



Professional Youth Cup Competition Rules

2023/24

1. NAME OF COMPETITION

The Trophy shall be called “The Lancashire Football Association Professional Youth Cup”.

2. CUP OWNERSHIP

- a) The Professional Youth Cup is the property of the Lancashire Football Association (The Association). The Cup shall be competed for annually unless otherwise specified by the Council. When the winning Club shall have been ascertained, the Association shall present the Cup to such Club, upon receipt of a document to the following effect and subscribed by three persons whose names shall be previously submitted to and approved by The Committee.

“We AB, CD, and EF members of the () Club and representing the () Club, which has now been declared to have won the Lancashire Football Association (insert competition name) and the same having been delivered to us by the said Association, do hereby on behalf of the said Club, and individually and collectively engage to return the Cup to the Secretary of the Association, on or before 28th January of the next calendar year, in good order and condition and that should the said Cup be destroyed or damaged by fire or by other cause, or lost whilst under our care, we agree to refund the Association the amount of its original value or the cost of thorough repair”

- b) It shall be clean and undamaged in condition and failure to return by the required date and in a good clean condition will result in a fine of £50.

3. MEDALS

- (a) The Association shall present 20 souvenir medals to both competing teams.
- (b) Medals will also be presented to the Match Officials.
- (c) When a Player or Club Official taking part is dismissed or ordered to leave the field of play for misconduct, the medal to which they may be entitled may be withheld at the discretion of the Competitions Committee (The Committee).

4. CONTROL OF THE COMPETITION

- (a) The ownership, organisation, control and management of the Competition and any rights associated with it of any nature shall be vested entirely and exclusively in the Association.
- (b) The Committee shall have the authority to make, delete, amend the rules for the organisation, control and management of the Competition, as it sees fit.
- (c) All Clubs completing in the Competition shall be bound by and comply with the Competition rules.

- (d) The Committee shall have the power to exercise all powers in relation to the Competition and to make decisions on all matters arising out of or in relation to the organisation, control, and management of the Competition (including eligibility and qualification) which shall be final and binding on all participants in the Competition. In relation to these and any other matters, not specifically mentioned in the Competition Rules, The Committee shall have the power to take such action and make such decisions, orders, rulings and impose such penalties as it deems necessary. Following such procedures as it considers appropriate, decisions shall be final and binding on all participants, subject to Rule 20. In considering such matters, The Committee shall not be bound by any enactment or Rule of Law relating to the admissibility of evidence in proceeding before a Court of Law.
- (e) The Committee shall have the power to appoint a Sub-Committee, such as a Football Advisory Board (FAB) to exercise the powers of The Committee to expedite decisions to ensure the progress of the Competition.
- (f) Subject to applicable FIFA, UEFA, and FA rules or regulations, Clubs may enter into commercial arrangements in relation to matches in the Competition, which do not in any way conflict with the commercial contracts and duties of Clubs. Clubs must indemnify the Association and its Officers, Directors, employees, and authorised representatives from and against any claims for direct or consequential loss or damage by any party to a commercial contract caused or otherwise attributable to any failure or breach by the Club to fully perform or observe to obligations and responsibilities under these provisions.

5. ELIGIBLE CLUBS

- (a) Participation in the Competition shall be open to Clubs whose First Affiliation is to the Association, those from other Counties who have entered their own Cup in the first instance and who are eligible and approved by the Committee.
- (b) The Committee may reject the application of any Club to participate in the Competition at its entire discretion.
- (c) A Club which has been allowed to participate in the Competition may not assign or otherwise transfer the ability/right to participate without the prior written approval of the Committee. A request for transfer must be in writing, setting out the details of the intended transferee and the reason for the transfer. The decision whether to approve a transfer shall be made by the Committee in its absolute discretion. A transfer shall be granted only on condition that the transferee shall be treated for the purposes of these Competition Rules and the Rules of The Association as being the same entity as the transferor.
- (d) If a Club is removed from the League in which it is playing, once it has been accepted into the Competition, The Committee has the power to remove the Club from the Competition.
- (e) The Professional Youth Cup shall be competed for annually by first affiliated Full Members or Associate Members of the Lancashire Football Association, who are members of the Premier League, English Football League and are approved by the Committee.

6. ENTRY DATE AND FEES

- (a) Clubs wishing to participate in the Competition must do so by completing Pro Youth cup entry at the point of affiliation, no later than close of play on 1st August each season.
- (b) Competing Clubs shall pay the required entrance fee prior to 1st of August deadline.

