



**GREATER  
MANCHESTER  
FOOTBALL**

**OUR GAME IN MANCHESTER**  
**>PLAY >VOLUNTEER >COACH >REFEREE**

Membership Rules of Manchester County FA Limited  
("The Association") – ("Manchester FA")

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Membership Rules of Manchester FA

**These rules are pursuant to the Association's articles of association and standing orders. The articles of association shall prevail over any conflict between these rules or standing orders.**

Membership of the Association

1. Members of Manchester FA
  - I. Are as listed in rules 3 through to 7 below.
  - II. All Members are entitled to benefits that the association will offer specific to their classification of membership.
  - III. To be granted membership to the association, all member clubs (excluding categories 3 and 4) **must have their players registered on The FA's Clubs Portal.**
  - IV. All member clubs must ensure that financial transactions relating to their club and team activities are conducted through an account associated by name to the Member Club.
  - V. Executive, Senior, or Full members failing to attend General Meetings without reason may be required to attend a regulatory board of inquiry.



- VI. All members shall agree to abide by The FA's Safeguarding Regulations in all aspects throughout the playing season
- VII. All members shall agree to comply with The FA's & Manchester FA's Affiliation Requirements throughout the playing season
- a. Clubs breaching VI & VII may have their membership status suspended at any time by the Association
2. Safeguarding Requirements of Manchester FA
- All members of Manchester FA must adhere to the following safeguarding requirements relevant to the club category
- I. As a club providing youth football we will:
- a. adhere to The FAs Safeguarding Children (SC) Policy and Procedures and proactively share our Club SC Policy with all parents/carers, players, club, and team officials
  - b. **proactively share and promote our Club Welfare Officer's details with all** parents/carers, players, club, and team officials
  - c. **ensure all club officials' details are accurate and up to date** on FA systems
  - d. ensure all team officials working directly with U18s are named on FA systems for every team
  - e. ensure all team officials working directly with U18s maintain an in-date accepted FA DBS check and have completed all required FA Safeguarding training
  - f. refer safeguarding concerns in line with The FAs SC Policy and Procedures
  - g. ensure there are a minimum of two FA DBS checked and safeguarding trained adults in place for all club organised activities
  - h. commit to creating a child-centred culture.
- II. As a Grassroots Open-Age club we will
- a. name a Club Welfare Officer (Open-Age Teams)
  - b. adopt and adhere to The FAs Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures (where we have U18s) and Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures and proactively share our Club Safeguarding Policies with our members (e.g., players, club officials, parents/carers of U18s)
  - c. ensure all managers and coaches including assistants are named on FA systems for every team
  - d. maintain in-date accepted FA DBS checks for all those working directly with under-18s
  - e. ensure that our club and team officials have done The FA Player Welfare training
  - f. Refer safeguarding concerns in line with The FAs Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- III. If we run Open-Age Disability teams, we will also:
- a. name a **Club Welfare Officer (Disability Teams) who has completed The FA's Safeguarding Adults Course**, in addition to complying with the Safeguarding Declaration as set out in points a-f above.
  - b. **encourage team and club officials to complete The FA's Safeguarding Adults Course.**



- IV. As an Open- Age League:
    - a. name a league Safeguarding Advocate who has completed The FA's Player Welfare Course
  - V. As a Youth League
    - a. name a League Welfare Officer who has completed The FA's Safeguarding Children Course, Welfare Officer Workshop, Safeguarding For Committee Members Training and hold a valid in-date FA DBS.
3. Executive Members of Manchester FA
- I. All clubs must have their headquarters within Greater Manchester. This does not apply to clubs who were accepted prior to May 2012.
  - II. Executive Member Clubs first team shall be competing in one of the following competitions;
    - a. FA Premier League
    - b. **FA Women's Super League**
    - c. **FA Women's Championship**
    - d. Football League
    - e. Step One – National League
  - III. Member category will automatically be revised to a lower classification for any club no longer conforming to rule 3.ii.
  - IV. Executive members have one vote each at Association General Meetings.
  - V. All clubs should enter the relevant MFA Senior Competition (If Applicable).
4. Senior Members of Manchester FA
- I. All clubs must have their headquarters within the Greater Manchester when first applying to be members.
  - II. Senior Member Clubs first team shall be competing in one of the following competitions;
    - a. Step 2 – National League North
    - b. Step 3 – Northern Premier League, Premier Division
    - c. Step 4 – Northern Premier League, Division 1 (East, West & Midlands)
    - d. Step 5 – North West Counties Premier
    - e. Step 6 – North West Counties Division 1 (North & South)
    - f. **Step 3 (Women's)** – National League Northern Premier
    - g. **Step 4 (Women's)** – National League Division 1 (North & Midlands)
    - h. FA National Futsal Series – Tier 1
  - III. Member category will automatically be revised to a higher or lower classification for any club no longer conforming to rule 4.II.
  - IV. Senior members have one vote each at Association General Meetings.
  - V. All Male clubs shall enter the MFA Premier Cup Competition.
5. Full members of Manchester FA
- I. All clubs must have their ground within Greater Manchester.
  - II. Full member clubs or leagues must belong to one of the following categories;



