**STANDARD CODE OF RULES**

(For all Divisions with the exception of Premier Division and Division 1)

**DEFINITIONS**

1. (A) In these Rules:

“Affiliated Association” means an Association accorded the status of an affiliated Association under the Rules of The FA.

“AGM” shall mean the annual general meeting held in accordance with the constitution of the Competition.

“Deposit” means a sum of money deposited with the Competition as part of the requirements of membership of the Competition.

“Club” means a Club for the time being in membership of the Competition and “Team” means a side from a Club especially where a Club provides more than one Team in a division in accordance with the Rules.

“Competition” means the Midland Football League.

“Competition Match” means any match played or to be played under the jurisdiction of the Competition.

“Secretary” means such person or persons appointed or elected to carry out the administration of the Competition.

“Contract Player” means any Player (other than a Player on a Scholarship) who is eligible to play under a written contract of employment with a Club.

“Fees Tariff” means a list of fees approved by the Clubs at a general meeting to be levied by the Management Committee for any matters for which fees are payable under the Rules.

“Fines Tariff” means a list of fines approved by the Clubs at a general meeting to be levied by the Management Committee for any breach of the Rules.

“Ground” means the ground on which the Club’s team(s) plays its Competition Matches.

“Management Committee” means in the case of a Competition which is an unincorporated association, the management committee elected to manage the running of the Competition and where the Competition is incorporated it means the Board of Directors appointed in accordance with the articles of association of that company.

“Match Officials” means the referee, the assistant referees and any fourth official appointed to a Competition Match.

“Non Contract Player” means any Player (other than a Player on a Scholarship) who is eligible to play for a Club but has not entered into a written contract of employment.

“Officer” means an individual who is appointed or elected to a position in a Club or Competition which requires that individual to make day to day decisions.

“Player” means any Contract Player, Non Contract Player or other Player who plays or who is eligible to play for a Club.

“Playing Season” means the period between the date on which the first competitive fixture in the Competition is played each year until the date on which the last competitive fixture in the Competition is played.

“Rules” means these rules under which the Competition is administered.

“Sanctioning Authority” means The FA.

“Scholarship” means a Scholarship as set out in Rule C 3 (a) (i) of the Rules of The FA.

“Team Sheet” means a form provided by the Competition on which the names of the Players taking part in a Competition match are listed.

“The FA” means The Football Association Limited.

“WGS” means the Whole Game System and the procedures for the operation thereof as determined by The FA from time to time.

 “written” or “in writing” means the representation or reproduction of words or symbols or other information in a visible form by any method or combination of methods, whether sent or supplied in electronic form or otherwise.

(B) The Rules are taken from the Standard Code of Rules (the “Standard Code”) determined by The FA from time to time. In the event of any omissions from the Standard Code then the requirements of the Standard Code shall be deemed to apply to the Competition.

 (C) All Clubs shall adhere to the Rules. Every Club shall be deemed, as a member of the Competition to have accepted the Rules and to have agreed to abide by the decisions of the Management Committee in relation thereto, subject to the provisions of Rule 16.

(D) The Competition will be known as “The Midland Football League (or such other name as the Competition may adopt). The Clubs participating in the Competition must be members of the Competition. A Club which ceases to exist or which ceases to be entitled to play in the Competition for any reason whatsoever shall thereupon automatically cease to be a member of the Competition.

 (E) The administration of the Competition under these Rules will be carried out by the Competition acting (save where otherwise specifically mentioned herein) through the Management Committee in accordance with the rules, regulations and policies of The FA.

**NOMENCLATURE AND CONSTITUTION**

2. (A) This Competition shall be designated the Midland Football League and shall consist of not more than 100 Clubs approved by the sanctioning authority.

 (B) All such Member Clubs must be affiliated to an affiliated County Football Association and their names and particulars shall be returned annually by the appointed date on the Form “D” to the Football Association. This Competition shall apply annually for sanction to the Football Association(s) and the constituent teams of Member Clubs may be grouped in divisions, *each* *not exceeding* 18 *in number.*

 (C) This Competition shall only permit one team from a Club to participate in the same division unless there is no viable alternative because of logistical issues and/or reasons linked to participation and geographical boundaries. This Competition will obtain the prior approval of the sanctioning Association in the event of a division comprising of more than one team from the same Club. This Competition will ensure that, where permission is given, teams from a Club operating in the same division are run as separate entities with no interchange of players other than via transfers of registration in accordance with Competition Rules.

 (D) Inclusivity and Non-discrimination

(i) This Competition and each Member Club must be committed to promoting inclusivity and to eliminating all forms of discrimination

(ii) This Competition and each Member Club does not and must not in any manner whatsoever unlawfully discriminate against any person within the meaning and scope of the Equality Act 2010 or any law, enactment, order or regulation relating to discrimination (whether by age, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief, ability or disability or otherwise).

(iii) This Competition and each Member Club must make every effort to promote equality by treating people fairly and with respect, by recognising that inequalities may exist, by taking steps to address them and by providing access and opportunities for all members of the community, irrespective of age, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief, ability or disability or otherwise).

(iv) Any alleged breach of the Equality Act 2010 legislation must be referred to the appropriate sanctioning Association for investigation.

(E) Clubs must comply with the provisions of any initiatives of The FA which are adopted by the Competition including but not limited to, Charter Standard and RESPECT programmes*.*

(F) At the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting called for the purpose, a majority of the delegates present shall have power to decide or adjust the compilation of the divisions at their discretion. When necessary this Rule shall take precedence over Rule 12.

**ENTRY FEE, SUBSCRIPTION, DEPOSIT**

3. (A) Applications by Clubs for admission to this Competition *or the entry of an additional team(s)* must be made in writing to the Secretary and must be accompanied by an Entry Fee of £130 per team which shall be returned in the event of non-election.

At the discretion of a majority of the accredited voting members present applications, of which due notice has been given, may be received at the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting. The Entry Fee shall apply.

When Rule 12(B) is applied or a team seeks a transfer or, is compulsorily transferred to another division, no Entry Fee shall be payable.

(B)The Annual Subscription shall be £180 per *team* payable on or before the 31st July in each year.

(C) In the event of any issue concerning the membership of any Club with the Competition the Board may require a Deposit to be paid by or on behalf of the Club on such terms and for such period as it may in its entire discretion think fit.

(D)A Club shall not participate in this Competition until the Entry Fee, Annual Subscription and Deposit have been paid.

(E) Clubs must advise annually to the Secretary in writing by 30th June of its County Football Association affiliation number for the forthcoming Season, *failing which they shall be fined* £20.

Clubs must advise the Secretary in writing, or on the prescribed form, of details of its Headquarters, Officers and any other information required by the Competition.

(F) Except with the prior written consent of the Board no person, company or business institution (including insolvency practitioners) may at any time be interested in more than one Club or in a Club and any other club playing in a Competition sanctioned by The FA. The definition of “interested” shall be the same as provided for by the Rules of the FA Challenge Cup Competition in force from time to time.

**MANAGEMENT, NOMINATION, ELECTION**

4. (A) The Competition shall be governed in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of The Football Association by the Board comprised of the Directors, as well as the Football Department and Football Support Group members who shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting. All Participants shall abide by The Football Association Regulations for Safeguarding Children as determined by The Association from time to time.

