ANTI-DOPING WHEREABOUTS GUIDE

For Club Staff

Season 2023/24
Level: Professional (Men’s)
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**INTRODUCTION**

Whereabouts is a tool designed to support an effective no-notice out-of-competition testing programme.

This document is designed to provide support and guidance to Clubs and Players in complying with their Whereabouts obligations under The FA Anti-Doping Regulations (“the Regulations”).

Irrespective of this Guide and the Whereabouts obligations contained in the Regulations, Players can be the subject of no advance notice out-of-competition testing at anytime and anywhere.

If you have any queries after reading this Guide, please email: whereabouts@thefa.com
1. CLUB WHEREABOUTS

1.1 SQUAD LIST REQUIREMENT

Clubs are required to provide The FA with accurate squad lists for the First team, Reserve and Youth Squads. To meet the requirement of accurate squad lists, Clubs must comply with the following:

A. All Players registered with the Club must be allocated to a Squad List (First team/Reserve/Youth) through the Online Whereabouts System.

B. Clubs must ensure Squad Lists are accurate and up to date at all times*.

C. The Unallocated Squad List should only contain Players who are out on loan or whose contract has been terminated by a Club**.

*As an example, in order to keep squad lists accurate, if a First Team Player misses a First team training session because he is playing in a Reserve squad match later that day, the Club must inform The FA in advance of the session the Player is going to miss, that he has changed Squads and will be following the Reserve team schedule. For further information see FAQ14 on page 14.

**If a Player has left a Club and remains in the Unallocated Squad List, a Club should undertake the Removal Process (See Annex 2); If a Player is duplicated on the Whereabouts System, a Club should undertake the De-duplication Process (see Annex 3).

1.2 PLAYERS’ HOME ADDRESSES

It is the responsibility of the Club to submit a home address for all Players (First/Reserve/Youth(regardless of academy category status) via the Online Whereabouts System. This must include the Player’s primary residence and any other address at which a Player regularly resides overnight. The Club must ensure the address(es) are kept accurate and up to date at all times.

1.3 WEEKLY TRAINING SCHEDULE REQUIREMENT

Clubs are required to provide The FA with weekly training schedules, detailing all training sessions. The FA defines a training session to be when five (5) or more Players are required to attend a session under instruction by the Club. To meet the requirement of weekly training schedules, Clubs must comply with the following:

All First Team and Reserve Squads and All Youth Category 1 Academies (U18 Premier League):

A. Submit weekly training schedules through the Online Whereabouts System before 10am on the Monday of the relevant week (unless the Monday training session starts prior to 10am, in which case the weekly squad whereabouts must be received 30 minutes prior to the start of the Monday training session);

B. Notify The FA of the start and finish time of all training sessions. Clubs in the Premier League must also provide The FA with the time Players are due to report to the training venue prior to the training start time*.

C. Ensure the weekly training schedule is accurate at all times by notifying The FA of any changes (e.g. venue including full postcode/time/day) to the weekly training schedule no later than when a particular change is effective.

D. Notify The FA (in advance and, in any event, no later than the start of a training session) if five (5) or more Players in a particular Squad (First team/Reserve/Youth Category 1) have been given a training session off. If five (5) or more Players have been collectively allowed to finish the session early, notify The FA before the Players depart. Players do not need to provide alternative whereabouts in either instance.
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E. Where five (5) or more Players are involved in a ‘Split Squad’ training activity, it is the Club’s responsibility to notify The FA (preferably in advance of a training session and, in any event, no later than when the Players leave the scheduled training venue to relocate to another). A ‘Split Squad’ training activity occurs when: five (5) or more Players collectively participate in a Club training activity that takes place at a different venue to the scheduled squad training session, as listed on the weekly plan on the Online Whereabouts System, but within the same session time. Notification must include the names of the Players involved in the Split Squad training activity, the time of the activity and the venue. Please note, for any changes to Player training activity that are made after the start of the training session, notification to The FA must be via email or text message, not the Online Whereabouts System.

* Clubs are required to provide accurate arrival times for their Players. The arrival time is there as a guide and it is only if the Player is absent from any part of the scheduled training session provided to The FA that the Player will be required to provide alternative whereabouts.