- a. Manchester FA Member Club elected to this position.
  - b. Manchester FA sanctioned leagues (conforming to the full members criteria)
  - c. Football Association sanctioned leagues (conforming to the full members criteria)
  - d. Greater Manchester County Schools FA
  - e. Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Manchester
  - f. Sanctioned Competitions elected to this position and conforming to the full members criteria
    - 1. Will be an England Football Accredited League
  - III. If you are a Manchester FA member club that has attained England Football 2\* or 3\* **Accreditation, you will automatically become a 'Full Member'.**
  - IV. If you are a MFA sanctioned league that has attained England Football Accreditation you will **automatically become a 'Full Member'.**
  - V. Member category will automatically be revised to a higher or lower classification for no longer conforming to rules 5.II, 5.III or 5.IV.
  - VI. Full Members have one vote each at Association General Meetings.
  - VII. **All Full Member clubs status' will be reviewed annually by the Regulations Strategy Group to ensure that they continue to meet the membership requirements.**
    - a. Any club no longer meeting the requirements will be subject to an annual review conducted by RSG who will approve member category changes
      - 1. In addition - any club that has achieved full member status prior to June 2023 will be subject to a full review
  - VIII. Members within this category will be eligible to apply for the maximum Fund4Football application bandings
  - IX. Members within this category will be eligible for priority ticket purchasing access when made available by the Association
6. Standard Membership of Manchester FA
- I. Any Membership categories not referred to in sections 2 to 5 of the membership rules; These include:
    - a. Match Officials
    - b. Coach
    - c. Education including both Further & Higher
    - d. Private Providers
    - e. Recreational
    - f. Small Sided
    - g. Club, Leagues and/or Competitions in accordance with 6.II below.
  - II. Standard Membership is also for Clubs, Leagues or Competitions that are not classified in accordance with sections 3 to 6 above. This class of membership is for all Clubs for whom Manchester FA is not their parent county (as per The FA Regulations) and for Leagues or Competitions that are not sanctioned by Manchester FA.
  - III. Standard Members do not have voting rights at Association General Meetings.
  - IV. Standard Members are eligible to receive reduced funding through initiatives such as Fund4Football
  - V. Standard Members are not eligible for Priority Access to FA Ticket Purchasing through Manchester FA.





## 7. Associate Members of Manchester FA

- I. All clubs must have their ground within Greater Manchester.
- II. Associate Member Clubs or Leagues must belong to one of the following categories;
  - a. Be a Parent County FA Club – not within membership 3,4 or 5
  - b. Be a Manchester FA sanctioned league – not meeting membership rule 5
  - c. Be a Non MFA Sanctioned League
  - d. Sanctioned Competitions
- III. Associate members do not have voting rights at Association General Meetings

## 8. Members Changing Names

- I. Members of the Association wishing to change their name must apply to [Support@ManchesterFA.com](mailto:Support@ManchesterFA.com) stating the reasons for the change. Before agreement can be reached the Association must be satisfied that the club, league or competition after such a change is in fact the same entity.

## 9. Membership Renewals

### Executive, Senior, Full Member Clubs and Leagues

- I. Membership is completed annually on-line via the FA's Clubs Portal. All renewals and payments should be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> July
- II. Associate members that have an Executive Status will be invoiced manually during the season.

### Standard Members

- III. Membership within category 6 will be renewed annually upon expiry or as determined or prescribed by the Regulations Strategy Group.
- IV. Standard Memberships will be renewed via The FA Clubs Portal or how the Association prescribes.