 (B) Retiring Officers shall be eligible to become candidates for re-election without nomination. All other candidates for election as Officers or Members of the Management Committee shall be nominated to the Secretary in writing, signed by the Secretaries of two Member Clubs, not later than 30th April in each year. Names of the candidates for election shall be circulated with the notice of the Annual General Meeting. In the event of there being no nomination in accordance with the foregoing for any office, nominations may be received at the Annual General Meeting.

(C) The Board shall meet at least quarterly.

 On receiving a requisition signed by 51% of the Members of the Management Committee the Secretary shall convene a meeting of the Committee.

(D) Except where otherwise mentioned all communications shall be addressed to the Secretary who shall conduct the correspondence of the Competition and keep a record of its proceedings.

(E) All communications received from Clubs must be conducted through their nominated Officers.

**POWERS OF MANAGEMENT**

5. (A) The Board may appoint sub-committees and delegate such of their powers as they deem necessary. The decisions of all sub- committees shall be reported to the Board for ratification. The Board shall have power to deal only with matters within the Competition and not for any matters of misconduct that are under the jurisdiction of the Football Association or affiliated Association.

(B) Subject to the permission of the Football Association having been obtained the Board may order a match or matches to be played each season, the proceeds to be devoted to the funds of the Competition and, if necessary, may call upon each Club (including any Club which may have withdrawn during the season) to contribute equally such sums as may be necessary to meet any deficiency at the end of the season. (See Rule 6(e)).

(C) Each Member of the Board shall have the right to attend and vote at all Board Meetings and have one vote thereat, but no Member shall be allowed to vote on any matters directly appertaining to such Member or to the Club so represented or where there may be a conflict of interest. (This shall apply to the procedure of any sub-committee).

 In the event of the voting being equal on any matter, the Chairman shall have a second or casting vote.

(D) The Board shall have powers to apply, act upon and enforce the Rules of the Competition and shall also have jurisdiction over all matters affecting the Competition, including any not provided for in the Rules. Any action by the Competition must be taken within 28 days of the Competition being notified.

With the exception of Rules 5(I), 6(H), and 19, for all breaches of Rule a formal written charge must be issued. The respondent shall be given seven days from the date of notice to reply to the charge and given the opportunity to:-

 (i) Accept or deny the charge

 (ii) Submit in writing a case of mitigation, or

 (iii) Put their case before the Board.

All breaches of the Laws of the Game, Rules and Regulations of The Football Association shall be dealt with in accordance with FA Rules by the appropriate Association.

The maximum fine permitted for any breach of a Competition rule is £250 and, when setting any fine, the Competition must ensure that the penalty is proportional to the offence, taking into account any mitigating circumstances.

(E) All decisions of the Board shall be binding subject to the right of appeal in accordance with Rule 16.

 Decisions of the Board must be notified in writing to those concerned within 10 days.

(F) More than 50% of its Members of the Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business of the Board or any sub-committee thereof.

(G) The Board, as it may deem necessary, shall have power to fill in an acting capacity, any vacancies that may occur amongst their number.

(H) A Club having failed to comply with an order or instruction of the Management Committee, or failing to satisfactorily attend to the business and/or the correspondence of the Competition, shall be liable to be fined or otherwise penalised at the discretion of the Management Committee.

(I) All fines and charges are payable forthwith and must be paid within 28 days of the date of notification of the decision.

 Any Club failing to do so will be fined a maximum of £50. Further failure to pay the fine including the additional sum within 14 days will result in fixtures being withdrawn until such time as the outstanding payments are settled.

(J) A member of the Management Committee appointed by the Competition to attend a meeting or match may have any expenses incurred refunded by the Competition.

(K) The Board shall have the power to fill any vacancy that may occur in the membership of the Competition between the Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting called to decide the constitution and the commencement of the Competition season.

(L) The business of the Competition as determined by the Board *shall* be transacted by electronic mail, post or facsimile.

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

6. (A) The Annual General Meeting shall be held not later than 30th June in each year. At this meeting the following business shall be transacted provided that at least 50% of Members are present and entitled to vote:-

(i) To receive and confirm the Minutes of the preceding Annual General Meeting.

(ii) To consider any business arising there from.

(iii) To receive and adopt the Annual Report, Balance Sheet and Statement of Accounts.

(iv) Election of Clubs to fill vacancies (as recommended by the Board).

(v) Constitution of the Competition for ensuing season.

(vi) Election of Directors and Officers.

(vii) Appointment of Auditors.

(viii) Alteration of Rules, if any (of which notice has been given).

(ix) Fix the date for the commencement and conclusion of playing season.

(x) Other business of which due notice shall have been given and accepted as being relevant to an Annual General Meeting.

(B) A copy of the duly audited Balance Sheet, Statement of Accounts and Agenda shall be forwarded to each Club at least fourteen days prior to the meeting, and to the Football Association together with any proposed change of Rules.

(C) A signed copy of the duly audited Balance Sheet and Statement of Accounts shall be sent to the Football Association within fourteen days of its adoption by the Annual General Meeting.

(D) Each Full Member Club shall be empowered to send two delegates to an Annual General Meeting. Each Club shall be entitled to one vote only. No less than seven days’ notice shall be given of any Meeting.

(E) Clubs who have withdrawn their Membership of the Competition during the season being concluded or who are not continuing Membership shall be entitled to attend but shall vote only on matters relating to the season being concluded.

(F) All voting shall be conducted by a show of voting cards unless a ballot be demanded by at least 50% of the delegates qualified to vote or the Chairman so decides.

(G) No individual shall be entitled to vote on behalf of more than one Member Club.

(H) Any continuing Member Club failing to be represented at the Annual General Meeting without satisfactory reason being given shall be fined £50.

**AGREEMENT TO BE SIGNED**

7. The Chairman and the Secretary of each Club which is an unincorporated Association and two directors of each Club which is an incorporated entity complete and sign the following agreement which shall be deposited with the Competition together with the Application for Membership for the coming season, or upon indicating that the Club intends to compete.

“We, (A), of …………………………………………………….(Chairman) and (B) ………………………………………………………………… of (Secretary) of the Football Club have been provided with a copy of the Rules and Regulations of the Midland Football League Competition and do hereby agree for and on behalf of the said Club to conform to those Rules and Regulations and to accept, abide by and implement the decisions of the Management Committee of the Competition, subject to the right of appeal in accordance with Rule 16.”

Any alteration of the Chairman and /or Secretary on the above Agreement must be notified to the Parent County Football Association to which the Club is affiliated and to the Secretary of the Competition.

(*Note:* The spaces above are intended for the inclusion of the signatures and addresses of officers and members).

QUALIFICATION OF PLAYERS

8. (A) (i) Contract players are not permitted in this Competition with the exception of those Players who are registered under Contract with the same Club who have a team operating at Steps 1 to 6 of the National League System.It is the responsibility of each Club to ensure that any Player registered to the Club has, where necessary, the required International Transfer Certificate. Clearance is required for any Player aged 10 and over crossing borders including Wales, Scotland and Ireland.

 (ii) While serving in any branch of Her Majesty’s Regular Forces, a player must first obtain the consent of his Association Secretary before signing a registration form to play for the Club.

 (iii) Each Club must have 11 players registered 14 days before the start of each Playing season

 (B) A registered playing member of a Club is one who, being in all other respects eligible, has:-

(i) Signed a fully and correctly completed Competition registration form in ink, countersigned by an Officer of the Club, and who has been registered with the Registrations Secretary not less than one hour prior to the scheduled kick off of the match in which the player is required to play and found to be in order, and so registered.

