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# THE FA HANDBOOK 2019/2020

Version: 1.0



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## PARTS

### REFEREES



# REFEREES

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# REFEREES

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## PREAMBLE

Pursuant to The Football Association Rule J1(d), the Council is authorised to make regulations with reference to Match Officials as they deem expedient. These 'Regulations for the Registration and Control of Referees' (the "Regulations") are the regulations made under that Rule.

Affiliated Associations are responsible for the administration of Referees registered with The Association who reside in their area as determined by The Association. Service Associations have administrative responsibility for Referees who are serving members of the Armed Forces.

Affiliated Associations shall appoint a Referees' Committee to carry out its' functions under these Regulations.

These regulations fully embrace The Association's Equality Policy, Safeguarding Children Policy and Regulations and Safeguarding Adults at Risk Regulations.

For the purpose of these Regulations the terms used will be defined as follows:

**Administer** - to carry out the administrative procedures relating to the registration and control of Referees as required or determined by The Association from time to time.

**Affiliated Association** - a County Football Association or Service Association.

**Annual Review** - the review by a Competition of its List of Match Officials entitled to be appointed for a match in that Competition, to establish the suitability of each Referee to continue to be eligible to be retained on that List. This will take place between the last day of the playing season and the 31st July each year. Such a review will take into consideration the Referee's administration, fitness, conduct and performance on the field of play as defined in these Regulations, as modified by any written instructions to a Competition from the Association from time to time. The Competition must provide reasons for the removal of a Match Official from their List to the Parent Association of the Match Official.

**Club Mark** - a numerical indication of a Referee's performance on the field of play, reported by competing Clubs after a match, on a scale defined by The Association.

**Contributory Leagues** - those nominated divisions, within specific Leagues as determined and considered by The Association, suitable for Level 3 Referees.

**County Referee** - a Referee who has demonstrated to the satisfaction of The Association, Affiliated Association or Service Association, as required by these Regulations, the ability to officiate at Level 6 and above.

**Examine** - to supervise, in written and/or other form of examination, Trainee Referee candidates to the requirements and standards determined by The Association from time to time.

**FA Basic Referee Course** (previously referred to as The Basic Referee Training Course) - a course of instruction for 11-a-side football as determined by The Association leading to the examination of Referee candidates.

**FIFA List** - those Referees and Assistant Referees, nominated by The Association and selected by FIFA, eligible for appointment to international matches.

**Futsal** - the only form of small sided football approved by FIFA.

**Futsal Observer** - those individuals authorised by The Association to produce Observer reports at levels determined by The Association in relation to futsal.

**Junior County Referee** - a Referee who has completed successfully the Basic Referee Training Course, having reached the age of 16 years.

**League** - a Competition sanctioned under relevant Regulations by The Association or an Affiliated Association.

**Marking Season** - except as otherwise determined by The Association, the marking season for promotion/retention shall be from the 1st July until the last day of April in the following year.

National List - those Referees selected by The Association, eligible for appointment to games in the Premier League, EFL and other matches as determined from time to time.

Observer report - written appraisal of a Referee's performance on the field of play, carried out by an Observer, or a Futsal Observer, on behalf of The Association, Affiliated Association or competition and submitted to the appropriate body.

Observers - those individuals authorised by The Association to produce out Observer reports at levels determined by The Association.

Panel List - those Referees selected by The Association, eligible for appointment to games within specific Panel Leagues as determined by The Association, suitable for Level 2 Referees.

Parent Association - the Affiliated Association within whose boundaries a referee resides (except for Service referees and the Amateur Football Alliance).

Playing Season - that period of the year when The Association permits football to be played.

Referee - a person registered as qualified under these Regulations who may be appointed as a Match Official.

Registration Period - from 1 June in each year, (or the date of successful completion of the Basic Referee Training Course if later) to the following 30 June.

Senior County Referee - a Referee who has demonstrated to the satisfaction of The Association, Affiliated Association or Service Association, as required by these Regulations, the ability to officiate at Level 5 and above.

Service Association - an Affiliated Association having responsibility for the administration of the game as determined by The Association from time to time in or relating to Her Majesty's Regular Forces (the Royal Navy, the Army, the Royal Air Force).

Specialist Assistant Referee - Referees who are permitted by The Association to officiate almost exclusively as Assistant Referees.

Supply League - those nominated divisions, within specific Leagues as determined and considered by The Association, suitable for Level 4 Referees.

The Association - means The Football Association.

Trainee Referee - a Referee candidate who is undergoing the FA Basic Referee Course, will be recognised and classified as a Level T Referee and may be appointed as a Match Official in accordance with these regulations.

Youth Referee - means a registered Referee who is aged 14 or 15.

For the purposes of these Regulations, The Association shall act through the Council, which shall delegate such functions to the Referees' Committee.

## 1. REGISTRATION

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(a) No person shall be appointed as a Match Official in any Match or Competition under the jurisdiction of The Association either directly or indirectly unless registered in accordance with these Regulations.

