent our full 'Referee Guide' which includes information on the support available to referees and further development opportunities.*

## **! Information for Parents/Carers !**

Approximately 35% of our referees are aged under 18. We are fully committed to safeguarding our young referees and, with the help of parents/carers, we are sure that some of our young match officials will go on to enjoy refereeing for a long time.

It is vital that parents/carers read the following information before someone in their care aged under 18 considers becoming a referee. This will help you to understand our requirements before and during their referee career as well as the important role that you play – not just as a taxi service!

### **1) The referee is required to attend the Referee Course on their own (i.e. without a parent/carer).**

**Why?** Put simply; because they will referee on their own. You will not be standing with them on the pitch to help them make decisions – it is important to understand the need to officiate on their own.

### **2) Our contact should primarily be with the referee – not their parent/carer.**

**Why?** The referee has to take responsibility for their actions. If they arrive late because their parent/carer did not get up on time to take them to the match, this only reflects badly on the referee. All of our email communication with U18 referees will include a named parent/carer but the emphasis should be on the referee to respond or get in touch when required.

### **3) Refereeing is not easy!**

**Why?** Picture yourself stood in the middle of a pitch with anything from 10 to 22 players waiting to start a match. Have you done a pitch inspection, a player kit inspection and completed the coin toss to decide who kicks off? Have you got all of your equipment, counted the players and checked that the goalkeepers are ready? All of this is before the match even starts, and all of this is the responsibility of the referee. Not to mention the need to then control the whole match, making sure that hundreds of decisions are awarded and communicated correctly.

### **4) Regular communication is key!**

**Why?** Referees need to talk to key people. If a referee does not communicate appropriately via email and phone, there will be issues. Key contacts include their County FA, Leagues, Clubs and other match officials. We will provide all of the relevant contacts – but they must communicate well on and off field.

### **5) We all have a Duty of Care...**

**Why?** Our experience shows us that some U18s struggle with the expectations and practical nature of refereeing. Our tutors will give every learner the best chance of becoming a competent referee but as professionals we ask the parent/carer of potential referees to consider if their child is ready to venture into refereeing. A lack of a confidence will sometimes improve with experience, but remember that during the course the learner must go and referee some matches in order to become qualified.