NOTE: Players can be tested at anytime and anywhere. If Clubs have any commitments to fulfil after the training times provided, we would encourage Clubs to provide these on the Online Whereabouts System within their weekly schedule so they can be taken into consideration during test planning. Examples of such commitments may include the team coach departure time for travel to an away game, visits to a local hospital or Players attending a funeral.

1.4 OTHER REQUIREMENTS

1.4.1 CLUB TOURS/TRAINING CAMPS

The FA must be notified in advance of any Club tour/training camp. Clubs must provide the following details:

A. Players participating in the tour/training camp.

B. Location of the tour/training camp (must include hotel(s) address(es)).

C. Daily training schedules and match schedules – to include location and local times.

D. Start and end date of the tour/training camp; and,

E. Contact details for a Club official who is with the squad.

If there are players who are not participating in the tour/training camp, the Club will still need to adhere to the requirements set out in 1.3 above.

Any changes to the submitted training schedule can be communicated to The FA through any of the following methods:

- Via the Online Whereabouts System (changes to a particular session can only be made prior to the start time of that particular session).

- Via email to whereabouts@TheFA.com

- Via SMS to 07800 140 062

- Or by voicemail, 24 hours a day, to 0844 980 8210
1.4.2 INTERNATIONAL DUTY
Notify The FA of Players who have been selected for international duty in advance of Players taking up their international duty posts, and the dates which the Player will be on international duty.

NOTE: In relation to international tournaments during the off-season, the date a Player returns for pre-season, is the date the Player Whereabouts Requirements begin. If a Player will not be returning for pre-season at the same time as every other Player in a particular squad, that Club must inform The FA of the date the Player will be returning.

1.4.3 PLAYER END OF SEASON
If a Player is given permission by the Club to finish his season early a Club must notify The FA of this fact. A Club must provide The FA with the full name of the Player and date the Player is scheduled to finish his season as soon as possible and in any event no later than the date a Player’s season finishes. Irrespective of when a Player is given permission to finish his season early, the earliest The FA will allow a Player to cease to provide Whereabouts information, is two weeks before the Club’s final game of the regular season. After this date, a Player will not be required to provide Whereabouts information until he returns for pre-season training, unless otherwise directed to do so by The FA. Clubs must leave Players’ names in the squad list and not move them to the Unallocated Squad List.

1.4.4 CLUB END OF SEASON
Prior to each squad’s final training session, Clubs should notify The FA by email of the date when each of their squads will finish their season and no longer be training. After this date Clubs are no longer required to submit weekly training plans and Players are not required to make individual Whereabouts submissions. Please also notify The FA, no later than a week before, of the date Players will return for pre-season training, it is from this date that normal Whereabouts requirements will resume.

1.5 FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH REQUIREMENTS
The FA operates a warning, strike and charge system. Both Club Whereabouts Warnings and Club Whereabouts Strikes remain valid for a period of 12 months.

1.5.1 STRIKES
A Club may incur a Whereabouts Strike if:
A. A Club fails to provide a weekly training schedule for a First/Reserve and/or Youth Category 1 Squad before 10 am on the Monday of the relevant week.
B. A Club fails to notify The FA of any changes to the weekly training schedule.
C. A Club fails to notify The FA of five (5) or more Players being given a session off.
D. A Club fails to notify The FA of five (5) or more Players collectively leaving a training session early.
E. A Club fails to notify The FA of a Split Squad involving five (5) or more Players participating in Club activity at a different venue.
F. A Club fails to ensure accurate and up to date Squad Lists are provided at all times.
G. A Club fails to submit an accurate home address(es) for all Players, and/or fails to ensure that the address(es) provided are kept up to date at all times.
H. A Club fails to notify The FA in advance of a Player finishing his season early.
I. A Club fails to notify The FA of Players who have been selected for International duty.

J. A Club provides The FA with inaccurate or false Whereabouts information.

K. A Club receives three (3) Warnings within a rolling 12 month period. It is on the fourth Warning, and every subsequent warning that a Whereabouts Strike will be issued.

If a Club receives three (3) strikes within a rolling 12-month period, the Club will be charged with a breach of Regulation 15 of the Anti-Doping Regulations.

1.5.2 WARNINGS
The decision to issue a Club Whereabouts Warning instead of a Strike for the reasons set out in 1.5.1 is at the absolute discretion of The FA.