### Associate Member Clubs and Leagues

- I. Membership within categories 3 to 6 is completed annually using the Manchester FA Associative Membership Form. All renewals and payments are to be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> July.
- II. County Cup Entries – are to be completed on-line via the FA's Clubs Portal or manually using the Associate Membership Form. Clubs wishing to enter teams must do so by 31<sup>st</sup> July.

## 10. League Membership

- I. **Leagues are required to obtain Sanction via The FA's Competitions Portal.**
- II. **A League's membership must be completed at least 14 days prior to the commencement of fixtures.**
- III. Clearance Certificates for Clubs – At the conclusion of a season a letter, on demand by a club, must be sent out confirming they have completed all fixtures and discharged all financial obligations.
- IV. Leagues must not accept clubs without confirmation of clearance as per 10.III, or written approval from the CEO of Manchester FA.



- V. League (Clubs) Membership – Leagues must receive from their Manchester FA member clubs their current season Manchester FA Membership number prior to playing any fixture.
- VI. **Leagues must submit their full Clubs listing via The FA's Competitions Portal**, at least 14 days prior to the commencement of their fixtures.
- VII. **Leagues must update The FA's Competitions Portal** of any teams no longer members of their league at any time during a season including supplying within 14 days of cessation, a full list of the clubs main officers and registered players if requested by Manchester FA.
- VIII. League Rules – Must be forwarded to Manchester FA Football Services Manager via [Support@ManchesterFA.com](mailto:Support@ManchesterFA.com) within 14 days of approval at their AGM for Manchester FA approval and acceptance.
- IX. All rules must comply without deviation to The Football Association Standard Code of Rules or Standard Code of Rules for Youth Football (SCOR/SCORY).
- X. Bye Laws are intended for information to the member clubs (e.g. league meeting dates) and are subject to approval by Manchester FA. League Cup Competition Rules are bye laws.
- XI. The League (SCOR/SCORY) rules shall prevail over any conflict between them & bye laws.
- XII. **All league rules must be annually approved at Leagues AGM's.**
- XIII. Sanction – **Manchester FA will not issue "competition to commence sanction" until 9.VIII has been approved.**
- XIV. Leagues must inform Manchester FA if 3 or more clubs in their league are parent members of different County Football Associations.
- XV. Match Officials panel list – Must be forwarded to [Support@ManchesterFA.com](mailto:Support@ManchesterFA.com) at least 14 days prior to the commencement of league fixtures. They must also be resubmitted for any changes during the season.
- XVI. All Match Officials must be registered with an Association affiliated to The Football Association.
- XVII. All Full Member Leagues shall have attained England Football Accreditation and have signed up to the FA Respect Programme.
- XVIII. All Manchester FA Sanctioned Leagues must use The FA's Competitions Portal for Player Registration.
- XIX. League Members shall agree to abide by The FA's Safeguarding Regulations in all aspects as outlined in section 2 throughout the playing season

## 11. Small Sided Membership

- I. Small Sided Competitions – may affiliate at any point during a season via slot numbers for which a fee per slot is required. For more information e-mail [Support@ManchesterFA.com](mailto:Support@ManchesterFA.com)

## Manchester FA Requirements

### 12. Directors Powers and Responsibilities

- I. As per Articles of Association 3, 5 & 48.
- II. Have the power to require from all members to produce documentation or evidence as appropriately required.
- III. Have the power to request the most recent set of financial statements from its members (inclusive of classification/categories 3 to 7).



## 13. Appeals Against Leagues

- I. Must be forwarded to [Support@ManchesterFA.com](mailto:Support@ManchesterFA.com) with an appeal fee of £50 to arrive within 14 days of the decision notification received from your League Management Committee.
- II. Appeals will only be considered against a league decision relative to their rules and will not be a re-hearing of the case.
- III. Grounds for appeal must be stated on the appeal application & must include any of the 4 stated below:
  - a. Failed to give the Appellant a fair hearing
  - b. Misinterpreted or failed to comply with the rules or regulations relevant to its decision
  - c. Came to a decision on the facts of the case which no reasonable body could have reached.
  - d. Imposed an award, order or any other sanction that is excessive.

## 14. Appeals against Clubs

- I. Must be forwarded to [Support@ManchesterFA.com](mailto:Support@ManchesterFA.com) with an appeal fee of £50 to arrive within 14 days of the decision notification received from your Club Management Committee.
- II. Appeals will only be considered against a club decision relative to their rules and will not be a re-hearing of the case.
- III. Grounds for appeal must be stated on the appeal application & must include any of the 4 stated below:
  - a. Failed to give the Appellant a fair hearing
  - b. Misinterpreted or failed to comply with the rules or regulations relevant to its decision
  - c. Came to a decision on the facts of the case which no reasonable body could have reached.
  - d. Imposed an award, order or any other sanction that is excessive.