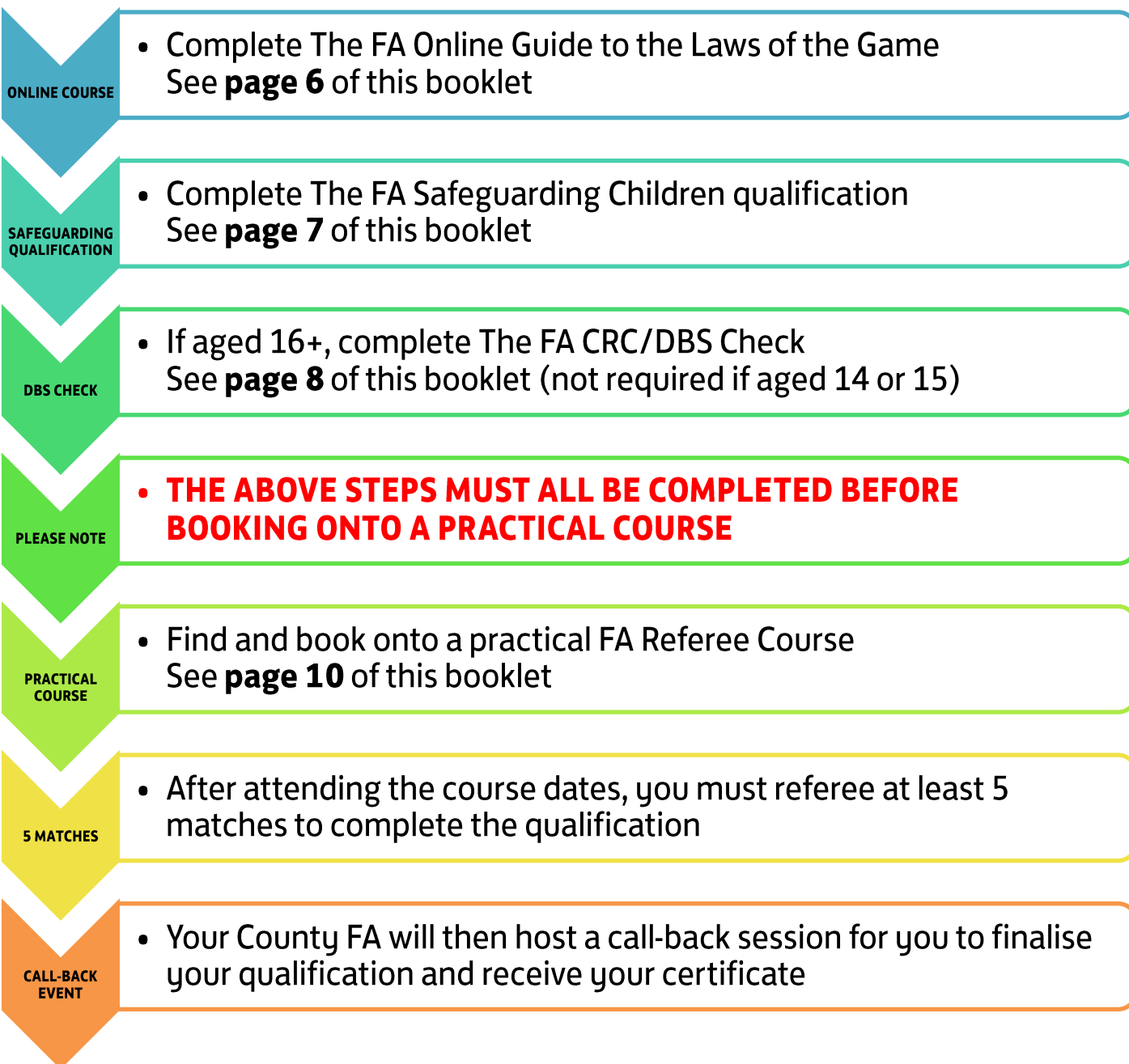
**Ask yourself:** Would my son/daughter cope being placed into the middle of a pitch and having to make and communicate every decision? **Please note:** If your son/daughter is going to be doing exams at school/college then we strongly recommend that they wait until this is over before booking onto a referee course due to the commitment required for both.

### **6) Final thought...**

Referees are paid to provide a service and, as a result, our expectations and requirements are very specific. If you or the learner have any questions, please contact us before booking onto a course.

## Process to Become a Referee

You will need to complete all of the below steps in order to become a qualified referee.

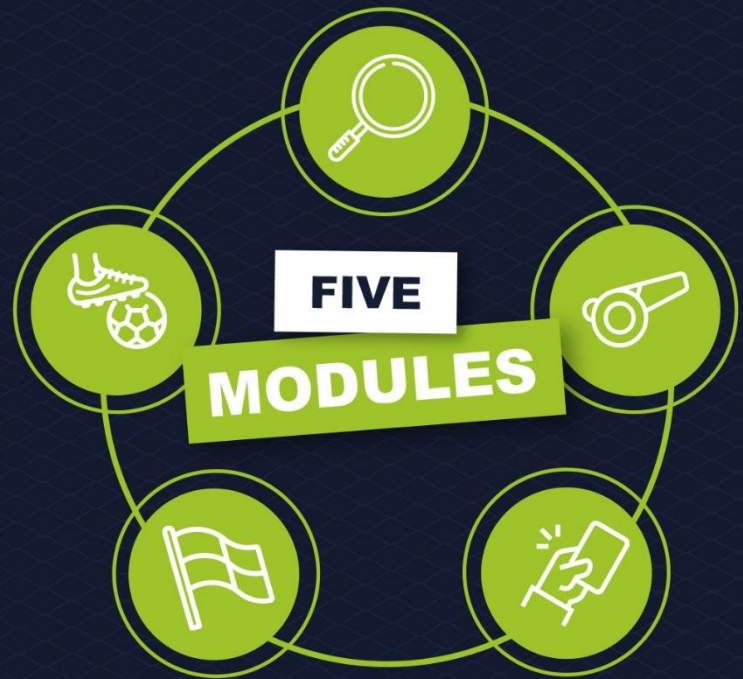




## FA Online Guide to the Laws of the Game



**THE OFFICIAL  
STARTING POINT  
FOR ALL REFEREES.**



The FA's Guide to the Laws of the Game is the official first step towards becoming a referee.