1.5.3 SANCTIONS
If a Club is charged with a breach of Regulation 15 in The FA Anti-Doping Regulations, and such breach is subsequently proven, The FA Regulatory Commission has all of the penalties set out in The FA Disciplinary Regulations at its disposal. Notwithstanding the above, The Judicial Panel has agreed that ordinarily any penalty will be financial and entry points are listed below, although the Commission would have the discretion to vary the amount up or down:

- Premier League Club: £50,000
- EFL Championship Club: £10,000
- EFL League One Club: £5,000
- EFL League Two Club £2,000
2. PLAYER WHEREABOUTS

The FA permits an individual/Club to assist with/submit a Player’s Whereabouts on his behalf. However, a Player is deemed personally responsible for, and aware of, any failure to comply with the requirements set out in this document. A plea that a Player delegated the task to a Club Official and/or someone else and should not be blamed for his failure will not be accepted.

Please note, Players are deemed to be aware of the detail of the Whereabouts information provided by their Club to The FA.

2.1 ALL PLAYERS WHO ARE OVER EIGHTEEN (18) YEARS OLD ON OR BEFORE 31 AUGUST

Players are required to comply with the following:

A. Notify The FA of your absence from the scheduled Club training session before the start of the training session. If you will be absent for a long period of time (e.g. three (3) weeks due to an injury) the Whereabouts Requirements still apply. Please see Top Tips and FAQs for further advice on managing Whereabouts, including providing Whereabouts for extended periods of absence. Notification of the alternative testing slot must include:

   i. A full address (including post code) and a 60-minute time slot when you will be present and available for drug testing between the hours of 6am and 11pm (local time)*.

   ii. The time slot must be at least two (2) hours after notification is provided to The FA.

B. Notify The FA if you are late for a training session or if you finish a training session early (for whatever reason e.g. scan/hospital appointment/illness). Notification must be provided before the start of the training session if you are late, or before you leave the training session if you are leaving early. If you are leaving early, your notification should clearly state this. Please note, if the Anti-Doping officials arrive at the scheduled squad training session and you are not present, you may not be called back. Notification must include all information set out at 2.1.A above.

In relation to 2.1.A and 2.1.B above, it is your responsibility to be present and available for testing at the stated address for the entire duration of the stated time slot. Players can update the location and/or time slot of their alternative testing slot.

C. Notify The FA if you are training at a different venue to that of the scheduled Club training session. You must notify The FA, before you leave the original venue (if applicable), stating your alternative training venue and the time you will be there.

D. If you are given permission to finish your season early, the Whereabouts Requirements still apply until two (2) weeks before the Club’s final game of the season. After this date you will not be required to provide Whereabouts information until you return for pre-season training, unless directed to do so by The FA.

*Please note this must include a room number when a hotel is provided as an alternative testing location.
2.2 PLAYERS WHO ARE UNDER EIGHTEEN (18) YEARS OLD ON OR BEFORE 31 AUGUST AT A CATEGORY 1 ACADEMY.

Players are required to comply with the following:

A. Notify The FA of your absence from a scheduled Club training session before the start of a training session (see page 11 for contact details).

B. Notify The FA if you are late for a training session or if you finish a training session early (for whatever reason e.g. scan/hospital appointment/illness). Notification must be provided before the start of the training session if you are late, or before you leave the training session if you are leaving early. If you are leaving early, your notification must clearly state this. Please note, if the Anti-Doping officials arrive at the scheduled squad training session and you are not present, you may not be called back and irrespective of that are liable to receive a Missed Test Strike.

C. Notify The FA if you are training at a different venue to that of the scheduled Club training session. You must notify The FA, before you leave the original venue (if applicable), stating your alternative training venue and the time you will be there.

D. If you are not at training for the full duration of the session and do not notify The FA within the required time periods set out at paras (A), (B) and (C) above, you must provide The FA with independent corroborative evidence of the reason within seven (7) days of a written request from The FA.

2.3 OTHER REQUIREMENTS

2.3.1 INTERNATIONAL DUTY

A Player must comply with the Whereabouts requirements 48 hours after his release from international duty.

NOTE: if a Player is given further days off from domestic training beyond the 48 hours, and those days off fall on a scheduled training session day, the Player must comply with the Whereabouts requirements as set out at 2.1 and 2.2 above.