## 15. Match Officials

- I. Must not officiate in any unsanctioned fixtures or competitions.
- II. Shall pay an annual registration fee to the Association.
- III. Must not officiate in any form of fixture until Registration has been completed
- IV. Any Match Official charged and found proven of an offence against a Match Official is not permitted to enter the Manchester FA progression pathway within the active season
- V. Any Match Official charged and found proven of an offence against a Match Official will be removed from the progression pathway if entered.

## 16. Close Season

The "Close Season" shall be defined as the period between 1<sup>st</sup> June and 30<sup>th</sup> June inclusive each calendar year, save where The Association makes an order to the contrary.  
No Matches other than the following may be played in the Close Season:



- (i) small-sided Matches as specified in Rule B7, mini-soccer matches or matches **played according to “The Laws of the Game – 9v9” and those organised in connection with works’ clubs sports days on private grounds and at fetes and similar sports functions;**
- (ii) Matches between Army, Navy and Royal Air Force teams and teams of the Auxiliary Forces in competitions whilst in camp. Such competitions shall be strictly confined to the units concerned and gate money shall not be taken.
- (iii) **Matches involving members of boys’ brigades, scouts and kindred organisation’s in competitions whilst in camp;**
- (iv) Matches for national representative teams or clubs played under the auspices of FIFA or UEFA; and
- (v) Matches between Clubs in The FA Premier League and The Football League for **the following season, and between Clubs in The FA Women’s Super League. This sub-paragraph (v) shall also apply to any successor in title to any of the Leagues specified;**
- (vi) 11v11 matches in sanctioned Leagues or Competitions that meet the criteria in **accordance with the “Regulations for the Sanction and Control of Competitions”** and are approved by The Association or sanctioning Association;
- (vii) Single Day, weekend and Bank Holiday competitions and festivals meeting the criteria and receiving sanction; and
- (viii) Pilot projects granted dispensation by The Association or sanctioning Association.

## 17. Sanctioned Leagues Unable to Continue due to folding

- I. Shall contact Manchester FA via [Support@ManchesterFA.com](mailto:Support@ManchesterFA.com) within 7 days who will clarify the appropriate process to follow
- II. Shall call a meeting of current member clubs to decide the following:
  - a. Agreement that the League can no longer function.
  - b. Approve final audited Financial Management Accounts
  - c. Agree where any assets shall be dispersed to.
  - d. Return any trophies to the original donors.
  - e. Forward any outstanding Trophies to their sanctioned County Association for possible distribution to their football family.Report such meeting (17.II) to their sanctioned County Association within 14 days of the meeting together with the meeting minutes.

## 18. Member Clubs Unable to continue due to folding

- I. Shall contact Manchester FA via [Support@ManchesterFA.com](mailto:Support@ManchesterFA.com) within 7 days who will clarify the appropriate process to follow
- II. Shall fulfil all outstanding financial obligations to Manchester FA and League(s) they compete in.
- III. Shall supply Manchester FA with a full list of Committee Members and players with outstanding monies within 14 days of the Club unable to continue.
- IV. Shall supply Manchester FA with a Final Statement of Accounts within 14 days of being







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unable to continue.

## 19. England Football Accreditation – Accredited Clubs & Leagues

- I. Clubs who have attained any of the three England Football Accreditation Levels (1\*/2\*/3\*) and Accredited Leagues shall be eligible for priority access to ticket purchasing when made available by the association. Competitions may include but are not limited to:
  - a. FA Cup Final
  - b. FA Women's Cup Final**
  - c. Carabao Cup Final
  - d. England Senior Men's & Women's Fixtures**
  - e. Any other ticketing opportunities made available to Manchester FA
- II. Manchester FA Fund4Football maximum apply-able pots will be tiered in accordance with a Club or Leagues England Football Accreditation Status – more information is available on our Fund4Football page.
- III. In Manchester FA Youth Cup Competitions Only clubs that have attained England Football Accreditation will be eligible to enter
- IV. England Football Accredited clubs will be prioritised for any other membership benefits and offers throughout the season when available.