It is open to anyone aged 14+ and the five modules will guide you through the basic Laws of the Game.

You'll be shown how each Law should be applied in matches, with plenty of opportunities to check your understanding via interactive activities. This online Guide must be completed before you book onto a practical course.

You will need to login to complete the course using your own email address and password. If you are aged under 18, this should be done via your own account and not that of a parent or carer.

If you do not have an FA Account, please click [here](#) and create one.

If you do have an FA account but do not know your password, please click [here](#) to reset it.

If you are aged 14 or 15 and having problems creating an account or accessing the course, please click here for help: <https://help.thefa.com/support/solutions/7000014796>

**CLICK [HERE](#) TO LAUNCH THE ONLINE GUIDE**

## Safeguarding Children Qualification

All affiliated referees must have an in-date FA Safeguarding Children Qualification.

This qualification normally lasts for two years and must then be renewed. Please visit the relevant links below to complete your Safeguarding Children qualification when required to do so.

- New referees aged 14 or 15 should complete The FA Safeguarding For All course
- New referees aged 16+ should complete The FA Safeguarding Children course

The FA Safeguarding Children courses are now completed online by clicking [here](#).

You will need to login using the details attached to your FA profile.

If you do not know your FA Number (FAN), please click [here](#).

If you do not know your password, please click [here](#).

**Safeguarding all participants is the responsibility of everyone in football, including referees.**



## Criminal Records Check (CRC)/DBS Check

All affiliated referees aged 16+ who officiate Youth Football must have an in-date FA CRC/DBS Check. FA DBS Checks normally last for three years and must then be renewed. Please follow the instructions below to start or renew your DBS Check when required to do so.

### STEP 1

Go to <https://gbg.onlinedisclosures.co.uk/Authentication/Login> and select **REGISTER** (on the right-hand side of the page) and enter the information requested, including:

<b>Worcestershire FA</b> Referees should enter: <b>Org PIN:</b> 102305 <b>Secret word:</b> Spa	<b>Herefordshire FA</b> Referees should enter: <b>Org PIN:</b> 102268 <b>Secret word:</b> Widemarsh
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Once registered, you can then login using the above organisation PIN, your email address and a password that you will have created as part of the registration process.

### STEP 2

Please ensure you provide your FA Number (FAN) in the Personal Reference Number field (if known) and complete all of your personal details, reading each question carefully.

### STEP 3

Complete all of the questions accurately and submit your application. Take your time as all of your information needs to be accurate. Only select the ID documents that you can bring for verification.

*(See next page for documents that can be used for your CRC/DBS Check)*

### STEP 4

You then need to email your County FA to arrange for a verifier to check your documents.

Worcestershire FA referees, email: [referees@worcestershirefa.com](mailto:referees@worcestershirefa.com)

Herefordshire FA referees, email: [referees@herefordshirefa.com](mailto:referees@herefordshirefa.com)

**IMPORTANT:** You will need to bring all of the original documents (not photocopies) that you selected online. It is your job to contact a Verifier to arrange a meeting time to present your documents. The verifier cannot edit your application so all of the information you enter must be accurate.

### STEP 5

The DBS Check costs £10 and this needs to be paid via bank transfer when submitting your online application. **Please put your name and DBS as the payment reference, e.g. Adam Smith DBS.**

<b>Worcestershire FA</b> Referees should pay: Account Name: Worcestershire FA Ltd Sort Code: 30-94-70 Account No: 00118126	<b>Herefordshire FA</b> Referees should pay: Account Name: Herefordshire FA Sort Code: 16-21-20 Account No: 10110200
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## Criminal Records Check (CRC)/DBS Check – Documents

Once you have completed the online section (see previous page) you will need to provide three ID documents from the list below. **You must supply THREE forms of ID.**