 (ii) Registration forms may also be submitted to the Registrations Secretary by facsimile machine or electronic mail prior to the player playing. The original document must be forwarded by post within five days of having been signed by the player.

 (III) Registered through WGS

Any registration form which is sent by either of the means set out at Rules 8(B) (i) or (ii) above that is not fully and correctly completed will be returned to the Club unprocessed. If a Club attempts to register a player via WGS but does not fully and correctly complete the necessary information via WGS, the registration will not be processed.

For clubs registering players under Rules 8(B) (i) or (ii) registration forms will be provided in a format to be determined by the Competition. For Clubs registering players via WGS (under Rule 8 (B) (iii)) Clubs must access WGS in order to complete the registration process.

 (iv) (Under 21 Division ONLY)

Is under the age of 21 as at midnight of August 31st of the playing season, however 3 ‘over-age’ players will be permitted to be included on any Competition fixture team-sheet.

(C)  *Not adopted*

 (D) A Player that owes a Football Debt (as defined under the Football Debt Recovery Regulations) to any Club(s) shall be permitted to register and play for a Club in the Competition, save that the Player may be liable to be suspended from playing for that Club should the Player fail to comply with the terms of the Football Debt Recovery Regulations in respect of that Football Debt.

 (E) A fee of £2 shall be paid for each player registered.

Registration forms shall be obtained from the *Registrations* Secretary.

 (F) The Management Board shall decide all registration disputes.

In the event of a player signing a registration form or having a registration submitted for more than one Club priority of registration shall decide for which Club the player shall be registered. The *Registrations* Secretary shall notify the Club last applying to register the player of the fact of the previous registration.

 (G) It shall be a breach of Rule for a player to:-

(i) Play for more than one Club in the Competition in the same season without first being transferred.

(ii) Having signed for one Club in the Competition, sign for another Club in the Competition in that season except for the purpose of a transfer.

(iii)Submit a signed registration form for registration or submit a registration through WGS that the player had wilfully neglected to accurately or fully complete.

(iv) Except when specific approval has been given by the Board a Club cannot sign or transfer more than one Player, contract or non-contract, from another Club at any one time unless a period of 14 days has elapsed between each signing.

(v) If a non-contract Player also registers for a club not in membership of the Competition, his registration for the Competition may be retained by the Club.

(H) (i) The Board shall have the power to accept the registration of any player subject to the provisions of clauses (ii) and (iii) below.

(ii) The Management Board shall have power to refuse, cancel or suspend the registration of any player or may fine any player, at their discretion who has been charged and found guilty of registration irregularities (subject to Rule 16).

(iii)The Board shall have power to make application to refuse or cancel the registration of any player charged and found guilty of undesirable conduct (subject to Rule 16) subject to the right of appeal to the FA or the relevant County Football Association. Undesirable conduct shall mean an incident of repeated proven misconduct, which may deter a participant from being involved in this Competition. Application should be made to the parent County of the Club the player is registered or intending to be registered with.

 (iv)For a player who has previously had a registration removed in accordance with clause (iii) but has a registration accepted at the expiry of exclusion will be considered to be under a probationary period of 12 months. Whilst under a probationary period, should the player commit a further act of proven misconduct under the jurisdiction of the Competition, (excluding standard dismissals), the Competition would be empowered to consider a further charge of bringing the Competition into disrepute.

(*Note:* Action under Clause (iii) shall not be taken against a player for misconduct until the matter has been dealt with by the appropriate Association, and then only in cases of the player bringing the Competition into disrepute and will in any case be subject to an Appeal to the Football Association. All decisions must include the period of restriction. For the purpose of this Rule, bringing the competition into disrepute can only be considered where the player has received in excess of 112 days’ suspension, or 10 matches in match based discipline, in a period of two years or less from the date of the first offence.

(I) Subject to compliance with FA Rule C2(a) when a Club wishes to register a Player who is already registered with another Club it shall submit a transfer form (in a format as determined by the Competition) to the Competition accompanied by a fee as set out in the Fees Tariff . Such transfer shall be referred by the Competition to the Club for which the player is registered. Should this Club object to the transfer it should state its objections in writing to the Competition and to the Player concerned within three days of receipt of the notification. Upon receipt of the Club’s consent, or upon its failure to give written objection within three days, the Competition Secretary may, on behalf of the Management Committee, transfer the Player who shall be deemed eligible to play for the new Club from such date or [ ] days after receipt of such transfer.

In the event of an objection to a transfer the matter shall be referred to the Management Committee for a decision.

(J) A player may not be transferred to another Club in the Competition after 5.00 pm on the fourth Thursday in March each season except by special permission of the Board.

(K) A Club shall keep a list of the players it registers and a record of the games in which they have played, and shall produce such records upon demand by the Board.

(L) A register containing the names of all players registered for each Club, with the date of registration, shall be kept by the *Registrations* Secretary and shall be open to the inspection of any duly appointed Member Club representative at all Board meetings or at other times mutually arranged. Registrations are valid for one Season only.

In the event of a player without a written contract changing his status to that of a contract player with the same Club, another Club in the Competition or with a Club in another Competition his registration as a player without a written contract will automatically be cancelled and declared void unless the Club conforms to the exception detailed in Rule 8(A)(i).

(M)A player shall not be eligible to play for a team in any special championship, promotion or relegation deciding match (as specified in Rule 12(A)) unless the player has played 6 games for that team in this Competition in the current season.

(N) Players’ registrations will normally be accepted until the end of the League season. The exception to this rule is that in any season a player who has registered for any team at Step 5 or above in the National League System shall not be allowed to register as a player for any club in the League after 31st March, apart from clubs in the Reserve Division or Under 21 Division where a player is already a player for that club*.*

 (O)Any Club found to have played an ineligible Player in a match or matches shall have any points gained from that match or matches deducted from its record, up to a maximum of 12 points, and have levied upon it a fine. The Management Committee may also order that such match or matches be replayed on such terms as are decided by the Management Committee which may also levy penalty points against the Club in default.

 The Management Committee may vary this decision in respect of the points gained only in circumstances where the ineligibility is due to the failure to obtain an International Transfer Certificate or where the ineligibility is related to the Player’s status.

 In exceptional circumstances the Management Committee may, at its discretion, award the points available in the match in question to the opponents, subject to the match not being ordered to be replayed.

(The following Clause applies to Competitions involving players in full-time secondary education):-

(P) (i) Priority must be given at all times to school and school organisations activities.

(ii) The availability of children must be cleared with the Head Teachers.

(iii)To play open age football the player must have achieved the age of 16.

**CLUB COLOURS. CLUB NAME**

9. (A) Every Club must register the colour of its shirts, shorts and socks with the Secretary by a date specified by the competition who shall decide as to their suitability.

When playing away from home, clubs must play in colours (shirts, shorts and socks which are clearly distinguishable from those of their opponents and the Match Officials, in particular the goalkeeper must play in kit clearly distinguishable from the colours of the shirts worn by all the players in the Match and the Match Officials.

Goalkeepers must wear colours which distinguish them from other players and the Match Officials.

No player, including the goalkeeper, shall be permitted to wear black or very dark shirts.

If, in the opinion of the referee, two Clubs have the same or similar colours, the *away* team shall make the change. Any team not having a change of colours or delaying the kick-off by not having a change shall be fined £25

The Secretary of the Competition may request shirts to be submitted if complaints are received as to lack of distinguishing colours, and the Management Committee may refuse to permit any shirts or shorts as they think fit.