A Competition may include in its regulations a provision by which a person who is not a registered Match Official may carry out the duties of a Match Official in a specific Match but only in circumstances where a registered Match Official cannot be appointed to or officiate in that Match. In these circumstances the appointed unregistered and/or unqualified Match Official will carry the same powers and duties of an appointed registered Match Official for the purpose of that match.

(b) A Referee must be registered with The Association through the Affiliated Association within the area in which the Referee resides, which will be deemed that referee's Parent Association (or County). The Parent Association for serving members of The Armed Forces is the Affiliated Association of the service in which they serve; such referees may also register as an

Associate Referee with the Affiliated Association in whose area they reside. A Referee will be required to pay the standard national registration fee to be determined annually by The Association. Registration will run from the date of registration until the following 30 June. A Referee may become an Associate Referee with another Affiliated Association but will not be required to pay a further fee.

The Memorandum attached to these regulations details the responsibilities of Affiliated Associations in respect of Referees administered by them.

(c) In cases where the boundaries of Affiliated Associations overlap, the Affiliated Associations concerned must mutually agree responsibility of the training and examination of Trainee Referees. Once the FA Basic Referee Course has been completed, the registration of the Referee must then be transferred to the Affiliated Association of the area in which the Referee resides. A Referee who changes residence from one administrative area to another will be required to be released by the original Association before being registered with their new Association for administrative purposes but will not be required to pay a further registration fee for that season.

(d) Referees shall not be registered with The Association until they are able to satisfy the Affiliated Association of their date of birth. A Trainee Referee must be 14 years of age or older at the time of registration.

(e) A Referee who has failed to register as a Referee with The Association for between two and five seasons shall not be re-registered until they have successfully undertaken and completed the FA Basic Referee Course written examination. The Affiliated Association may then register the Referee at their former Level (up to Senior County Referee) once they are satisfied with his/her competence. A Referee who has not been registered for more than five seasons must attend and successfully complete the FA Basic Referee Course at which point they will be registered as a Junior County Referee.

(f) A Referee's registration may be cancelled or suspended by the Affiliated Association in consultation with The Association where the Referee has not acted in the best interests of the game. The Association may take any action it deems appropriate. Applications for the re-instatement of a Referee who has previously been disqualified under this Regulation must be referred to The Association.

## **2. REFEREE RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND EXAMINATION**

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(a) The Association and Affiliated Associations shall be responsible for the recruitment, training and examination of Referees.

(b) The requirements and standards for Referee training and examination shall be agreed by The Association.

(c) Initial Referee training course fees shall be set by The Association for:

- FA Basic Referee Course
- Futsal
- Small Sided Football
- Mini Soccer
- Disability Football

(d) FA Basic Referee Course - A candidate will undergo training and evaluation, including practical and written assessments as determined by The Association.

(e) All other formats of initial Referee training will be examined at the end of the period of training.

(f) The minimum age a candidate may be presented for initial examination of the FA Basic Referee Course and all other forms of refereeing will be 14 years.

(g) Candidates who do not reach the standard required by The Association in the initial examination may be re-examined at a time appropriate to the needs of the individual as determined by The Association and/or the Affiliated Associations.

### 3. CLASSIFICATION

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(a) On behalf of The Association, each Affiliated Association must classify Referees administered by their Association. The classification period runs from 1 June in each year, or the date of successful completion of the initial examination, to the following 31 May.

As at 1 June in each year every Referee is to be classified as follows;

International FIFA List Referee

Level 1 Select Group or National List Referee

Level 2a Panel Select List Referee

Level 2b Panel List Referee

Level 3 Contributory League Referee

Level 4 Supply League Referee\*

Level 5 Senior County Referee. This classification includes Referees who have served at a higher Level.\*\*

Level 6 County Referee

Level 7 Junior County Referee (16 years of age or over)

Level Y Youth Referee (14 or 15 years of age)

Level D Referee Workforce (an active Referee officiating in 6 or fewer matches a season)

- Tutor
- Observer
- Mentor
- Coach

*\*Any such referee registered with the Guernsey FA, Jersey FA and the Isle of Man FA and officiating on those islands may be classified as Level 4i according to criteria approved by The Association.*

*\*\* Where a Referee has achieved a Level higher than Level 5 and is not retained, the Referee will usually be reclassified as a Level 5 Referee, with the option of further promotion in the normal way or until a status of non-active is declared by the individual.*

The Association may designate Referees as Specialist Assistant Referees who will officiate almost exclusively as Assistant Referees according to guidelines determined from time to time.

A Referee may be registered as one or more of the following specialist categories; such registration may be in addition to a Level 1 to 10 registration.