NOTE: in relation to international tournaments during the off-season, the date a Player returns for pre-season, is the date the Player Whereabouts Requirements begin.

2.4 FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH REQUIREMENTS

The FA operates a warning, strike and charge system. Both Player Missed Test Warnings and Player Missed Test Strikes remain valid for a period of 12 months.
2.4.1 STRIKES
A Player may incur a Missed Test Strike if:

A. A Player is not present and available for drug testing at the location for the full duration of the testing time slot provided to The FA.

B. A Player fails to comply with the requirements set out at 2.1, 2.2 and/or 2.3 as above.

C. A Player receives three (3) Missed Test Warnings within a rolling 12 month period for non-compliance with the requirements set out at 2.1, 2.2 and/or 2.3 above. It is on the 4th Warning, and every subsequent Warning that a Missed Test Strike will be issued.

2.4.2 WARNINGS
The decision to issue a Player with a Missed Test Warning instead of a Strike for a failure to meet the requirements set out at 2.1, 2.2 and/or 2.3 above is at the absolute discretion of The FA.

2.4.3 SANCTIONS
If a Player incurs three (3) Missed Test Strikes in a 12-month rolling period, they will be in breach of Regulation 16 of the Anti-Doping Regulations. If such breach is subsequently proven, the following sanctions will apply:

- For a first offence – a minimum one (1) year suspension and a maximum of two (2) years suspension based on the Player’s degree of fault.
FAQs

Q1. I have a question and am not sure where to find the answer, who should I contact?

WHEREABOUTS: whereabouts@TheFA.com

EDUCATION: Myles.Blenkinsop@TheFA.com
07866 005 025

GENERAL: Sam.Mulhall@TheFA.com
07976 948 058

GENERAL: Robert.Henderson@TheFA.com
07415 366 513

Q2. What should a Club do when a Player goes out on loan to a Club outside of the Premier League or EFL?

A. As Clubs outside of the Premier League and EFL are not required to provide Whereabouts information, the Player does not need to provide Whereabouts information during his time on loan. This Player must be placed in the Unallocated Squad List.

Q3. When a Player goes on loan to a Club in the Premier League or EFL, who is responsible for ensuring his home address(es) is kept accurate and up to date?

A. Whilst a Player is on loan to a Club in the Premier League or EFL it is the responsibility of the Club he is on loan with to ensure the Player’s address(es) are accurate and up to date at all times.

Q4. What are the requirements if a Player who is on loan returns to his parent Club to train / receive treatment?

A. It is the Player’s responsibility to provide an alternative testing window if they miss any part of a scheduled training session at their loan Club.

Q5. What are the Whereabouts requirements when a Player goes on trial at a different Club?

A. Players who are over eighteen (18) years old on or before 31 August are still required to provide whereabouts during this time and he must therefore provide an alternative testing slot for each day he is not present at his parent Club’s training sessions. As the Player is still contracted to the parent Club, he must remain in the squad list and not be moved to the Unallocated Squad List. Please note, if the Player is on trial at a Club in the Premier League, Championship, League 1 or League 2, his testing slot can be during the trial Club’s training sessions. Players who are under eighteen (18) years old on or before 31 August at Category 1 Academies must notify The FA of every training session that they miss while on trial.

Q6. What are the Whereabouts requirements for a Player who is given permission to finish his season early?

A. If a Player is given permission by his Club to end his season earlier than two (2) weeks before the final game of the season, he is still required to provide full Whereabouts information as set out in 2.1.A.

Q7. What should a Club do if a training session is cancelled at short notice?

A. The Club must notify The FA before the scheduled start of the training session that it has been cancelled. Such prior notification should be given via the online system or sent to whereabouts@TheFA.com; via SMS to 07800 140 062; or by voicemail, 24 hours a day, to 0844 980 8210.
Q8. What should a Club do if a squad training session finishes earlier than the submitted schedule?
A. The Club must notify The FA that training has finished before players leave the training venue.

Q9. What should a Club do if an additional training session is added? E.g. After a match on a Saturday, the Manager decides to add a training session on the Sunday which had not previously been scheduled on the weekly plan.
A. The Club must notify The FA of the additional training session before the start of the session. Such prior notification should be given via the online system or sent to whereabouts@TheFA.com; via SMS to 07800 140 062; or by voicemail, 24 hours a day, to 0844 980 8210.