Shirts must be numbered 1-11 and substitute shirts 12 to 16 (or 17 where 13 is excluded) such that the numbers can be clearly identified by officials and spectators. Striped, hooped or otherwise patterned shirts shall have numbers affixed to contrasting patches or numbers in a contrasting colour with bold outline.

The Captain shall wear a distinguishing armband to indicate his status.

Both sleeves of the shirts of all players in matches played under the jurisdiction of the Company shall carry a Competition logo as supplied by the Competition on an annual basis if so decided by the Board.

Shirt advertising must comply with FA Regulations.

 (B) Any Club wishing to change its name *and/or* colours must obtain permission from its affiliated County Association and from the Management Committee.

**PLAYING SEASON. CONDITIONS OF PLAY, TIMES OF KICK-OFF. POSTPONEMENTS. SUBSTITUTES**

10. (A) The Board shall determine the date for the commencement of the season in accordance with Football Association Rules. Original fixtures arranged by the Fixture Secretary to be held no later than 31st May must not be arranged for a date later than seven days preceding the concluding date.

 Fixtures are deemed to be accepted unless objections are received by the Fixture Secretary within fourteen days of their issue.

 (B) All matches shall be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game as determined by the International Football Association Board.

 No Club shall remove to another Ground without first obtaining written consent of the Board; such consent not to be withheld unreasonably.

The Club must disclose, as soon as practicable, plans and details of any proposed move to a new stadium. The location of the proposed new stadium must meet with the approval of the Board.

A Club’s Ground may be shared with another Club or any other club (including a club engaged in another sport) providing, where sharing with a football club the Club or club playing in the most senior competition has priority of fixtures at all times and, where sharing with a club engaged in another sport, the Club has priority of fixtures. A Club will not be permitted to ground share to gain promotion or to avoid relegation. Ground sharing may not be permitted when one of the sharers retains the use of another ground unless that club can show by means of a refused planning permission or similar that it cannot meet the requirements of the Criteria Document at that ground. Any Club wishing to share a Ground or intending to move to a new Ground must obtain the written consent of the Board. Any Ground sharing for a period exceeding thirteen (13) weeks must be in writing and a written agreement must first be approved by the Board before being entered into and (except in an emergency) must be completed by 31 March in any year to be effective for the following Playing Season. A copy of the completed signed and dated agreement must be received by the Competition within fourteen days of the approval being sent to the Club.

The Club as at 31 May in any year have either:

(i) Own the freehold of the ground, or

(ii) Have a lease for the Ground that extends uninterrupted for a minimum of the next Playing Season, or

(iii) Possess an agreement for the use of the Ground that is acceptable to The Football Association.

A Club’s Ground must comply with the Criteria Document for the division in which the Club is playing.

No club that is a “nursery” club of another football club shall be eligible for membership of the Company.

A club shall be deemed to be a “nursery” club if it is under obligation, written or otherwise, to a football club by reason of which it has not the sole and entire control of its own management, finance and players.

Clubs seeking membership or applying to retain membership of the Company must comply with the requirements provided for in the Criteria Document for the division in which the Club is playing. Only clubs, which meet these criteria in full, will be eligible for membership. All Clubs visited by representatives of the Competition in pursuance of the document will pay a non-returnable fee. In the absence of a procedure for application for membership being established by The FA, the Board shall establish such procedure.

The Board shall establish a procedure for inspecting Clubs’ grounds from time to time to ensure that the grade attained by that ground is maintained.

Clubs in membership of the Competition on 1st April in any season will have until 31st May in that season to meet in full the criteria of membership of the Competition.

Clubs must take all reasonable precautions to keep their grounds in a playable condition. All matches shall be played on pitches deemed suitable by the Board. If through any fault of the home team a match has to be replayed, the Board shall have power to order the venue to be changed.

The Board shall have power to decide whether a pitch and/or facilities are suitable for matches in the Competition and to order the Club concerned to play its fixtures on another ground.

Clubs must register their pitch dimensions with the Competition prior to the start of each season. It will be misconduct on the part of a Club to alter its pitch dimensions during a season unless with prior written consent of the Board. The Board may at any time require a Club, at its own cost, to submit a report from a qualified independent source certifying the pitch dimensions.

The Board may require a Club to take such steps as the Board shall specify if they are not satisfied that an adequate standard of pitch is being maintained, including but not limited to the Board commissioning an independent report on the state of the pitch. The cost of the independent report to be borne by the Club concerned.

Football Turf pitches (3G) are allowed in this Competition providing they meet the required performance standards and are listed on the FA’s Register of Football Turf pitches. For clubs playing at Step 7 and below a pitch must be tested (by a FIFA accredited test institute) every three years and the results passed to the FA. The FA will give a decision on the suitability for use and add the pitch to the Register.

The home Club is also responsible for advising participants of footwear requirements when confirming match arrangements in accordance with Rule 10(D).

All matches shall have a duration of 90 minutes.

The times of kick-off shall be fixed at the AGM. Any Club failing to commence at the appointed time shallbe fined a sum of £15 + £2 per minute or be otherwise dealt with as the Board may determine.

Each Club must hand the Team Sheet containing list of name(s) of players taking part in a match (including the name(s) and number(s) of the nominated substitute(s) to the Referee and a representative of their opponents in the presence of the Referee at least fifteen minutes before the scheduled time of kick-off. The players’ numbers (in accordance with Rule 7) and the colours of the playing strip must be clearly stated. Any Clubs in breach may be fined £15.00.

Any Club altering its team selection or numbering after team sheets have been exchanged may be fined the sum of £15.00. A player who is named on the team sheet exchanged as above may be replaced without fine if he is injured warming up after exchange of the team sheet. Any subsequent changes must be notified to the referee and to a representative of the opponents before the actual kick-off.

Referees must order matches to commence at the appointed time and must report all late starts to the Competition.

The home team must provide at least three footballs fit for play and the referee shall make a report to the Competition if the footballs are unsuitable. Goal nets must be used.

(C) Except by permission of the Board all matches must be played on the dates originally fixed but priority shall be given to The Football Association and parent County Association Cup Competitions. All other matches must be considered secondary. Clubs may mutually agree to bring forward a match with the consent of the Fixture Secretary.

In the case of a revised fixture date, the Clubs must be given by the Competition 5 clear days’ notice of the match (unless otherwise mutually agreed).

(D) The Secretary of the home Club must give notice in writing of full particulars of the location of, and access to, the ground and time of kick-off to the match officials and the Secretary of the opposing Club at least five clear days prior to the playing of the match. The away Club shall seek and acknowledge receipt of such particulars. . If not so provided, the away club shall seek such details and report the circumstances to the competition.

Any Club failing to comply with this Rule shall be liable to a fine of £15.00

(E) In the event of a Club playing in any match with less than eleven players they shall be fined £15.00 for each missing player. A minimum of seven players will constitute a team for a Competition match.

(F) (i) Home and away matches shall be played. In the event of a Club failing to keep its engagement the Board shall have power to inflict a fine, deduct points from the defaulting Club, award the points from the match in question to the opponents, order the defaulting Club to pay any expenses incurred by the opponents or otherwise deal with them except the award of goals. Notwithstanding the foregoing home and away provision, the Board shall have power to order a match to be played on a neutral ground or on the opponent’s ground if they are satisfied that such action is warranted by the circumstances.