MSR - Mini Soccer Referee

SS - Small Sided Referee

International - FIFA List Referee

1W - Women's Super League Referee

2W - Women's Championship Referee

3W - Women's National Referee

4W - Women's Regional Referee

YW - Women's Youth Referee

International	- FIFA List Referee
FR1	- Select Group Referee
FR2	- National List Referee
FR3	- Regional Referee
FR4	- County Referee
FRY	- Youth Referee
FRT	- Trainee Referee

(b) When a Referee changes residence from one Affiliated Association to another, the classification Level will be accepted by the Affiliated Association into whose area the Referee has moved.

(c) A Referee moving to England from another country must provide proof of their current Referee status from their National Association. The Association will determine their classification Level.

(d) Trainee Referees undertaking the FA Basic Referee Course must be registered as Level T by the end of module 3. A Level T Referee will automatically become a Level 7 Referee (16 years of age or over) or Level Y (14 or 15 years of age) upon successful completion of the FA Basic Referee Course.

(e) A Level Y Referee will automatically become a Level 7 Referee on reaching the age of 16

(f) FIFA nominations:

Nominations will be approved annually by The Association's Referees' Committee

Priority will be given to developing English officials who show the potential to officiate at future major international finals and tournaments

A FIFA official who ceases to be on the FIFA list will not be considered for future nomination although consideration may be given in exceptional circumstance to an official who resigned from the FIFA list for significant personal reasons

The following factors will be taken into consideration for each potential nominee:

- Domestic performances
- International performances
- Potential to officiate in future major international tournaments with special consideration being given to UEFA EURO Championships and FIFA World Cups
- Fitness and body composition
- Availability
- Ambassadorial qualities
- Organisation and attitude (including feedback, reporting, self-analysis etc...)

Consideration will be given to operational requirements and the strategic planning of the overall makeup of the English FIFA lists

## 4. PROMOTION

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In addition to specific criteria outlined below, candidates for promotion may be required to undertake all or some of the following:

- Physical fitness test(s).
- Laws of the Game test(s).
- Competition rule and regulations test(s).

- Interview.

Account may also be taken of administration and availability.

## Men

(a) Selection and promotion within Levels 4 to International will be determined as follows:

International Level Annual nomination by The Association to FIFA, selected from those eligible Referees as at the date of nomination determined by FIFA.

Level 1 Referees who have been promoted from Level 2A for outstanding ability as determined by The Association.

Level 2A Referees who have been promoted from Level 2B for outstanding ability as determined by The Association.

Level 2B Referees who have been promoted from Level 3 for outstanding ability as determined by The Association.

Level 3 Referees who have been promoted from Level 4 for outstanding ability as determined by The Association.

Level 4 Referees who have been promoted from Level 5 for outstanding ability as determined by The Association following nomination by the Affiliated Association to act as an Assistant Referee on the National Contributory Leagues and as a Referee on a Supply League.

Referees will be required to complete successfully an annual fitness test and other criteria as determined by The Association prior to having their classification confirmed. On initial selection for promotion to a higher Level, Referees may be required to attend an interview to ascertain their suitability against criteria determined by The Association. The Association will determine the acceptable number of matches required for consideration to be selected for Levels 4 and above.

(b) Selection and promotion within Levels 7 to 5 will be determined as follows:

Referees must apply for promotion in writing to their Parent Association no later than 1 August in the season in which promotion is sought. Referees considered for promotion in the preceding season, but not successful, will automatically be included in the promotion scheme for the following season unless they indicate otherwise, in writing, to their Parent Association.

(c) The Parent Association may charge promotion candidates an administration fee (the sum to be determined from time to time by The Association); the administration fee will be refunded to a candidate who completes the promotion process, regardless of whether or not they are promoted.

The responsibility of promoting Referees within Levels 7 to 5 rests with the Referee's Parent Association. All selections must be made by 31 May each year.

## *Levels 5 and 6*

Promotion from Level 6 to Level 5 and Level 7 to Level 6 shall be based on a Referee's practical performance on the field of play and other criteria as follows:

- Observer reports by Observers on a minimum of three games.
- Club marks from competitions over the age of 16 years over a minimum of 20 games (a minimum of 70% must be in open age competitions) officiated in as a Referee in the marking season.
- A Level 6 Referee wishing to be considered for future promotion to Level 4 must complete at least 5 games as an Assistant Referee.
- Attending at least one promotion in-service training event.
- Successful completion of a written examination as determined by The Association.

## *Level 7 - Reclassification from Level Y and T*

(d) At an interim meeting at the end of September County Associations may:

- Identify Level 7 Referees who are showing promise and consider them for accelerated promotion from Level 7 to 5 in one season providing they meet the criteria as determined above
- To gather supporting evidence for this “accelerated promotion” the Affiliated Association should provide the Referee with more challenging matches eg higher division matches in local leagues, games in later rounds of County Competitions. Referees being considered for this promotion would require an additional 20 games and a further three Observer reports at the higher Level of challenge. The Referee must attend an in-service training event for Level 6 to 5 and take the appropriate examination as determined in the criteria set by The Association.
- Review for promotion to Level 6 or 5 a Referee who was ineligible for consideration in the annual promotion meeting because of shortage of games. Referees who meet the criteria may be promoted to Level 6 or Level 5 with effect from 1 December.