7. ORGANISATION OF THE COMPETITION

The competition shall be played on a Knock-Out basis.

8. DRAW FOR ROUNDS

- (a) The Teams shall be drawn in individual ties.
- (b) The winner of each tie will proceed to the next round until two Clubs remain to play the Final Tie.
- (c) The Association will communicate details of each tie to be played throughout the Competition.
- (d) They will also indicate the closing date for each round, which must be observed.
- (e) In each tie, the game shall be played on the ground of the Club first drawn, unless otherwise mutually arranged, and the consent of The Committee obtained, subject as hereafter provided.
- (f) Any Club refusing or failing to play the Club against which it has been drawn upon the date fixed for the tie to be played shall, unless otherwise decided by The Committee be adjudged to have lost the match and fined £50.
- (g) Within seven days following the notification by The Association of the draw for each round, the Club first drawn must communicate with the opponent Club to notify the location of the ground and other match details and notify The Association of its receipt. Failure to comply with this requirement shall incur a fine of £10.

9. VENUE FOR MATCHES

- (a) The Club drawn first shall be entitled to have the match played on its home ground, providing it meets the requirements of the Competition Rules. Such match shall be played on that ground unless the consent of the Committee has been obtained to any change of venue.
- (b) No monetary or other consideration shall be asked for, offered, or paid in connection with negotiations for change of venue.
- (c) Matches must not be played on a neutral ground without the consent of the Committee.
- (d) The Committee shall have power to order that any match be played on an alternative ground, or date if it is considered appropriate and necessary.
- (e) No other activity must be played on the day of the match on the same pitch to be used for the match unless otherwise authorised by the Competition committee

- (f) All matches shall be played on either a natural grass pitch, or a 3G surface which is listed on the FA approved pitch register (<http://goo.gl/4XIDLd>).
- (g) If a 3G pitch is to be used, they must be booked for a minimum of the match length plus 1 hour. This will allow time for warmups/cool downs and penalties should the match result in a tie.
- (h) The dimensions of the pitch shall be in accordance with FA regulations and the length of the touchline must be greater than the length of the goal line.
- (i) Separate toilets must be provided for changing rooms used by the Players and Match Officials, which are not available for spectator use.
- (j) Each Club should provide, if possible, separate areas adjacent to the pitch for the sole use of Team Officials, Medical Staff and Substitutes. Such designated areas shall have direct access to the pitch, be located as near as possible equidistant from the halfway line and be under cover if possible. It is recommended that a spectator viewing area be designated, which is separated from the pitch using either ropes or barriers.
- (k) Clubs failing to provide any of the above facilities may be removed from the Competition and fined £50.
- (l) If the ground of the home Club is considered unsuitable for the tie, having regard to all the circumstances, the opposing Club may appeal to the Association within 3 days of the receipt of the draw. Such appeal to be accompanied by a fee of £25, which may be forfeited if the appeal is not sustained. The Committee will make its decision, which shall be binding to both parties.
- (m) The Home Club shall supply suitable match balls.
- (n) Each Club must take every precaution to keep its pitch in a good playing condition
Where there is doubt relating to the fitness of the pitch for play, then a qualified Referee must be brought in to decide on the fitness of the ground, no later than 2 hours before the advertised kick-off time. Where there is doubt, Clubs are asked to arrange an early inspection to prevent unnecessary travel.
- (o) Any Club refusing or failing to play the against the Club which it has been drawn shall, unless otherwise decided by The Committee will be adjudged to have lost the match and will be fined £50.
- (p) The Club first drawn must communicate with the opposing Club to notify the location of the ground and other match details and notify The Association of its receipt within seven days of the advertised date of the tie. Failure to comply with this rule will result in a fine of £10 being Imposed.

10. CLUB COLOURS

- (h) Where the colours (shirts, shorts, or socks) of the two competing Clubs are similar the Away Club must change unless alternative arrangements are mutually agreed by the competing Clubs.
- (i) Team colours must not clash with the outfit worn by the Match Officials. In the event of Clubs not agreeing the colours to be worn by their respective teams The Committee shall decide.