**Please contact your County FA to arrange verification after completing the online section.**

### **GROUP 1 – YOU MUST HAVE AT LEAST ONE OF THESE FOUR DOCUMENTS**

- Current in-date valid Passport (photo page)
- Full or provisional UK driving licence (photo side)
- UK Birth Certificate issued WITHIN 12 MONTHS of date of birth
- UK Biometric Residence Permit

### **GROUP 2A**

- UK non-photo Driving Licence (old style driving licence)
- Marriage/Civil Partnership Certificate
- Current Non-UK Photo Driving Licence
- UK Adoption Certificate
- UK Birth Certificate issued 12 MONTHS OR LATER after date of birth
- UK HM Forces ID Card
- UK Firearms Licence

### **GROUP 2B**

#### **THESE DOCUMENTS MUST SHOW A DATE WITHIN THE LAST 3 MONTHS**

- UK Bank or Building Society Statement
- UK Credit Card Statement
- UK Utility Bill (electricity, gas, water). Mobile phone bill NOT accepted.
- Benefit Statement e.g. child allowance, pension
- Document from UK Government Agency/Local Authority giving entitlement e.g. *from Dept. of Work & Pensions, Customs & Revenue, Job Centre.*

### **GROUP 2B**

#### **THESE DOCUMENTS MUST SHOW A DATE WITHIN THE LAST 12 MONTHS**

- UK Mortgage Statement
- Financial Statement e.g. pension, endowment, ISA
- UK P45/P60 Statement
- UK Council Tax Statement
- UK Work Permit/Visa

### **GROUP 2B**

#### **THESE DOCUMENTS CAN BE FROM ANY DATE**

- Letter from Head Teacher or College Principal (16/17 year olds in full-time education at the time of application)
- EU National Identity Card
- UK Bank/Building Society Opening Confirmation Letter
- Letter of sponsorship from future employment provider  
*(Non-UK/Non-EEA only – if residing outside the UK at the time of application)*

If you do not have three forms of ID from the categories above, please email for assistance: [safeguarding@worcestershirefa.com](mailto:safeguarding@worcestershirefa.com) or [safeguarding@herefordshirefa.com](mailto:safeguarding@herefordshirefa.com)

*Once your documents have been verified, you should receive your certificate or further information in the post within approx. 3-4 weeks.*

## Referee Courses

The FA Referee Course will prepare you to referee mini-soccer, 9v9 and 11v11 football.

Courses are added to County FA websites throughout the year so keep checking back if there isn't a suitable course for you. Please make sure that you can attend all of the dates for the course you book.

**REMEMBER:** Before booking a place on a course, you must complete the online Guide to the Laws of the Game (see page 6), Safeguarding Children qualification (page 7) **and** CRC/DBS Check (page 8).

### IF YOU LIVE IN WORCESTERSHIRE

Please click [here](#) to visit the Worcestershire FA website and book onto an available course.

### IF YOU LIVE IN HEREFORDSHIRE

Please click [here](#) to visit the Herefordshire FA website and book onto an available course.

### IF YOU LIVE IN ANOTHER COUNTY

Please contact your [local County FA](#) to see when they are running courses.

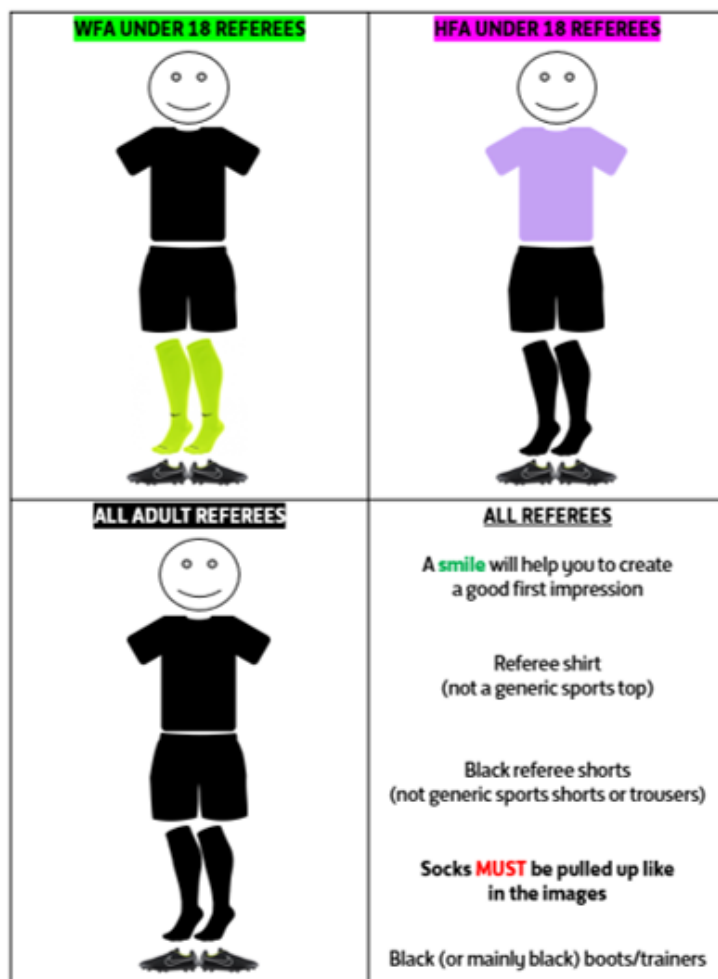
Additional qualifications for Futsal and Disability Football can be completed separately to the Referee Course when you have gained some experience as a referee.