(e) A Level 7 Referee must officiate as a Referee in a minimum of 20 games in one registration period before applying for promotion. No Affiliated Association may impose any other qualification periods which cause delayed passage through the promotion pyramid.

## **Women**

(f) Promotion through the Women’s Football pyramid will follow the criteria above, excepting that Referees choosing the women’s pathway cannot automatically cross over to the same Men’s pyramid classification.

As at 1 June in each year Referee is to be classified as follows;

International - FIFA List Referee

Level 1W - Women's Super League Referee

Level 2W - Women's Championship Referee

Level 3W - Women's National Referee

Level 4W - Women's Regional Referee

Level YW - Women's Youth Referee (14 or 15 years of age)

International Level - annual nomination by The Association to FIFA, selected from those eligible Referees as at the date of nomination determined by FIFA. Nominees must operate regularly at the highest level of the national women’s competition.

Level 1W - Referees who have been promoted from Level 2W for outstanding ability as determined by The Association.

Level 2W - Referees who have been promoted from Level 3W for outstanding ability as determined by The Association.

Promotion to Level 1W and Level 2W will be based on a Referee’s practical performance on the field of play by considering the criteria determined as follows:

- Observer reports on a minimum of three games on competitions as determined by The Association.
- Club marks from competitions over the age of 16 years over a minimum of 20 games (a minimum of 70% must be in women’s competitions) officiated in as a Referee in the marking season.
- Attending at least one women's football in-service training event.
- Successful completion of a written examination as determined by The Association.
- Successful completion of a fitness test as determined by The Association.

Referees will be required to complete successfully an annual fitness test and other criteria as determined by The Association prior to having their classification confirmed. On initial selection for promotion to a higher Level, Referees may be required to attend an interview to ascertain

their suitability against criteria determined by The Association. The Association will determine the acceptable number of matches required for consideration to be selected for Levels 2 and above.

### *Level 3W*

Promotion from Level 4W to Level 3W shall be based on a Referee's practical performance on the field of play by considering the criteria determined as follows:

- Observer reports by Observers on a minimum of three games.
- Club marks from competitions over the age of 16 years over a minimum of 20 games (a minimum of 70% must be in women's competitions) officiated in as a Referee in the marking season.
- Completion of at least 5 games as an Assistant Referee.
- Attendance at at least one in-service training event
- Successful completion of a written examination as determined by The Association.

Trainee Referees undertaking the FA Basic Referee Course must be registered as Level 7 by the end of module 3. A Level 7 Referee will automatically become a Level 4W Referee (16 years of age or over) or Level YW (14 or 15 years of age) upon successful completion of the FA Basic Referee Course

A Level YW Referee will automatically become a Level 4W Referee on reaching the age of 16.

## **Futsal**

International FIFA List Referee

Annual nomination by The Association to FIFA, selected from those eligible Futsal Referees as at the date of nomination determined by FIFA. Nominees must operate regularly on the FA Futsal National League competitions.

**FR1** – Officiates all National competitions and Home internationals (if FIFA fitness test has been passed)

Promotion from Level 2 to 1 shall be based on the following criteria:

- Successful completion of a fitness test as determined by The Association.
- Successful completion of a Laws of the Game examination.
- Attendance at in-service training events as determined by The Association.
- Officiate at least 50% of games in the playing season.
- Attain Observer Report average as determined by The Association.

**FR2** – Officiates FA National League 2 and below; and BUCS Premier Leagues and below

Promotion from Level 3 to 2 shall be based on the following criteria:

- Successful completion of a fitness test as determined by The Association.
- Successful completion of a Laws of the Game examination.
- Attendance at in-service training events as determined by The Association.
- Officiate at least 50% of games in the playing season.
- Attain Observer Report average as determined by The Association.

**FR3** – Officiates FA National League 3 and below; and BUCS Tier 2 competitions

Promotion from Level 4 to 3 shall be based on the following criteria:

- Successful completion of a Laws of the Game examination.
- Have a minimum of one year's experience as a Futsal Referee.

**FR4** – Officiates County Futsal leagues and other sanctioned competitions

Reclassification from FRY upon reaching the age of 16.

A FRT referee will automatically become FR4 upon successful completion of the FA Futsal Referee Course.

**FRY** – Officiates FA and County FA Youth competitions

**FRT** – Officiates County Futsal leagues and other sanctioned competitions

A Level 7 Futsal Trainee Referee will automatically become a Level 5 Referee (16 years of age or over) or Level 6 (14 or 15 years of age) upon successful completion of the Futsal Referee Training Course.

## 5. COMPETITIONS

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(a) Affiliated Associations must advise successful candidates of the result of the initial examination, in writing, as well as providing them with details of local competitions on which they are eligible to officiate.