## 20. ADVANCE NOTICE OF ANTICIPATED MANCHESTER FA MEMBERSHIP RULE AMENDMENTS JANUARY 2024

Manchester FA anticipate continued changes and development to our membership rules including the following:

- I. In ALL Manchester FA Cup Competitions only clubs that have attained England Football Accreditation will be eligible to enter
- II. Only clubs that have attained any of the three England Football Accreditation Levels (1\*/2\*/3\*) shall be eligible for access to ticket purchasing when made available by the association. Competitions may include but are not limited to:
  - a. FA Cup Final
  - b. FA Women's Cup Final**
  - c. Carabao Cup Final
  - d. England Senior Men's & Women's Fixtures**
  - e. Any other ticketing opportunities made available to Manchester FA





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## 21. Manchester FA Complaints Procedure

TO BE INCLUDED BELOW ONCE A REVIEW OF THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE HAS CONCLUDED

### Manchester FA (MFA) Official Complaints Procedure

Before making a complaint to MFA about a Club, League and or an individual within a Club or League it is important that you have already made a formal complaint to the relevant person at the Club/League and that they have been given the opportunity to deal with your complaint via their own complaints procedures.

If you have not done this we will refer you back to the appropriate person in the Club/League. If you are not satisfied with their response you can then make a formal complaint to MFA by following our official Complaints Procedure as detailed below.

#### Section 1 - Who to contact to make a complaint?

Complaints may be made and sent in writing to Paul Roots (Football Services Manager) via email [Support@ManchesterFA.com](mailto:Support@ManchesterFA.com) or by post to Manchester FA, Gate 13 Rowsley Street, National Squash Centre, Etihad Campus, M11 3FF. If you wish to make us aware verbally of your intentions to make a complaint or are seeking clarity on the process you can contact Paul Roots on 0161 225 1966.

#### Section 2 - Do I need to complete a form to make a complaint?

Complaints will be accepted in written form via post or email however will only be accepted if completed on the official complaints form provided by Manchester FA. Please contact a member of the team to request a copy. It is important to note that Social media is not an appropriate method for reporting your concerns and Manchester FA will not review concerns submitted using this method.

#### Section 3 - When receiving complaints we will:

- Acknowledge your complaint in writing within 48 hours of receipt.
- **Advise you of any further information that we may require or ask you to complete our 'MFA Complaints Form', if not already completed.**
- Advise you if we require information from a third party and seek your written agreement to do so.
- Indicate to you the timescales involved in resolving your complaint.
- Manchester FA reserves the right to refuse the complaint on the grounds that Manchester FA is not the appropriate association to deal with the concern, for example a different County FA or Club.
- Request that complainant responds to observation requests and provide required evidence and/or any additional statements within 7 days of request.

#### Section 4 - How will we resolve complaints?

##### Stage 1

##### Internal Resolution





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In many cases, a complaint may best be resolved by the person who is responsible for the issue being complained about. The Football Services Manager will in the first instance seek to act within 7 days and liaise with both parties in order to seek a swift resolution.

OR

#### Stage 2

The Football Services Manager will upon provision of all information form a **'Complaints Working Group' (CWG) with a minimum of three members one of whom will act as Chair.** Communication between the complainant and Manchester FA will remain open during this process with the Business Operations Manager or appointed person providing updates throughout until resolution.

What next?

#### Stage 3

If the Complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage 1 or Stage 2, they can refer their complaint to Colin Bridgford (Chief Executive Officer) via email [Colin.Bridgford@manchesterfa.com](mailto:Colin.Bridgford@manchesterfa.com) or by post to Manchester FA, Gate 13 Rowsley Street, National Squash Centre, Etihad Campus, M11 3FF.

#### Stage 4

If the Complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage 1, Stage 2 or Stage 3, they can refer their complaint to The FA which is the governing body for the game in England and is primarily responsible for all regulatory aspects of the game.

Customer Relations

The Football Association

Wembley Stadium

PO Box 1966

London SW1P 9EQ

Tel: (0) 800 389 0699 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm)

#### Final Stage

The final option is for the Complainant to refer their complaint to the Independent Football Ombudsman which has a clear remit to receive and adjudicate on complaints from football supporters and participants which have not been resolved by the football authorities.

The Independent Football Ombudsman

Suite 49

33 Great George Street

Leeds LS1 3AJ

Tel: 0800 588 4066

Email: [contact@TheIFO.co.uk](mailto:contact@TheIFO.co.uk)