## Referee Kit/Equipment

We expect our referees to look professional when they are representing their County FA at a match.

To create a positive first impression when you referee, it is advisable that you obtain the correct kit as soon as possible. See the image below for our expectations of a basic referee kit:



Under 18 referees are provided with different colour kit (socks or shirt as detailed above and on the next page) as part of our commitment to safeguarding young referees.

On your Referee Course we will provide you with coloured socks or shirt (if U18), as well as a whistle, black notebook and yellow/red cards.

The rest of your black kit and equipment can be bought from most sports shops/online including from:

- A&H, a referee sportswear company – <https://referee-equipment.co.uk/>
- The Referees' Association shop – <https://www.the-rashop.org/>

**IMPORTANT:** Don't forget that you need to make sure that you take to matches: 2 watches, 2 whistles, black notebook, red/yellow cards, pen/pencils and a coin.

If you are refereeing a 9v9 or 11v11 match, you also need 2 flags to lend to the assistant referees.



## **#SeeTheSocks** and **#SeeTheShirt**

Safeguarding our young referees is a key priority for both Worcestershire FA and Herefordshire FA.

**In Worcestershire, referees under the age of 18 wear bright socks.**

**In Herefordshire, referees under the age of 18 wear purple shirts.**

This is not optional.

Why? It is often overlooked that youth referees are new to officiating and still learning. The purpose of **#SeeTheSocks** and **#SeeTheShirt** is to remind everyone that not only is the referee still learning and developing their refereeing ability, but that they are also a minor under the age of 18 and should be treated with the same care and safeguarding protocols that apply to youth players and coaches.

A referee under the age of 18 is subject to children's safeguarding legislation and should therefore be protected, encouraged, and treated with the utmost respect.