(b) Referees under the age of 16 are only eligible to officiate in competitions where the players' age band is at least one year younger than the age of the Referee. e.g. a 15 year old referee may only referee in competitions where the age banding is 14 or younger. This also applies to those mentioned in regulation 1(a) regarding unregistered and or unqualified Referees.

(c) Referees under the age of 16 must not participate either as a Referee or Assistant Referee in any open age competition. This also applies to those mentioned in regulation 1(a) regarding unregistered and/or unqualified Referees.

(d) The Association will advise Affiliated Associations annually of those Competitions, and the recognised Leagues and divisions, which have been granted Supply League status.

(e) A Competition acting alone may not suspend a Match Official from its List at any time during the playing season (such power resting solely with The Association, Affiliated Association or Service Association as appropriate under Regulation 7 below).

A Competition can only remove a Match Official from its List during the season with the written approval and permission of the Association or the Parent Association of the Match Official.

A Competition may remove a Match Official from its List as part of the Annual Review and must provide reasons for the removal to the Parent Association of the Match Official.

(f) The practical performance on the field of play of Match Officials officiating at Supply Leagues and above shall be appraised and reviewed during and at the end of each marking season.

Competitions at Supply Leagues and above are responsible for informing Referees of their performance at regular intervals during the season.

Competitions shall provide annually to The Association or Affiliated Association as appropriate a List of the Match Officials they have appointed with the Marks and Observer reports obtained in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 12 of these Regulations.

All affiliated football clubs are to mark Referees on a scale of 1-100. An example of the marking Guide and form to be used in Supply Leagues is shown at [Appendix A](#). Similarly an example of a marking guide and form for all other affiliated football is shown at [Appendix B](#).

(g) A Match Official may appeal to the relevant Affiliated or Service Association, or where appropriate The Association, against a decision of a Competition to remove or suspend the Match Official from its List.

(h) A Competition shall not have the power to act in relation to the Registration of a Referee.

Any allegation of behaviour alleged to constitute a breach under Regulation 7 (a) (i) or (ii) below must be reported to The Association, Affiliated Association or Service Association in accordance with Regulation 7 (c) below.

(i) Match Officials' Fees and Expenses are set or approved by Affiliated Associations. Match Officials officiating in competitions at Supply League and above may not receive any other financial reward or incentive based on their on field of play performances from any Affiliated Association or Competition, other than the set fees and expenses.

(j) A Competition may add a new referee to its List for a period not exceeding 6 months, on a probationary basis. By the end of this period of time, the Competition must either confirm the referee as an addition to its List or inform the Parent Association of the Match Official that it will no longer offer them appointments.

## 6. TRAINING

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(a) The Association shall identify the training requirements of Referees at all levels and be responsible for accrediting courses of instruction to meet those requirements.

(b) Referees will be required to attend accredited training at intervals determined by The Association. Only training delivered by accredited or approved Referee tutors will be valid.

(c) Training may be delivered, at the appropriate levels, in conjunction with Affiliated Associations, Match Officials' associations or the Referees' Association by Referee tutors accredited or approved by The Association.

## 7. CONDUCT OF REFEREES

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(a) The Association, Affiliated Association or Service Association, as appropriate, shall have the power to act at any time in relation to the registration of a Referee who has:

- (i) less than proficiently applied the Laws of the Game; or
- (ii) committed a technical irregularity; or
- (iii) proved to have been concerned as an agent for a Club or a Player in the transfer or attempted transfer and/or engagement of a Player; or
- (iv) wilfully mis-stated his/her age, or, date of birth; or
- (v) as a player, violated the Laws of the Game to such a degree that a Regulatory Commission or a Disciplinary Committee subsequently imposes a penalty of suspension from playing; or
- (vi) been found to have committed an act of Misconduct (as defined in and) pursuant to the Rules of The Association or an Affiliated Association or Service Association; or
- (vii) a Football Banning Order imposed on him or her; or
- (viii) has not acted in the best interests of the game.

(b) Only The Association, Affiliated Association or Service Association may act in relation to the Registration of a Referee. Such action may only be taken by its Referees' Committee. Where an alleged breach of Regulation 7(a) is committed by a Referee whilst acting as a Match Official in any capacity (on or off the field) the matter will be dealt with by a Referees' Committee or Commission thereof except where a charge is brought under FA Rule E. A Regulation 7(a) breach can only be subject to a charge under FA Rule E if brought by, or after consultation with, The Association. Where a charge is raised under FA Rule E, and in all other circumstances, the Referee will be dealt with by a Disciplinary or Regulatory Commission as any other Participant.

(c) Any behaviour alleged to constitute a breach under 7(a) (i) or (ii) above must have been notified to, or otherwise come to the attention of The Association, Affiliated Association or Service Association within 14 days of the relevant incident(s) for such to be acted upon under

7(a).

(d) A technical irregularity under 7 (a)(ii) above shall be any failure by a Referee to meet any requirement imposed on, or notified to, a Referee by The Association, Affiliated or Service Association as appropriate from time to time.