 (ii) Any Club with more than one team in the Competition shall always fulfil its fixture, within the Competition, in the following order of precedence - First Team, Reserve Team, Under 21 Team. Clubs in breach of this requirement shall be fined a sum not exceeding £125.00 or otherwise dealt with by the Board.

(iii)Any Club unable to fulfil a fixture or where a fixture has been postponed for any reason must, without delay, give notice to the Fixture Secretary, the Competition Referees Appointments Secretary, the Secretary of the opposing Club and the match officials. Any Club failing to comply shall be dealt with by the Board who may inflict a fine. Where a match is re-arranged or cancelled after the officials have been appointed, it is the duty of the home Club to notify the officials of the cancellation of their appointments immediately. Clubs in default of this Rule may be subject to any action decided by the Board.

 (iv)In the event of a match not being played or abandoned owing to causes over which neither Club has control, it shall be played in its entirety on a date to be mutually agreed by the two Clubs and approved by the Board. Failing such agreement and notification to the *Fixture* Secretary within seven days the Board shall have power to order the match to be played on a named date or on or before a given date. Where it is to the advantage of the Competition and the Clubs involved agree, the Management Committee shall also be empowered to order the score at the time of an abandonment to stand.

 (v) The Board shall review all matches abandoned in cases where it is consequent upon the conduct of either or both Teams. Where it is to the advantage of the Competition and does no injustice to either Club, the Board shall be empowered to order the score at the time of the abandonment to stand. In cases where a match has been abandoned owing to the conduct of both teams, or their Club member(s), the Board shall rule all points for the match as void. No fine(s) can be applied by the Board for an abandoned match.

 (vi)The Management Committee shall review any match that has taken place where either or both teams were under a suspension imposed upon them by the Association or Affiliated Association. In each case the team that was under suspension would be dealt with in the same manner as if they had participated with ineligible players in accordance with Rule 8(O) above. Where both teams were under suspension the game must be declared null and void.

(vii) All claims for compensation by either Club in the case of an abandoned match or a postponed match must be received by the League Secretary within 14 days of the date of the match to which the claim relates.

 (G)A Club may at its discretion and in accordance with the Laws of the Game use three substitute players in any match in this Competition who may be selected from five players.

*(RESERVE AND UNDER 21 DIVISION ONLY) A player who has been substituted himself becomes a substitute and may replace a player at any time subject to the substitution being carried out in accordance with Law 3 of the Laws of Association Football.*

The referee shall be informed of the names of the substitutes not later than 15 minutes before the start of the match and a Player not so named may not take part in that match.

The referee shall be informed of the names of the substitutes not later than fifteen minutes before the start of the match.

A player who has been selected, appointed or named as a substitute before the start of the match but does not actually play in the game shall not be considered to have been a player in that game within the meaning of Rule 8 of this Competition.

(H) All matches shall be of 90 minutes duration. Any match that is not of ninety duration may be ordered to stand as a completed match or replayed for the full period of ninety minutes or awarded to the Club not at fault, as the Board may decide, on such terms as the Board may decide. The half time interval shall not exceed fifteen minutes duration.

(I) Prior to each match the participating teams and officials shall conduct the ‘Respect’ handshake.

(J) All Clubs must have a facsimile machine, a mobile telephone and an email address, operational at all times. These will be listed in the Competition Handbook unless a Club requests otherwise.

(K) The standard kick-off times shall be as follows:

Saturday matches – 3.00 pm (unless implemented otherwise by the board)

Midweek matches – 7.45 pm (Unless otherwise implemented by the board) unless a Club notifies the Fixture Secretary in writing before the commencement of each Playing Season to state that it wishes all its home midweek matches to kick off at 7.30pm. All agreed changes to time of kick-off to be notified to the Board immediately for confirmation

Official bank holidays and Sundays – 3.00pm unless agreed otherwise by the two Clubs and the Board; application shall be made to the Competition Secretary by both Clubs at least 21 days before the relevant date. All agreed changes to time of kick-off to be notified to the Board immediately for confirmation.

To re-schedule a midweek fixture for an evening other than a Club’s usual midweek night will require written agreement of both Clubs and the Fixture Secretary.

The Fixture Secretary reserves the right to amend scheduled fixtures and kick-off times to meet television requirements as necessary. Notification will be provided by the Competition Secretary, in writing to both Clubs for fixtures so rescheduled.

(L) The Board shall determine the policy of the Competition for the issuing of match day passes.

(M) In all Competition Matches, the number of Clubs players and officials seated on the team benches, in the designated technical area, must not exceed 8 people.

(N) Only one person at a time has the authority to convey tactical instructions to the Players during the match from within the technical area.

(O) 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.

(P) The occupants of the technical area must behave in a responsible manner at all times. The Referee to The FA, who shall have the power to impose sanctions as deemed fit, will report misconduct by occupants of this area.

(Q) 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 trainers bench. The team manager or team coach is allowed to move to the edge of the technical area to issue instructions to his team.

**REPORTING RESULTS**

11. (A) The Registrations Secretary must receive by electronic means within three days of the date played, the result of each Competition match. This must include the forename(s) and surname of the team players and also the Referee markings required by Rule 13, or any other information required by the Competition. Failure to do so will incur a fine of £15.00 and/or the Club being dealt with as the Board decide.

(B) Both Clubs shall SMS the result of each match to the Results Service by 5.30 pm on a Saturday or 10.15 pm for midweek matches. Clubs in default shall be fined £15.00.

**DETERMINING CHAMPIONSHIP**

12. (A) Team rankings within the Competition will be decided by points with three points to be awarded for a win and one point for a drawn match. The teams gaining the highest number of points in their respective Divisions at the conclusion shall be adjudged the winners. Matches must not be played for double points.

 In circumstances where two or more teams are equal on points team rankings shall be determined by goal difference where the goals scored against by each team shall be deducted from the goals scored by that team and the largest positive difference shall be placed the highest. In the event of the goal difference being equal the highest placed team shall be the team which has scored the most goals. In the event that two or more teams have the same goal difference and have scored the same number of goals then the highest placed team shall be the team which has won the most matches.

 If the records of two or more teams are still equal and it is necessary for any reason to determine the position of each then the teams affected shall play a deciding match or matches as determined by the Board.

 (B) Automatic promotion and relegation shall be applied for the first two and last two teams in each Division except as provided for hereunder, subject to the provisions of Rule 2(B).

(i) Should one or more teams withdraw from any one Division after the fixtures have commenced an equal number of teams to those withdrawing in that Division shall not be automatically relegated.

(ii) Vacancies occurring after the conclusion of the season may be filled on any of the following ways:

(a) retention of otherwise relegated team(s)

(b) additional promotion of the next ranked team(s) from the Division below

(c) election

(iii) The last placed team in the lowest Division shall retire, but be eligible for re-election except as below, and be subject to the conditions of paragraph (B)(1) above.

(C) Not Adopted

(D) In the event of a team withdrawing from the Competition before completing 75% of its fixtures for the season all points obtained by or recorded against such defaulting team shall be expunged from the Competition table. For the purposes of this Rule 12(D) a completed fixture shall include any Competition Match(es) which has been awarded by the Management Committee.