**If you see a young referee in bright socks or a purple shirt, please say hello and support them.**



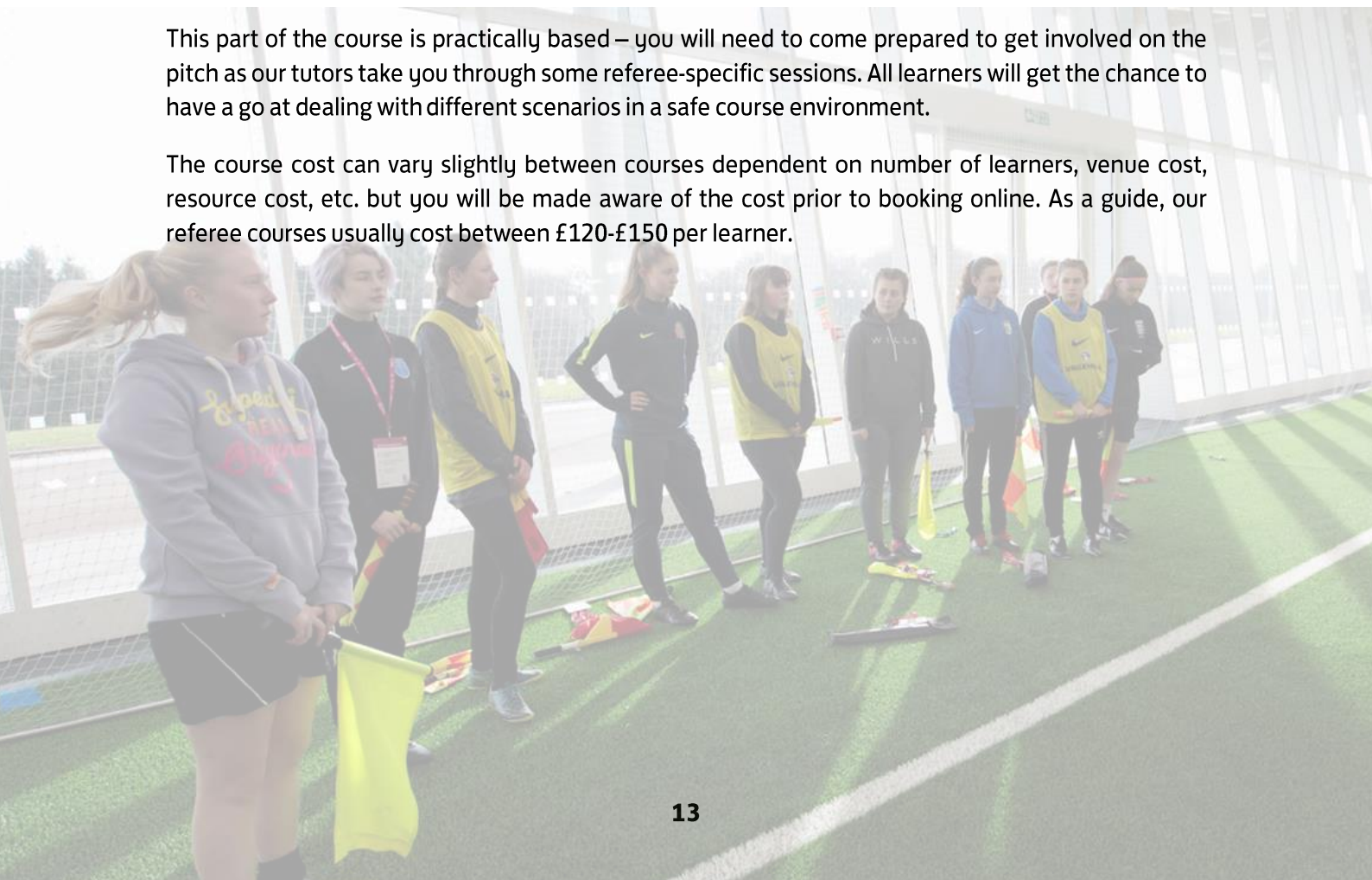
## Course Format

The practical course is made up of around 12 hours of learning and includes the following topics:



This part of the course is practically based – you will need to come prepared to get involved on the pitch as our tutors take you through some referee-specific sessions. All learners will get the chance to have a go at dealing with different scenarios in a safe course environment.

The course cost can vary slightly between courses dependent on number of learners, venue cost, resource cost, etc. but you will be made aware of the cost prior to booking online. As a guide, our referee courses usually cost between £120-£150 per learner.



## Laws of the Game

As a referee, you are required to know the Laws of the Game. Only you can make sure that you keep up to date with the latest Law Changes and we expect you to do this on a regular basis.

The International Football Association Board (IFAB) have created a really useful App that you can download on your phone or tablet by clicking [here](#).


We recommend that all match officials download the App so that they can easily access the Laws of the Game.

We aim to regularly update referees on any changes and to offer relevant training and development opportunities to enhance your knowledge on the Laws of the Game.

As a referee, you are paid to provide a service and as a result are expected to know the Laws of the Game. Therefore, you are expected to read the Laws thoroughly whilst training to become a referee.







## Your First Matches

After you have completed the practical course sessions, you then need to go out and referee at least 5 matches to finish your qualification.

Trainee referees are paid the same match fee as a qualified referee.

You are appointed to fixtures by a League Referee Appointment Secretary (LRAS) and we will provide you with details of these people during your Referee Course.

