



PROFESSIONAL GAME REFEREES



Scope

This policy, which was approved by the Pro Ref Board in August 2024, outlines, in respect of matches in the competitions detailed below: (a) the criteria by which the eligibility of match officials will be determined; and (b) the process by which match officials will be appointed to officiate in such matches.

Premier League EFL Championship EFL 1 EFL 2 EFL Cup EFL Trophy FA Cup (1st Round Proper onwards) National League Premier	Premier League 2 (Div 1+Div 2) Premier League Cup Premier League International Cup National League Cup Women's Super League Women's Super League 2 Women's FA Cup (4th Round Proper onwards) Women's League Cup
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Eligibility

All Pro Ref match officials must submit a declaration of interests form to Pro Ref on an annual basis, prior to the commencement of the season. Individuals will be responsible for keeping their declared interests up-to-date during the season. Each declaration submitted prior to the season (and any amendment to a declaration during a season) will be reviewed by Pro Ref.

On-field Match Officials, VARs and AVARs (when VAR is in operation within a competition) will only be eligible to officiate in a match where:

- i. The match does not directly involve a club for which they have a conflict of interest.

Circumstances in which there will be a conflict of interest, meaning that the individual will be ineligible to officiate, include, but are not limited to:

- a. Where the match directly involves a club for which the individual has indicated an active interest in seeing that club achieve success. This includes the individual currently or previously being in possession of a season ticket of that club, or declaring themselves as a supporter of that club.
- b. Where the match directly involves a club for which the individual played one or more competitive matches at a first team level.



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- c. Where the match directly involves a club with which the individual has a material personal connection. The question of whether a match official has such a connection shall be a matter for Pro Ref to determine in its discretion having regard to, amongst other factors, family links, romantic or other close personal relationships, or business dealings with any member of the club's board of directors, management, players, or staff (whether permanent or temporary).
 - d. Where the match directly involves a club from the same town or city (excluding London) in which the match official resides.
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- ii. The match does not directly involve a club which has a strong association with a club for which an interest has been declared. The question of whether a club has a strong association with another club shall be a matter for Pro Ref to determine in its discretion.

Replay Operators will only be eligible to be involved in a match where:

- i. The match does not directly involve a club for which they have a conflict of interest (applying the criteria referred to above).

Appointments

Having assessed eligibility for appointment in accordance with the criteria set out above, the appointment of the officiating team for each match will be made by each group's respective management team at their discretion.

All appointments are subject to oversight from the Pro Ref Chief Refereeing Officer, who may vary any appointment at his/her discretion.

In exercising their discretion the management teams and the Pro Ref Chief Refereeing Officer will take into account a range of practical, operational and performance considerations.