(E) Not Adopted

(F) If any Clubs ceases to operate between the annual general meeting of the Company and the commencement of the following Playing Season, no adjustments to the number of the Clubs participating in the Competition will be made. The remaining Clubs will participate in the Competition for that season

(G) (*Under 21 Division only)*

Where more than one division is in operation, the teams adjudged winners of their respective divisions will enter into a series of play off matches as determined by the Board to decide the overall champions of the competition.

**MATCH OFFICIALS**

13. (A) Registered Referees (and Assistant Referees where approved by the FA or County FA) for all matches shall be appointed in a manner approved by the Board and by the sanctioning Association(s).

 (B) In the event of the non-appearance of the *appointed Referee the appointed senior Assistant Referee shall take charge and a substitute Assistant Referee appointed by the competing Teams.* In cases where there are no officially appointed Assistant Referees, the Clubs shall agree upon a Referee. An individual thus agreed upon shall, for that game, have the full powers, status and authority of a registered Referee. Individuals under the age of 16 must not participate either as a Referee or Assistant Referee in any open age competition.

(C) Where Assistant Referees are not appointed each Team shall provide a Club Assistant Referee. Failure to do so will result in a fine of £25.00 being imposed on the defaulting Team.

(D) The appointed Referee shall have power to decide as to the fitness of the ground in all matches and the decision shall be final.

 (E) The home Club will be responsible for paying the Match Officials the fees and match expenses set by the Appointing Authority on the day of the match in their dressing room, within a reasonable time after the conclusion of the match.

(F) In the event of a match not being played because of circumstances over which the Clubs have no control, the Match Officials, if present, shall be entitled to *half fee plus expenses.* Where a match is not played owing to one Club being in default, that Club shall be ordered to pay the Officials, if they attend the ground, their full fee and expenses.

(G) A Referee not keeping his or her engagement, and failing to give a satisfactory explanation as to their non-appearance, may be reported to the Association with which he or she is registered.

 (H) Each Club shall award marks to the Referee for each match and the name of the Referee and the marks awarded shall be submitted to the Competition on the prescribed Form provided. Clubs failing to comply with this Rule shall be liable to be fined or dealt with as the Board shall determine. When a Club considers that the Referee has discharged his duties incompetently and awards a mark of 60 or less, a detailed report must be send to the Appointing Authority within 3 days of the date of the match. Clubs in default of any provision of the Rule will be subject to a fine of £15.00

 (I) The Competition shall keep a record of the markings and, on the Form provided by the prescribed date each season, shall submit a summary to The Football Association.

(J) The Referee shall submit a report Form, supplied by the Competition, giving the result of the match, the number of players in each team and the time of kick-off to the Referee Liaison Officer within three days of the match.

(K) Referees and Assistant Referees shall be supplied, each Season, with a copy of the Competition Rules free of charge.

(L) Other than in the Under 21 competitions, no Club shall postpone a Competition match on account of the apparent state of the ground. In the event that such circumstances prevail, Clubs should comply with procedures provided for in the document published by The FA “Recommended procedure for the guidance of Clubs and Referees in determining the suitability of grounds in adverse weather conditions”. Should the ground be declared unfit it is the responsibility of the home Club to immediately advise the Competition, the Appointing Authority, the visiting Club and the Match Officials.

(M) Match Officials should be present at the appointment at least 1 hour prior to the scheduled time of kick-off. The appointed Referee may be required to visit the ground earlier if requested to do so by the home Club.

(N) In cases where it is found necessary to stop play owing to the weather or other cause, the Referee must wait a reasonable length of time before deciding on abandonment.

(O) Referees must report on the relevant form all cases where teams commence a match late or without eleven players on the field of play. Referees must also report their own or any assistant referees’ late arrival in any matches, and notify those concerned at the time of their intention. Assistant referees must also send an explanation of their late arrival to the Appointing Authority in writing by first class post within 3 days of the match.

(P) In the case of a postponed match, whether or not gate money is taken, any Match Official who has travelled to the match will be entitled to claim travelling expenses and half their match fee from the home Club. Where provided by the home Club, each Match Official must complete and submit a claim form for expenses.

(Q) The home Club shall be responsible for providing Assistant Referees with distinctive flags of a suitable size in an acceptable condition.

(R) It is the Responsibility of the club playing at home in each match played under the jurisdiction of the Competition to provide match balls in accordance with any match ball agreement signed by the Company

(S) The visiting Club will be responsible for providing their own practice balls.

**CONTINUATION OF MEMBERSHIP OR WITHDRAWAL OF A CLUB**

14. (A) After 31st December in the current Season a Club intending, or having a provisional intention, to withdraw a team from the Competition on completion of its fixtures and fulfilment of all other obligations to the Competition must notify the Secretary *in writing by 31st March* each Season or be liable to a fine not exceeding £250.00

All Clubs wishing to remain in membership of the Competition for the following Season must confirm their intention to do so, in writing, to the Secretary by 31st May.

(B) A Club shall not be allowed to withdraw any or all of its teams from the Competition after the *Annual General Meeting* for the following Season. Any Club infringing this Rule shall be liable to a fine not exceeding £250.00 per team and shall also be liable for its share of any call which may be made under Rule 5(D).

(C) In the event of a Member Club failing to discharge all its financial obligations to the Competition in excess of £50, the Management Committee are empowered to refer the debt under The FA Football Debt Recovery provisions.

 (D) The Membership for the coming season having been decided at the Annual General Meeting held not later than 30th June the Competition shall have the right, irrespective of other provisions in this Rule, to refuse to permit a Club to withdraw its team(s) in order to join another Competition and may hold the Club to its engagements.

(E) In the event of a Member Club which is an unincorporated association withdrawing and/or disbanding it shall be immediately liable to discharge all its financial and other obligations to the Competition.

In the event that any such obligation remains undischarged after a period of twenty-one (21) days then such obligation shall be met by the then current Club Members, excluding those under the statutory school leaving age. Until a Member’s pro rata obligation is discharged in full the Member shall not be allowed to participate in the Competition, which may apply to the Club’s Parent County Association for a suspension order.

If the debt remains unpaid after eighty-four (84) days the Competition may apply to the Club’s parent County Association for the debt to be recovered in accordance with the FA Football Debt Recovery System. Once the matter has been passed to the Club’s parent County Association the debt can only be cleared by payment to that County Association.

**PROTESTS AND COMPLAINTS**

15. (A) (i) All questions of eligibility, qualifications of players or interpretations of the Rules shall be referred to the Board.

(ii) Objections relevant to the dimensions of the pitch, goals, flag posts or other facilities of the venue will not be entertained by the Board unless a protest is lodged with the Referee before the commencement of the match. Any Club lodging such protest and not proceeding with it shall be deemed guilty of a breach of this Rule and shall be dealt with by the Board.

(B) Except in cases where the Board decide that there are special circumstances, protests and complaints (which must contain full particulars of the grounds upon which they are founded) must be lodged in duplicate with the Secretary within ten days (excluding Sundays) of the match or occurrence to which they refer. A protest or complaint shall not be withdrawn except by permission of the Board. A Member of the Board who is a member of any Club involved shall not be present (except as a witness or representative of his Club) when such protest or complaint is being determined.

(C) Any dispute occurring between Clubs in the Competition shall be referred for determination by the Board whose decision shall be binding upon all parties subject to Rule 16.