- (j) Goalkeepers must wear colours, which distinguish them from other players and Match Officials. In any Semi-Final or Final the first named Club is classed as Home.
- (k) Player's shirts must be clearly numbered on the back and be in accordance with the list handed to the Referee before any tie. There must be no change of numbers during the match except on a change of Goalkeeper or where a Player has been required by the Referee to change his shirt because of a blood injury. The Captain shall wear a distinguishing armband to indicate his status.
- (l) Advertising may be worn on Player's clothing in accordance with the Rules of The Football Association.

11. DURATION OF MATCHES

- (a) The duration of each match shall be 90 minutes with two equal halves of 45 minutes.
- (b) In the event of the score being level after 90 minutes then extra time will NOT be played. However, the winners of the tie will be decided by the takings of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with the recommendations of the International Board, under the direction of The Committee.
- (c) The half- time interval shall not exceed 15 minutes.
- (d) Any Club being reported for a late kick off will be dealt with by The Committee. If a Club is found guilty of such misconduct, they will be fined a minimum of £10 and up to a maximum of £25 as determined by The Committee.

12. PROVISIONS FOR THE PLAYING OF MATCHES

- (a) If a match is postponed or abandoned before the completion of 90 minutes and neither Club is at fault, it must be played on the same ground by mutual consent.
- (b) In an event of a match being postponed due to the unplayable condition of the ground, it will be replayed on the ground on which it should originally have been played, unless mutually agreed and approved by The Committee.
- (c) If a game is abandoned and the designated time has not been played, the game must be replayed on the ground of the Club originally drawn at home if neither of the competing teams were at fault.
- (d) Matches abandoned through the fault of the Clubs shall be dealt with by The Committee.
- (e) The Committee shall have the power to vary these arrangements if it is deemed necessary.

13. REPORTING RESULTS

- (a) Results must be reported via email or FA Fulltime to Andrea.gratton@lancashirefa.com within 12 hours of the completion of the tie.
- (b) Failure to comply with this rule may result in £20 fine being imposed.

- (c) Team sheets listing players who played in the match and goal scorers must be submitted within 2 working days to the Association or email to Andrea.gratton@lancashirefa.com
- (d) Failure to forward these details will incur a fine of £20.

14. PROVISION FOR STAGING THE FINAL

- (a) The Final tie will be held at Lancashire FA.
- (b) If the match has resulted in a draw after 90 minutes the winner shall be determined by the taking of penalty kicks in accordance with the procedure adopted by the International Football Association Board.
- (c) If the Final is postponed or abandoned, it shall be played as directed by The Committee.
- (d) At least seven days prior the Final Tie, the Secretaries of both competing Clubs must forward to the Association Secretary a list of players from which the Team will be selected, and the colours in which they play.
- (e) Failure to do so will result in a £15 fine being imposed.
- (f) The ball used in the Final will be provided by the Association and must be returned to the Secretary of the Association or his representative.
- (g) If two Clubs in the Final have similar colours, the teams must mutually agree, or both must change.

15. PROVISION FOR WITHDRAWAL FROM THE COMPETITION

- (a) Any Club intending to withdraw from the Competition after the affiliation process will be charged a fine of £50 will be incurred.
- (b) Failure to comply with rule 15 (a) will be dealt with by The Committee who have the power to compel the offending Club to pay any expenses incurred and take any further action as deemed expedient.
- (c) Failure to provide a satisfactory reason for their withdrawal may mean the Club will not be allowed to play in the Competition in the following season.
- (d) The non-participation fee position will also be reviewed.
- (e) In the Semi-Final and Final Tie, any Club failing to play may be adjudged by the Association to have been guilty of serious misconduct and liable to be dealt with by The Committee.

16. PROVISION CONCERNING QUALIFICATION OF PLAYERS

- (a) All issues relating to the qualification of Players interpretation of the rules or other matters in dispute shall be referred to The Committee.
- (b) Players must be under 18 years of age on 31st August in the current season. They may be contract, non-contract or Y.T.S. players.
- (c) The Players shall be duly qualified according to the Rules of the Association.
- (d) Clubs must play their best available team.