A “technical irregularity” includes, but is not in any way limited to, any failure to comply with administrative requirements imposed on a Referee such as the requirements to file reports, answer correspondence, attend match venues or disciplinary or regulatory hearings at a particular time, etc or any breach of Regulation 10 or 13.

(e) Where a Referee is alleged to have breached 7(a) (i) – (viii) above, the Referees’ Committee shall advise the Referee, in writing, of the relevant allegation(s) and supporting facts and state that the matter will be considered by the Committee or a duly appointed Commission thereof.

The Referee shall respond within 14 days and may either:

- (i) deny the allegation(s), setting out a statement of his case; or
- (ii) request a personal hearing, in which case a fee of £25 must accompany the request; or
- (iii) admit the allegation(s). A Referee who admits the allegation(s) may set out any submissions which he wishes the Referees’ Committee to consider when considering what, if any, action to take. The Referee may also request a personal hearing as above.

In considering any allegation at a personal hearing, a Referees’ Committee or Commission thereof, may adopt such procedures as it considers appropriate and expedient for the determination of the matter brought before it; and shall not be bound by any enactment of rule or law relating to the admissibility of evidence in proceedings before a court of law.

#### *Guide to Procedures at Personal Hearings*

The following may be used as a guide to the procedures to be followed at a personal hearing, unless the Referees’ Committee or Commission consider it appropriate to amend them:

- (a) The allegation(s) will be read out to the Referee, who will be asked if the allegation(s) are admitted or denied.
- (b) Evidence in support of the allegation(s) to be called.
- (c) Evidence in response to the allegation(s) to be submitted by the Referee, who may, with the permission of the Referees’ Committee or Commission, be accompanied by a representative. (Any such representative shall not be permitted to give evidence as a witness).
- (d) The Referees’ Committee or Commission and the Referee (as appropriate) shall be entitled to ask questions of any witness giving evidence in support of the allegation(s). The Referees’ Committee or Commission shall be entitled to ask questions of the Referee, who may give evidence in defence of the allegation(s).

The Referees’ Committee or Commission may draw such inferences as it considers appropriate from the failure of the Referee to give evidence or answer a question.

(e) In the event of evidence submitted in answer to the allegation(s) disclosing a point which the Referees’ Committee or Commission considers was not covered in the evidence of, or not put to, any witness in support of the allegation(s), the Referees’ Committee or Commission may recall and ask questions of such witness. The Referee or relevant representative may also ask questions.

(f) After the evidence has been completed to the satisfaction of the Referees’ Committee or Commission, the Referee or representative shall be entitled to make submissions based upon the evidence, but this may not include reference to facts not disclosed in the evidence presented to the Referees’ Committee or Commission. At the conclusion of the submissions all persons shall withdraw whilst the Referees’ Committee or Commission considers the evidence and submissions presented to it and determines whether the allegation(s) has been proved or not. After reaching a decision, the Referees’ Committee or Commission shall

recall the Referee and any representative, and announce whether the allegation(s) have proved or not proved. The decision shall be subsequently confirmed in writing. As an alternative the Referees' Committee or Commission may, where it considers it appropriate, not announce its decision at the meeting but inform the Referee that such a decision will be communicated in writing.

(g) Where the Referees' Committee or Commission find the allegation(s) proved, it shall have the power to act in relation to the Registration of the Referee as it considers appropriate. This may include, but is not limited to, censure, a period of remedial training, suspension or removal of Registration.

(h) A Referee may be dealt with in the normal course as a participant for any alleged Misconduct (i.e. by a Regulatory Commission or another Disciplinary Commission as appropriate), in addition to having issues relating to the Registration as a Referee considered by The Association, Affiliated Association or Service Association through its Referees' Committee in relation to the same behaviour. In such cases, a charge of Misconduct shall be considered before any matter relating to the issue of Registration is dealt with by the Referees' Committee under Regulation 7 (a)(vi).

Action in respect of the Registration of Match Officials appointed to Competitions of The Association and other Competitions including Contributory League Level and above in the Order of Precedence (Section 9) will be considered by the appropriate committee of The Association.

(i) In circumstances where it is considered appropriate, the Referees' Committee may order that the Registration of a Referee be suspended with immediate effect, pending determination of a charge of Misconduct or pending the determination of a charge under 7(a)(i) or (ii) above and in the latter case the reason for such suspension is to be notified to the Referee in writing and reported to the Commission hearing any resultant charge.

## **8. APPEALS AGAINST DECISIONS OF A REFEREES' COMMITTEE OR COMMISSION THEREOF**

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(a) Where The Association or an Affiliated or Service Association, through its Referees' Committee, makes an order in relation to the registration or classification of a Referee there shall be a right of appeal by the Referee against the decision.

Where the order is made under Regulation 7, the appeal procedure is outlined below. In all other cases the appeal shall follow the procedure determined by the appropriate body i.e. The Association, Affiliated Association or appointing authority.