(D) No protest of whatever kind shall be considered by the Board unless the complaining Club shall have deposited with the Secretary a sum of £50.00. This may be forfeited in whole or in part in the event of the complaining or protesting Club losing its case. The Competition shall have power to order the defaulting Club or the Club making a losing or frivolous protest or complaint to pay the expenses of the enquiry or to order that the costs to be shared by the parties.

(E) All parties to a protest or complaint must receive a copy of the submission and must be afforded an opportunity to make a statement at least 7 days prior to the protest or complaint being heard.

 (i) All parties must have received seven days’ notice of the Hearing should they be instructed to attend.

 (ii) Should a Club elect to state its case in person then they should forward a deposit of £50.00 and indicate such when forwarding the written response.

**BOARD OF APPEAL**

16. (A)All protests, claims or complaints relating to these Rules and appeals arising from a Player’s contract shall be heard and determined by the Management Committee, or a sub-committee duly appointed by the Management Committee. The Clubs or Players protesting, appealing, claiming or complaining must send a copy of such protest, appeal, claim or complaint and deposit a fee which shall be forfeited in the event of the protest, appeal, claim or complaint not being upheld, and the party not succeeding may, in addition, be ordered to pay the costs at the direction of the Management Committee.

 (B) All such protests claims complaints and appeals must be received in writing by the Secretary within fourteen days of the event or decision causing any of these to be submitted.

 (C) The Management Committee shall also have power to compel any party to the protest to pay such expenses as the Management Committee shall direct.

 (D)Any appeal against a decision of the Management Committee must be lodged with the Sanctioning Authority within fourteen (14) days of the posting of the written notification of the decision causing the appeal, accompanied by a fee which may be forfeited in the event of the appeal not being upheld. A copy of the appeal must also be sent to the Secretary.

 (E) If so requested the Management Committee may arbitrate on any disputes, protests, appeals, claims or complaints between two Clubs in which event both Clubs shall send a non-returnable fee. Such arbitration shall be final and binding upon the parties to the arbitration.

 (F) No appeal can be lodged against a decision taken at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting unless this is on the ground of unconstitutional conduct.

**EXCLUSION OF CLUBS OR TEAMS, MISCONDUCT, CLUBS, OFFICIALS, PLAYERS**

17.(A) At the Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting called for the purpose, Notice of Motion having been duly circulated on the Agenda, the accredited delegates present shall have the power to exclude any Club or Team from further membership which must be supported by at least 51% of those present and voting. Voting on this point shall be conducted by ballot.

(B) At the Annual General Meeting, or at a Special General Meeting called for the purpose, in accordance with the provisions of Rule 19, the accredited delegates present shall have the power to exclude from further participation in the Competition any Club whose conduct has, in their opinion, been undesirable, which must be supported by (more than) 51% of those present and voting. Voting on this point shall be conducted by ballot.

A Club whose conduct is the subject of the vote being taken shall be excluded from voting.

(C) Any official or member of a Club proved guilty of either a breach of Rule, other than field offences, or of inducing or attempting to induce a player or players of another Club in the Competition to join them shall be liable to expulsion or such penalty as a General Meeting or the Board may decide, and their Club shall also be liable to expulsion in accordance with the provisions of Clauses (A) and (B) of this Rule.

(D) Any Club or Team failing to complete all of its fixtures in any season shall (unless the conditions are beyond their control, or the accredited delegates present at the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting decide otherwise by a majority of two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast) be debarred from membership the following season.

**TROPHY: - LEGAL OWNERS, CONDITIONS OF TAKING OVER, AGREEMENT TO BE SIGNED, AWARDS.**

18. (A) The following agreement shall be signed on behalf of the winners of the Cup or Trophy:-

“We A and B , the Chairman and Secretary of FC, members of and representing the Club, having been declared winners of Cup or Trophy, and it having been delivered to us by the Competition, do hereby on behalf of the Club jointly and severally agree to return the Cup or Trophy to the Competition Secretary on or before 1st March . If the Cup or Trophy is lost or damaged whilst under our care we agree to refund to the Competition the amount of its current value or the cost of its thorough repair.”

Failure to comply will result in a fine as determined by the Board.

(B)The Company shall present to the Winners and Runners Up of all divisions in the Competition 20 souvenirs (17 for cup competitions), Additional souvenirs cannot be presented except by consent of the Board, and then at the expense of the requesting Club.

In addition, a Competition championship trophy and runners-up trophy will be presented as and when the Board determine.

**SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS**

19. Upon receiving a requisition signed by one third of the Clubs in membership the Secretary shall call a Special General Meeting.

The Board may call a Special General Meeting at any time.

At least fourteen days’ notice shall be given of either meeting under this Rule, together with an agenda of the business to be transacted at such meeting. Each Member Club shall be empowered to send two delegates to all Special General Meetings. Each Club shall be entitled to one vote only, as will members of the Management Committee.

Any continuing Member Club failing to be represented at a Special General Meeting without satisfactory reason being given *shall/may* be fined £50.00.

**ALTERATION TO RULES**

20. Alterations, for which consent has been given by the sanctioning Association, shall be made to these Rules only at the Annual General Meeting or at a Special General Meeting specially convened for the purpose called in accordance with Rule 19. Any alteration made during the playing season shall not take effect until the following playing season.

 Notice of proposed alterations to be considered at the Annual General Meeting shall be submitted to the Secretary by 31st January in each year. The proposals, together with any proposals by the Management Committee, shall be circulated to the Clubs by 30th April. The proposals and proposed amendments thereto shall be circulated to Clubs with the notice of the Annual General Meeting. A proposal to change a Rule shall be carried if 51% of those present, entitled to vote and voting are in favour.

 A copy of the proposed alterations to Rules to be considered at the Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting shall be submitted to the sanctioning Football Association 7 days prior to the date of the meeting.

**FINANCE**

21. (A) The Board shall determine with which bank or other financial institution the funds of the Competition will be lodged.

 (B)All expenditure in excess of £50.00 shall be approved by the Board. Cheques shall be signed by at least two Officers nominated by the Board.

 (C)The financial year of the Competition will end on 31st March.

 (D)The books, or a certified balance sheet, of a Competition shall be prepared and shall be *audited* annually by some suitable person(s) who shall be appointed at the Annual General Meeting.

(E) Where a Club defaults in making any payments to any Football Creditor, the Club shall be subject to such penalty as the Board of Directors may decide.

(F) Within nine months of its accounting reference date, each Club shall submit to the Company a copy of its full financial statements as presented to its members/shareholders with confirmation that the accounts have been approved at a duly convened general meeting.

**INSURANCE**

22. All Clubs must have public liability insurance cover of at least 10 million pounds (£10,000,000).

 The Players’ personal accident cover must be in place prior to the Club taking part in any Competition match and shall be at least equal to the minimum recommended cover determined from time to time by the sanctioning Association. In instances where The Football Association is the sanctioning Association, the minimum recommended cover will be the cover required by the Affiliated Association to which a Club affiliates.

**DISSOLUTION**

23 (A) Dissolution of the Competition shall be by resolution approved at a Special General Meeting by a majority of three quarters (3/4) of the members present and shall take effect from the date of the relevant Special General Meeting.

 (B) In the event of the dissolution of the Competition, the members of the Board are responsible for the winding up of the assets and liabilities of the Competition.

 (C) The Management Committee shall deal with any surplus assets as follows:

(i) Any surplus assets, save for a Trophy or any other presentation, remaining after the discharge of the debts and liabilities of the Competition shall be transferred only to another Competition or Affiliated Association or The Football Association Benevolent Fund or to such other charitable or benevolent object in the locality of the Competition as determined by resolution at or before the time of winding up, and approved in writing by the sanctioning Association.