Q10. What should a Club do if the squad arrive for a training session at the scheduled venue to find they are unable to use it, e.g. Due to a waterlogged pitch?
A. The Club must notify The FA as soon as possible that they will not be training at the scheduled venue. If the squad are relocating to an alternative venue or if the session is consequently cancelled, The FA must also be notified of this information prior to relocating. Such prior notification must be sent to whereabouts@TheFA.com; via SMS to 07800 140 062; or by voicemail, 24 hours a day, to 0844 980 8210. Please note, if the session start time on the Online Whereabouts System has passed, you will be unable to make changes to that particular session online. Notification must be via one of the other above methods.

Q11. What should a Player do if after the start of a training session, it is decided that they are to leave the session to train at an alternative venue e.g. a local swimming pool?
A. The Player must notify The FA, before he leaves, detailing their name, alternative training venue and the time they will be there. This notification to The FA can be via email or SMS message. Please note, this information can be provided on the Players' behalf by the Club, but ultimately the Player is deemed personally responsible for their own Whereabouts. Please note, Clubs are not able to amend details on the Online Whereabouts System for a particular session after that session has started.

Q12. What are the requirements if a Player leaves a training session early to attend a medical appointment e.g. Hospital scan?
A. The Player must notify The FA, before he leaves the training session, clearly stating that he is leaving early. The Player must also provide an alternative testing slot, as per section 2.1 of this guide.

Q13. What should a Player do if he doesn't know his exact Whereabouts when notifying The FA of his absence?
A. The Player must give a likely location along with a time slot for later that day. The Player can then amend if necessary once he can confirm his location.
Q14. What are the requirements if a First-Team Player misses a First Team training session because he is playing in a Reserve Team match later that day?
A. The Club must notify The FA that the Player has changed squad and will be following the Reserve Team schedule. Notification can be via email, voicemail, SMS message or through the Online Whereabouts system (mark the Player as absent and include match details listed in the ‘Notes’ section). Alternatively, the Player can be moved to the Reserve Team squad list to reflect their participation in the match. Please note, should you move the Player out of the First Team squad list, this must be done in advance of the session he is missing. Please also remember to move the Player back to the First Team squad list, prior to him returning to First Team activity.

Q15. Why do Premier League Clubs have to provide the time Players are due to report to the training venue prior to the training start time?
A. UK Anti-Doping runs an Athlete Biological Passport (ABP) Programme. The ABP is increasingly used across all sports as a tool within anti-doping. The concept of an ABP is the monitoring of selected biomarkers which can indirectly detect doping. Biological tracing throughout a Player’s career will make doping harder to achieve undetected.

One of the requirements of an ABP blood test is that a sample has to be taken at least two hours from the point that the Player has ceased strenuous physical activity. For ABP tests, if the Player has trained or competed less than two hours before the time the Player has been notified of his selection, the Player shall be chaperoned until this two period has elapsed. For this reason, it is a requirement for Premier League Clubs to provide the time that Players are due to report to the training venue in order for Players to be given the choice of providing their ABP sample prior to training.

Q16. Will a Premier League Player be liable to receive a Missed Test Strike if they are not present at the designated arrival time?
A. We would encourage Clubs to provide accurate arrival times for their Players, the arrival time is just there as a guide and it is only if a Player is absent from all/part of the training session itself (provided through the Online Whereabouts System) that a Player will need to provide notification of their absence and alternative whereabouts. If a Player is not present at the designated arrival time they will not receive a Missed Test Strike.

Q17. When can The FA undertake a whereabouts check?
A. Officials will attend training venues in order to check the accuracy of the whereabouts information provided by a Club or Player. These checks may be conducted separately, or in conjunction with anti-doping or social drug testing.