- (e) A Player shall not in the same season play for more than one competing Club. Members of each respective Team may be changed during the series of matches.
- (f) A Player must have been registered with his Club prior to playing of any round.
- (g) If the Committee has any doubts regarding the qualification of a player taking part in the Competition, it shall have the power to call upon such player or his Club to prove his eligibility according to these rules.
- (h) If an ineligible player is played in the competition, The Committee may disqualify a Player from the Competition, or order the game to be replayed, or award the tie to the opponents and/or impose such other penalties and decisions as it thinks fit. A fine may also be imposed on the offending Club of £100.
- (i) Trialists or loan Players are permitted to take part in the Competition.
- (j) The names of all Players taking part in any game, including Substitutes and Technical Area occupants must be detailed on the Team sheet and must be signed and returned via email to Andrea.gratton@lancashirefa.com within 4 days of the match-taking place.
- (k) A Club may at its discretion use three Substitute Players at any time in a cup-tie except to replace a player who has been suspended from the game by the Referee after play has commenced. The Substitution can only be made when play is stopped for any reason and the Referee has given permission. The Substitution is completed when the Substitute enters the field of play, from which moment he becomes a Player and the Player whom he is replacing ceases to be a Player.
- (l) A maximum of 5 Substitutes may be nominated and they must be included on the official team sheet handed to the Referee before the match.
- (m) A player who was not eligible for a tie that was postponed, but is then registered in time for the revised date, will be eligible providing that all other criteria is met
- (n) Any Club found to have played an ineligible Player shall be fined up to £100 and expelled from the Competition.

17. DISQUALIFICATION

Any Club or player infringing these Rules shall be liable to be dealt with under the Rules of this Competition, and the Rules of the Association. In addition to any other action or penalty, The Committee shall have the power to disqualify any competing Club, or Player for any competing Club(s), which it determines to have breached the Rules of The Association or the Competition Rules, and the decision of The Committee shall be final and binding

18. PROVISIONS CONCERNING MATCH OFFICIALS

- (a) In all matches the Referee and Assistant Referees shall be appointed by the Association.
- (b) A Fourth Official will be appointed for all Ties.
- (c) In the event of any of the Match Officials failing to arrive or being incapacitated, the two Clubs must agree to a substitute official, providing one is available who is

currently eligible to officiate in a League equivalent to the lowest level of football in which either of the two Teams participate.

- (d) Such appointed Officials shall have the same authority as the original appointed Match Official.
- (e) The fees and expenses paid to all the Officials will be met by the Home Club and will be a match expense.
- (f) Match Officials shall be entitled to the following fees:

<i>Referee</i>	<i>Assistant Referees</i>	<i>4th Official</i>	<i>Travel Expenses</i>
£60	£40	£30	£0.40p Per Mile

- (g) In the event of the match being played on a mid-week afternoon, the Officials are entitled to an additional £25 daytime allowance fee.
- (h) If Officials travel and the game is not played, they shall be entitled to receive half their match fee and all travelling expenses.
- (i) Match Officials shall acknowledge acceptance of appointments for all matches in the Competition to The Association.
- (j) The Home Club **must** confirm all match arrangements with the Match Officials no later than five days prior to the date of the game.
- (k) The duties of the Match Officials shall be as defined in the Laws of the Game.
- (l) Match Officials may wear coloured shirts in this Competition in accordance with the following provisions:
 - i. Black shirts shall be worn wherever possible.
 - ii. There will be no designated colour for the alternative shirt. However, it must not clash with either Team's colours.
 - iii. With Teams unable to wear black or dark colours, when there are instances of a colour clash, the Referee must revert to their black shirt.
 - iv. When Assistant Referees and Fourth Officials are appointed, all the Officials must wear the same-coloured shirt.
 - v. Officials must always wear black shorts and black socks.

19. PROVISIONS CONCERNING PROTESTS.

- (a) All questions relating to the qualifications of Competitors, or issues relating to the interpretation of the Competition Rules shall be referred to The Committee, whose decision shall be final and binding. The Committee shall consider any such matter in such manner and following such procedures as it considers appropriate. The Committee shall not be bound by any enactment or Rule of Law relating to the admissibility of evidence in proceedings before a Court of Law.
- (b) Where a Club wishes to protest that there has been a breach of the Competition Rules by their opponents, such protest must be made in writing and must contain the particulars of the grounds upon which it is made. The protest must be received by The Association, accompanied by a fee of £25, within 4 days of the match to which it relates. The fee shall be forfeited to The Association in the event of the protest

not being sustained. No appeal will be accepted against decisions made (pre, during or post-match) by the Referee.