(b) (i) Notice of an appeal against a decision of a Referees' Committee or Commission thereof made under Regulation 7 must be lodged with The Association or appropriate Affiliated Association within 14 days of notification of the decision appealed against, accompanied by a fee as determined by The Association.

(ii) An Appeal shall be considered by an "Appeals Panel" comprising Members of the Council of The Association or appropriate Affiliated Association established specifically to deal with appeals from decisions under Regulation 7, none of whom shall have been party to the original decision. A decision of the Appeals Panel shall be final and binding.

(iii) The Notice of Appeal must:

- (1) identify the specific decision(s) being appealed
- (2) set out the grounds of appeal; and
- (3) set out a statement of the facts upon which the appeal is based.

(iv) The grounds of appeal shall be that the body whose decision is appealed against:

- (1) misinterpreted or failed to comply with any rules or regulations relevant to its decision; and/or
- (2) came to a decision to which no reasonable such body could have arrived at; and/or

(3) made an order, which is excessive.

(v) The Appeals Panel may adopt such procedures as it considers appropriate and expedient for the just determination of an appeal brought before it, and shall not be bound by any enactment or rule of law relating to the admissibility of evidence in proceedings before a court of law.

The following is set out as a guide to the conduct of a hearing before the Appeals Panel:

- (1) The Appellant to address the Appeals Panel, summarising its case;
- (2) The Respondent to address the Appeals Panel, summarising its case;
- (3) The Appeals Panel may put questions to the parties at any stage;
- (4) The Respondent to make closing submissions;
- (5) The Appellant to make closing submissions;
- (6) The Appellant and the Respondent to withdraw whilst the Appeals Panel considers the submissions and determines the matter.
- (7) The Appellant and the Respondent to be recalled and the decision and any orders consequential to it announced to both parties. Alternatively, where it considers it appropriate, the Appeals Panel may decide not to announce its decision, but make it known at a later date, in writing. In any event, the Appeals Panel shall publicise a written statement of its decision (see 8(b)(ix) below).

(vi) The Appeals Panel shall proceed in the absence of any party, unless it is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for the failure of the party to attend, and shall do so in such manner as it considers appropriate.

(vii) A decision of the Appeals Panel shall be final and binding and there shall be no right of further challenge.

(viii) The Appeals Panel shall have power to:

- (1) allow or dismiss the appeal; or
- (2) remit the matter for re-hearing by the Referees' Committee; or
- (3) exercise any power which the body against whose decision the appeal was made could have exercised; or
- (4) make any further or other order considered appropriate, either generally, or for the purpose of giving effect to its decision. Any fee may be returned or forfeited, in whole or in part, at the discretion of the Appeals Panel, who shall also have the power to determine by whom the costs of the appeal shall be borne.

(ix) As soon as practicable after the hearing, the Appeals Panel shall publish a written statement of its decision, which shall state:

- (1) the names of the parties, the decision(s) appealed against and the grounds of appeal;
- (2) whether or not the appeal is allowed; and
- (3) the order(s) of the Appeals Panel.

The written statement shall be signed and dated by the chairman of the Appeals Panel and be the conclusive record of the decision.

## 9. APPOINTMENTS

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(a) Registered Referees shall not officiate in any Competition, which is not sanctioned, or match in which unaffiliated clubs compete.

(b) The "Order of Precedence" of appointments, whether as a Referee or Assistant Referee shall be as follows:

- (1) The FA Challenge Cup Competition and The FA Women's Challenge Cup Competition (Fourth Round Proper onwards);
- (2) The Premier League;
- (3) EFL;
- (4) The FA Women's Super League and The FA Women's League Cup;
- (5) The FA Challenge Trophy Competition;
- (6) The FA Challenge Vase Competition;
- (7) Affiliated Association Cup Competitions\*
- (8) The Panel Leagues and The FA Women's Championship;
- (9) The FA Youth, FA County Youth Challenge Cup Competitions and The FA Women's Challenge Cup (prior to Fourth Round Proper).
- (10) Contributory Leagues (recognised divisions only), National League Systems Cup and FA Sunday Cup
- (11) Supply Leagues (marking divisions only)
- (12) Non Supply League divisions operating at Step 6 in the National League System
- (13) Senior County Leagues
- (14) Intermediate County League
- (15) Women's National League and Cup
- (16) Women's Regional League and Cup
- (17) County Junior Leagues
- (18) County Women's Leagues and Cup
- (19) All other competitions, including Youth Competitions

\*Affiliated Association appointments only take precedence over Panel Leagues, The FA Youth and FA County Youth Challenge Cup Competitions, Contributory League and Supply League appointments. If the appointment is in the Affiliated Association's nominated Senior Cup Competition or in the Semi-final and/or Final of any other Affiliated Association Competition whether the appointment is as a Referee or an Assistant Referee.