(ii) If a Competition is discontinued for any reason a Trophy or any other presentation shall be returned to the Donor if the conditions attached to it so provide or, if not, dealt with as the sanctioning Association may decide.

24 For Competition league matches only, the travelling expenses of match officials shall be pooled, each Club rendering on the match report details of all payments made. The Company shall, at the conclusion of the season, divide the total cost of officials in each division by the total number of Clubs in that division and where the total payment made by the Club is less than the equal share of the pool, the Club shall pay the difference within 14 days of the date of posting of the written notification to the Club. Where the sum paid by the Club is more than the equal share of the pool, the Club will be reimbursed from the pool of monies received from all the other Clubs.

25 Any person charged and found guilty of bringing the Competition into disrepute and any Club, Officer or Member charged and found guilty of misconduct as defined by the Board or of inducing or attempting to induce a player of another Club to join his own Club shall be liable to such penalty as the Board shall deem appropriate.

26 The minimum charge for admission to all matches shall be determined from time to time by the Board.

Admission charges, excluding home Club concessions as appropriate, must be the same for home and visiting supporters at Competition matches.

Clubs may, with the written permission of the Board, have a maximum of three promotional days each Playing Season during which they can vary admission charges for adults including allowing free admission.

27 The Board shall be empowered to grant a long service award for 30 years’ service with a member Club, providing such an award has not already been made by any other competition

28 The Board shall present a club celebrating its centenary, whilst in membership of the Competition, with a commemorative award.

29 All Clubs shall have a therapist present throughout each Competition Match who has passed as a minimum “The FA Intermediate Treatment of Injury" course (or its equivalent) and who holds a valid first aid certificate.

30 Clubs who are in debt to the League will not receive any monies due from sponsorship or awards until their debt to the League is paid.

31 Each Club shall take, and pay for, a minimum of 4 tickets for the Annual Dinner at the price stated by the Management Committee. If a Club is unable to attend there will be no refund or credit.

# 32 All clubs are to ensure that they partake fully with any scheme negotiated by the Management Committee on behalf of member clubs.

# 33 Any player selected to represent the Competition in an inter league, F.A. specified match or special match shall not be allowed to play for his club on such a date or in a match up to 72 hours preceding, unless special permission is obtained from the Management Committee in writing. A player who is called into a League Representative squad, who is subsequent released is then available to play for his club on the date\* of the Representative fixture subject to the following: If the player is released from the squad for failing to arrive at any pre match meeting/training session then he can only play for his club on the date\* of the Representative match with prior permission from the Board. Such permission must be sought, in writing, by the club concerned.

## \* Date of fixture means 3 days either side of the date of the Representative fixture.

34 Clubs with 2 or more regular players in a League or County F.A. representative team may seek permission, in writing to have a League fixture postponed. In the case of dispute, the Management Committee’s decision shall be final.

# Home clubs to provide after match hospitality in the form of food. Away clubs not staying for after match hospitality and not informing the home club upon receipt of confirmation of fixture details, may be liable to the costs of provision of such food as the Management Committee may decide.

36 Each Club shall at all times comply with all reasonable requests by the Competition to ensure due compliance by the Competition with its commercial agreements and shall not enter into any new agreements with any direct competitor to the Competition’s title sponsor.

37 Each Club shall be obliged to utilise any match boards provided by the Competition’s sponsor and further shall be obliged to procure that any bench kit provided by a sponsor shall be worn during competitive and first team matches. In the event of any Club having an existing agreement with a competitor to the Competition’s sponsor in respect of match boards and bench kit, they should be entitled to honour that agreement but shall not renew the same.

38 Any distribution of any income received by the Company from any source whatsoever shall be entirely at the discretion of the Board.

39 The Company shall be entitled either directly or through its duly appointed agents to inspect the books, accounts and financial records of any Club and that Club shall make available to the Company all information as may be required from time to time in that respect.

40 A past President of the League shall be afforded the same privileges as those of a Life Member.

**Fees Tariff**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Subject Matter | Amount (£) |
| Grading | £85 |
| Application for membership | £130 |
| Annual Subscription per team | £180 |
| Registration Forms | £2 per Registration |
| Transfer forms | £6 per Transfer |
| Sporting sanctions appeal | £50 |
| Appeal to Board | £50 |
| Appeal to The FA | £50 |
| Appeal by player | £40 |
| Appeal by Club | £50 |
| Arbitration | £50 |

**Fines Tariff**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Offence | Rule | Minimum | Maximum |
| Failing to advise of County Affiliation number by 30th June | SCOR.03(E) | £20.00 | £20.00 |
| Matters not provided elsewhere in the rules | SCOR.05(D) | £15.00 | £250.00 |
| Failing to comply with League instruction | SCOR.05(H) | £15.00 | £250.00 |
| Failing to pay fines / charges on time | SCOR.05(I) Fine | £25.00 | £50.00 |
| Failing to attend A.G.M. | SCOR.06(H) Fine | £25.00 | £50.00 |
| Playing unregistered, ineligible, over-aged or suspended players | SCOR.08(O) | £50.00 | £250.00 |
| Delaying kick off due to colour clash | SCOR.09(A) | £15.00 | £25.00 |
| Late Kick-off (+ £2 per minute) | SCOR.10(B) | £15.00 | £15.00 |
| Altering team selection or numbering after team sheet exchange | SCOR.10(B) | £15.00 | £15.00 |
| Late/Incomplete/no notification of match details to opponents/Referee | SCOR.10(D) | £15.00 | £15.00 |
| Playing a match with less than eleven players (per missing player) | SCOR.10(E) | £15.00 | £15.00 |
| Failing to honour fixture after confirmation | SCOR.10(F)(i) | £125.00 | £250.00 |
| Failing to honour fixture after confirmation in team order of precedence | SCOR.10(F)(ii) | £125.00 | £125.00 |
| Failing to notify all/any parties of postponed game | SCOR.10(F)(iii) | £15.00 | £25.00 |
| Causing a match to be abandoned | SCOR.10(F)(v) | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Late/No submission Incorrect/Missing details for Match Report Form | SCOR.11(A) Fine | £15.00 | £15.00 |
| Late or Failure to advise match result | SCOR.11(B) Fine | £15.00 | £15.00 |
| Failure to provide club assistant referee | SCOR.13(C) | £25.00 | £25.00 |
| Failing to pay Referee and/or Assistant | SCOR.13(E) | £25.00 | £25.00 |
| Failing to submit a detailed report within 3 days for mark 60 or under | SCOR.13(H) | £15.00 | £15.00 |
| Failure to advise of withdrawal of team | SCOR.14(A) | £250.00 | £250.00 |
| Withdrawing from the League after AGM | SCOR.14(B) | £250.00 | £250.00 |
| Administration costs/Disciplinary Committee hearings costs | SCOR.15(D) | £50.00 | £50.00 |
| Failure to submit signed receipt of trophy/cup | SCOR.18(A) | £15.00 | £25.00 |
| Failure to attend S.G.M. | SCOR.19 Fine | £25.00 | £50.00 |
| Bringing the Competition into disrepute | SCOR.25 | £15.00 | £250.00 |
| Not staying for after match hospitality (£10+Costs) | SCOR.35 | £10.00 | £10.00 |