- (c) The Committee may make such orders and costs as it considers appropriate in relation to any issue or protest referred to it. The Committee may make such orders as it considers appropriate as to the costs incurred by the parties or The Association.
- (d) Any protest relating to ground, goalposts, crossbar, or other appurtenances of the game shall not be entertained by The Committee unless an objection has been lodged by the Referee prior the commencement of the match and not later than one hour before the official kick off time. The Referee shall require the responsible Club to correct the cause of the objection if this is possible without unduly delaying the progress of the match.
- (e) Any protest relating to player's eligibility must specify the names of the players protested against and be accompanied by evidence to justify the protest. Each Club may support its own case by witnesses.
- (f) When a protest has been lodged with the Referee, a protest must be made to the Association and objections shall not be withdrawn except by Association permission.
- (g) A Club summoned to attend a hearing regarding a dispute or protest maybe represented by one of its members. A Barrister or Solicitor may represent a Club of which he/she is a member of at the time of the alleged offence but otherwise only with the prior consent of the Association. Any person summoned to attend a hearing of a dispute or protest must attend personally and shall not be legally represented except with the prior consent of The Committee.
- (h) Should The Committee subsequently discover that any rule or has, in its opinion, been violated by mutual agreement between the Clubs or others it shall be in its power to disqualify any such Club from further competing in ties, or to order the match or matches to be replayed without any formal protest having been submitted. Clubs may also be disqualified from future participation in competitions.

20. APPEALS

- (a) A Club expelled from the Competition may appeal against that decision, to an appeal board in accordance with the procedures for FA appeals.
- (b) For the avoidance of doubt, a Club may not appeal against any penalty imposed on it other than expulsion from the Competition.

21. ADMISSION TO MATCHES

- (a) The Home Club shall provide for the sale of tickets and the visiting Club for checking the sale. The expenses of sellers and checkers shall be charged on the gate.
- (b) When turnstiles are used, the visiting Club does not provide checkers, the cost of working the turnstiles shall be a charge on the gate.
- (c) For all games up to the Semi-Final, the charge of admission shall not be less than £2.00 for adults, the charge for stand accommodation being extra. The price of admission for Semi-Final and Final Ties to be agreed by and with The Committee.
- (d) All members, shareholders and ticket holders of the Clubs shall pay admission charges to the ground and stands.

22. PROCEEDS OF MATCHES

- (a) The proceeds of the matches (except matches played through breach of Rule) shall after paying the necessary match expenses, be divided as follows.
- (b) In matches prior to Semi-Finals and Final Ties be divided equally between the contesting Club.
- (c) The gate receipts shall be divided immediately after the match, and a full statement must be made to the Association Secretary within **SEVEN** days of the match.
- (d) If a Cup Tie is abandoned by the Referee's decision, and the gate is not sufficient to pay the expenses, the gate and expenses shall be pooled with those of the replayed match.
- (e) In any match ordered to be replayed in consequence of breach of rules, the Club in default shall not receive any share of the proceeds of such replayed matches, without the consent of The Committee, and such consent shall only be given under special circumstances. If consent is not given, the share will be taken by the Association.

23. PAYMENT OF EXPENSES

- (a) It was agreed that charge for floodlights would be £60.

24. FIRST AID

It is the responsibility of the Home or Host Club to ensure that First Aid facilities and equipment are available whenever possible.

25. TEAM BENCHES

- (a) In all Rounds of the Competition, the number of Clubs Players and Officials seated on the team benches, in the designated technical area, must not exceed 8 unless the team bench facility provides more than 11 individual seats.
- (b) Only one person has the authority to convey tactical instructions to the Players during the match. This person shall be the Team Manager or the Team Coach. They are allowed to move to the edge of the technical area to issue instructions to his Team but then must return to his position on the bench immediately after giving these instructions.
- (c) All Team Officials and Substitutes seated on the bench shall be listed on the Official Team Sheet when it is submitted to the Match Officials. Only those persons listed on the Official Team Sheet shall be permitted in the technical area.
- (d) With the exception of the Team Manager, the Team Coach and any Substitutes who are warming up or warming down, all other personnel are to remain seated on the trainer's bench. The Team Manager or Team Coach is allowed to move to the edge of the technical area to issue instructions to his Team but must then return to the trainer's bench.
- (e) In the Final, Clubs will be advised by The Association of the number of Technical Staff and Substitutes who may occupy the team benches and a list of the permitted

number of authorised personnel must be provided by each Club to the Referee at least one hour before kick-off.

26. NOTICES

All notices required to be given to The Association by any of these Competition Rules shall be addressed to The Chief Executive, Lancashire F.A., The County Ground, Thurston Road, Leyland PR25 2LF.