If you have any other queries; please email: whereabouts@TheFA.com
ANNEX 1

PLAYER TOP TIPS:

• Ensure friends and family are aware of your Whereabouts obligations;
• Save the Whereabouts contact numbers in your phone;
• Ask close friends and family to save the Whereabouts contact numbers as a back-up.
• Submit Whereabouts information ahead of the submission deadline e.g. the day before your scheduled training session if you know you will be absent.
• If you don’t know your exact Whereabouts when notifying The FA of your absence submit the last testing time slot for the day (10pm-11pm) together with a likely location and amend if necessary once you can confirm where you are going to be. However, please remember a two (2) hour time gap must remain between notification and your testing slot.
• Time slots provided are in local time e.g. if you are in Dubai, the time slot you provide The FA is the time in Dubai.
• If you have exceptional circumstances for missing training/leaving early from training/long term absence, e.g. close family bereavement, please provide as much information as possible to The FA.
• Programme a phone alarm to remind you of your designated hour.
• If you are going to be absent from training for a long period of time notify The FA and submit a consistent one (1) hour testing time slot together with a location for the defined period of your absence.
• Clubs have the option to set a default time and address for your alternative testing slot on the Online Whereabouts System, ensure you are aware of this information and when it has been provided on your behalf.
• If your alternative testing venue has a complicated entry system or is difficult to access, please remember to give any details which will assist in gaining entry.
• Remember it is your responsibility to make yourself available for testing. If you do not, you are likely to receive a Missed Test Strike. For example, if you are staying in a hotel, this includes making the hotel reception aware that you may be drug tested and to contact you should you be tested.
• Your alternative testing venue must be a suitable venue for a drugs test to take place; this includes having a private toilet.
• Clubs are required to provide The FA with addresses for all Players, of where they regularly reside, therefore please keep your Club updated with any change of address.

CLUB TOP TIPS:

• Weekly training schedules can be submitted up to four (4) weeks in advance.
• Although season plans are not a requirement under the Regulations, Clubs might consider a season plan to help with their weekly schedule requirement. Season plans will prepopulate your weekly plan.
• Do not forget to click SUBMIT for each squad once you have inputted your weekly schedule. The “submit" button is under each squad’s weekly plan.
• Once the weekly plan for the relevant squad has been submitted, the time and date will be populated next to the squad name above the weekly plan. Check the time and date for each squad to ensure submission has been successful.
• In the event that you are unable to access the system in order to submit your weekly training schedule, you should email your schedule to whereabouts@TheFA.com and then submit it onto the system at your earliest opportunity.
• Clubs are able to set a default address/time slot for their Players’ alternative testing slot, this prevents Clubs needing to input details every time an alternative testing slot is required.

• Clubs are required to provide The FA with addresses for all Players, of where they regularly reside. Please note, when a Club signs a new Player, the Player may have no address, or the address from a previous Premier League or EFL Club will stay with his online record. Clubs must ensure these addresses are updated and accurate at all times.

• If a Club submits an alternative testing slot on behalf of a Player, make sure they are aware of what has been submitted as ultimately it is their responsibility to be available for testing.

• When a Club signs a new Player; if he is staying in a hotel before moving into a permanent address, the hotel address must be added on the Online Whereabouts System, and updated as soon as he moves into a permanent address.

• If a Club signs a Player on loan from another Premier League or EFL Club, it is the responsibility of the Loan Club to ensure the Player’s address(es) on the Online Whereabouts System are accurate and up to date at all times.

ANNEX 2

PLAYERS NO LONGER WITH THE CLUB:

Players must be removed from an Online Squad List if they are no longer contracted with the Club. The process outlined below should be followed:

• Move the Player to the ‘Unallocated Squad List’.

• If the Player does not automatically disappear from the Squad List page after refreshing the screen, please contact whereabouts@thefa.com providing the following information:
  A. Player’s full name
  B. Player’s FA Number (FAN)
ANNEX 3

PLAYERS WHO ARE DUPLICATED:
If a Player is listed twice/more on an Online Squad List please follow the steps below:

- Move the duplicated version of the Player to the ‘Unallocated Squad List’ and refresh your web browser.
- If the Player does not automatically disappear from the Unallocated Squad List, please email whereabouts@TheFA.com with both original and duplicated Players name and FA Number (FAN).

ANNEX 4

ADDING A CLUB OFFICIAL TO THE WHEREABOUTS SYSTEM:
Please note, more than one Club Official can be added to the Whereabouts System per Club, and they can hold any job role within the Club.

To add a Club Official to the Whereabouts System, please email the following details to whereabouts@thefa.com:

A. Name of club official to be added
B. Email of club official to be added
C. FA Number of club official to be added
D. Date of Birth of club official to be added