\*\*Fourth Officials where appointed do not form part of the Order of Precedence and usually do not take precedence over an active appointment.

(c) Referees must attend personal hearings when required to do so. At Contributory Level or above Match Officials' appointments already received, take precedence over requests to attend personal hearings. On receipt of notification of a personal hearing Referees must close the date with all appropriate competitions.

(d) Where release from an appointment is required to enable a Referee to take a more senior appointment at least four days' notice must be given to the relevant Affiliated Association or competition by the association or competition requesting the release. Where fewer than four days' notice is given, The Association or Competition must obtain permission from the Affiliated Association or Competition for the Referee to be released.

(e) Once The Association or an Affiliated Association has appointed a Match Official if, subsequently, the match is postponed, abandoned or results in a draw and the rearranged fixture is then scheduled to take place less than four complete days from the date of the original match, The Association or Affiliated Association appointment will take priority over any other appointment already accepted by the Referee from a competition lower in the order of precedence, unless The Association or Affiliated Association waive their right to the services of the match official so appointed.

- (f) “Fourth Officials” are appointed to certain rounds of FA Competitions, Premier League and EFL matches and associated Competitions, and the Panel Competitions. The duties and responsibilities of the Fourth Official are detailed in the Laws of the Game and in the Competition Rules. Such appointments form part of the Order of Precedence within the Competitions listed above.
- (g) Reserve Assistant Referees may only be appointed in FA, Premier League and EFL Competitions, with the approval of The Association. They have no duties other than to replace an official who is unable to officiate.
- (h) With the exception of appointments made by The Association, Referees must obtain permission from their Parent Association (or County Association), or The Association in order to officiate in matches outside the United Kingdom.

## 10. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

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A Referee shall at all times act impartially. Where a Referee believes that there is a material interest conflicting with the duties and obligations of a Match Official and any appointment, then the Referee shall decline to act or officiate and declare it to the appointing authority (whose decision in relation to any dispute or difference in such matters shall be final and binding).

## 11. REFEREES’ UNIFORMS

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- (a)
- (i) All Match Officials in Competitions under the jurisdiction of The Association and Affiliated Associations must wear uniforms comprising a plain shirt which shall be almost entirely black with a white or black collar and black shorts. Socks will be black; the sock top will be black, white or the colour of the shirt or its collar. Affiliated Associations may give permission for Referees to wear non-black shirts in a Competition which the Affiliated Association organises and/or sanctions. The shirt(s) must be almost entirely of a single colour. Where a Competition appoints neutral assistant referees, only one non-black coloured shirt is permitted; the colour must be designated and competition rules must ensure that the match officials can wear black or the designated colour without clashing with the Players.
  - (ii) Referees’ uniforms must not carry any form of advertising.
- (b) Headgear may be worn in extreme weather conditions. It must be plain black and not restrict the vision of the Match Official.
- (c) The following Competitions may be exempt from (a) above, on application to The Association subject to the conditions below:
- The FA Women’s Super League and The FA Women’s Championship
  - The Premier League
  - EFL
  - Competitions of Panel and Contributory League Status
- Application must be submitted annually prior to 1 May for the following season. Approval will be considered only for shirts that are almost entirely of a single colour and where the competition confirms to The Association that all Match Officials will be provided with shirts, shorts and socks free of charge.
- (d) Match Officials officiating in FA Competition matches are required to wear the FIFA or Football Association badge (where awarded) or the badge of their Affiliated Association. No other competition badge should be worn.

(e) Advertising and branding on Match Officials' uniforms (where permitted in accordance with sub-paragraph 11(c) above) must be in accordance with The Association's Regulations relating to advertising on the clothing of Players, Club Officials and Match Officials.

## 12. RETURNS

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(a) Annually, in accordance with the instructions of The Association issued from time to time, competitions shall provide to The Association or appropriate Affiliated Association lists of Match Officials used. Such lists shall include the marks awarded by clubs, and Observer reports where appropriate, during the specified period, together with any other information required.

(b) Not later than the date decided by The Association, Affiliated Associations shall nominate suitable Referees for consideration by The Association for selection to the Contributory League Assistant Referees List.

(c) Competitions that are required to administer fitness tests must submit the results to The Association and the Referee's Parent Affiliated Association.

## 13. CODES OF CONDUCT

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Match Officials shall be bound by Codes of Conduct such as are instructed by The Association from time to time ([Appendix C](#)).

## 14. REPORTING MISCONDUCT

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(a) Referees must submit full details on all matters of misconduct, sendings off and cautions only to the appropriate Association or Affiliated Association responsible for administering misconduct and not to any other organisation or Competition.

(b) Referees may include on the normal Competition match report forms the names and club details of those personnel reported for misconduct but must not include any details of the incident and for all on-field offences they can only report the name of the player/players cautioned/sent off, the club, the time of offence and the relevant FA offence code.

(c) Should any match official be approached to supply any details, they should immediately report the matter to the Association or Affiliated Association.

## APPENDIX C

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