We recommend that your first matches are in Youth Football. However, if you are aged 16 or over and only wish to referee Adult Football, that can also be arranged.

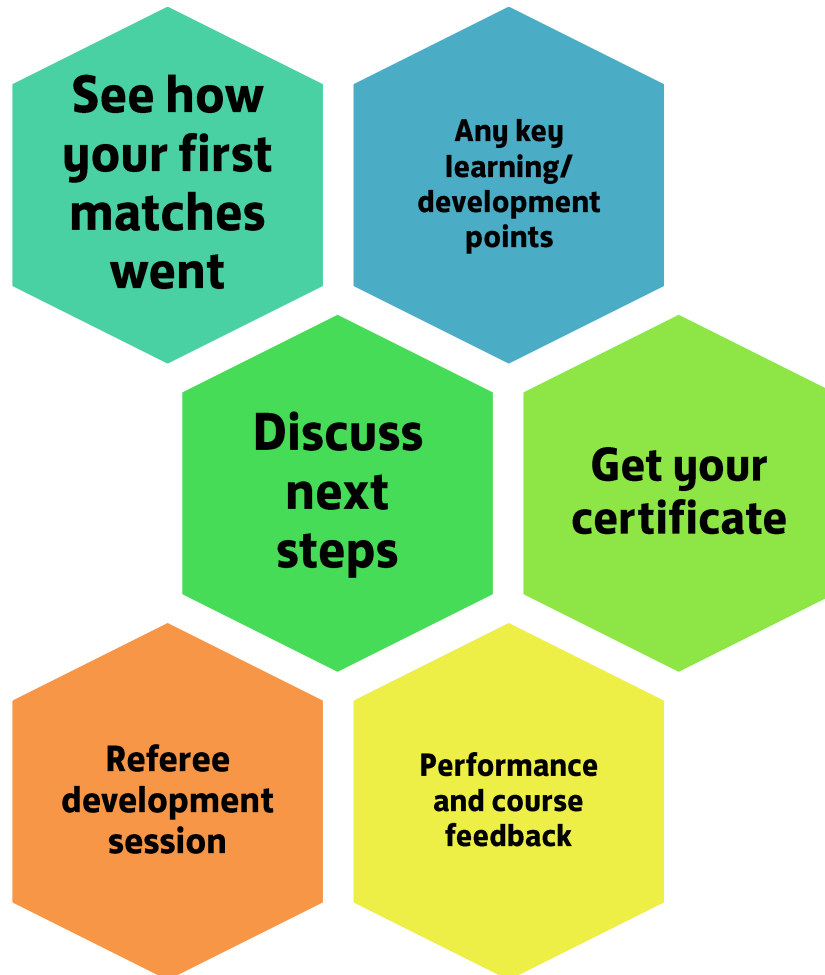
Mentors are offered to support trainee referees in their first matches. This is a person you can talk to before/after matches and will help you in the early stages of your career. A mentor might also be able to come out and watch you occasionally.

After each match you referee, both clubs are required to submit a referee mark and any feedback to the competition organisers. We will contact you with any relevant feedback to help your ongoing development.

## Call-back Event

After you have refereed your first 5 matches, we will invite you to a call-back event.

The purpose of the call-back event is as follows:



After this session, you will officially become a fully qualified referee! If you are aged 14 or 15, you will become a Level Y (Youth) Referee. If you are aged 16 or over, you will become a Level 7 Referee.

Once you are fully qualified, we aim to offer a programme of Referee Development during each season that you will be invited to take part in.



## Contact Us

Worcestershire FA and Herefordshire FA have a dedicated team of staff to support match officials.

If you have any questions about becoming a referee, or something that is not included in this booklet, please email your County FA.

Email Worcestershire FA: [referees@worcestershirefa.com](mailto:referees@worcestershirefa.com)

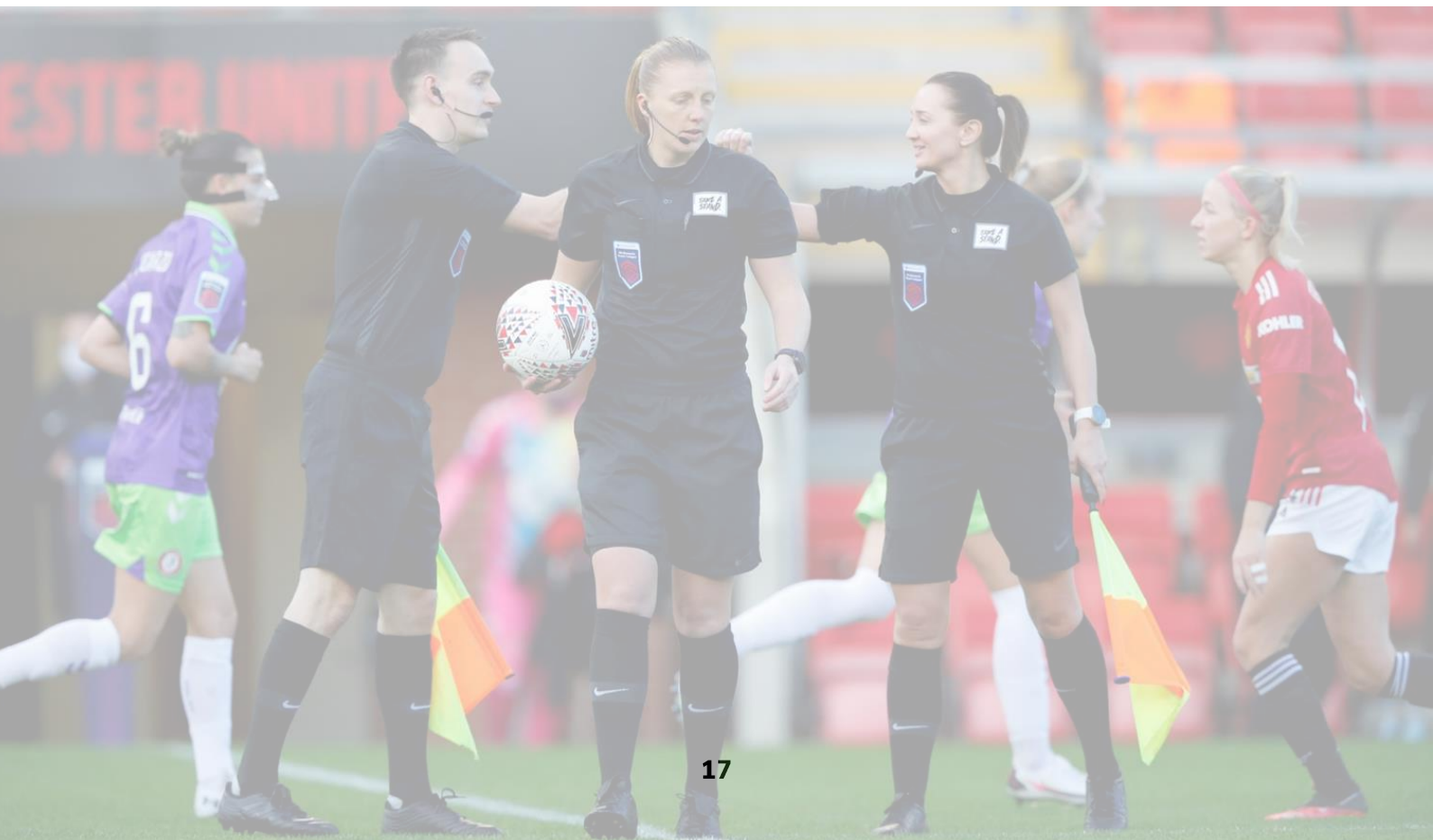
Email Herefordshire FA: [referees@herefordshirefa.com](mailto:referees@herefordshirefa.com)

Our Referee Development Manager is Ollie Williams who can be contacted as follows:

Email: [ollie.williams@worcestershirefa.com](mailto:ollie.williams@worcestershirefa.com)

Office: 01905 827137 ext.208

**We look forward to hearing from you and helping you to become a qualified referee!**







Worcestershire FA | County Sports Ground | Claines Lane | Worcester | WR3 7SS | [website](#)  
Herefordshire FA | County Ground | Widemarsh Common | Hereford | HR4 9NA | [website](#)