



COMPETITION RULES 2024-25

- FA STANDARDISED RULES (Step 5 & 6 NLS)
- STANDARD CODE OF RULES (Step 7 & U23)
- STANDARD CODE OF RULES YOUTH (U18)
- NATIONAL LEAGUE SYSTEM REGULATIONS
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**RULES OF
THE SOUTHERN COMBINATION FOOTBALL LEAGUE**

1. DEFINITIONS

1.1 In these Rules:

“Acquisition Debt” means the aggregate amount of all obligations incurred by the Proposed Acquiror (to the extent they are or will be secured over the assets of the target Club) and incurred by the target Club in connection with or following the acquisition of Control of the target Club for or in respect of borrowings of any nature.

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

“Agent” shall be defined in the Rules of The FA.

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

“Appointing Authority” means the Southern Combination Football League

“Articles” means the Articles of Association of the Company and reference to a number of following the word “Article” is a reference to an Article so numbered in the “Articles”.

“Board” means the Board of Directors of the Company appointed in accordance with the Articles or, in the case of a Competition which is an unincorporated association, the management committee elected to manage the running of the Competition.

“Board Directive” means an order or instruction issued by the Board.

“Bond” 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 Company (including a Club which has had a transfer of membership approved under Rule 2.7 below)

“Commercial Agreements” means all or any Agreement or Agreements with any third party including but not limited to broadcasting media. sponsorship. marketing. merchandising. licensing and advertising. for the general promotion of each or any of the Clubs in the Competition and the Company. and which have the object of promoting the welfare and general commercial interest and increasing the financial resources of each of the Clubs. the Company and the Competition.

“Company” means The Southern Combination Football League, which administers the Competition and shall, where the Competition is an unincorporated entity, include that entity.

“Competition” means the Southern Combination Football League

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

“Competition Office” means the registered Offices or addresses where League business is transacted.

“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.

“Contractual Disputes Tribunal” shall be as defined in Rules of The FA.

“Control” shall be defined in the Rules of The FA.

“Criteria Document” means the document entitled “National Stadium Accreditation Criteria Document” issued by The FA from time to time and shall, unless stated to the contrary, mean the latest edition of the document.

“Creditor Compromise” shall mean an agreement reached by a Club under a Company Voluntary Arrangement (under the Insolvency Act 1986) or a Scheme of Arrangement (under the Companies Act 1985 or Companies Act 2006). Or a restructuring plan (under Part 26A of the Companies Act 2006)

“Day” means any day on which the Competition Office is open for normal business but excluding, unless the Board determines otherwise, a Saturday, a Sunday or a Bank or Public Holiday

“Embargo” means a ban placed by the Board on a Club in respect of player registrations, as more fully defined in Appendix H

“Embargoed Club” means any Club subject to an Embargo.

“Event Doctor” means an individual qualified in accordance with the requirements set out in ‘Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds’ (known as ‘Green Guide’), as in force from time to time (formerly known as a crowd doctor).

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

“FIFA Quality Concept” means the:

(a) FIFA Quality Concept Handbook of Requirements for Football Turf Surfaces (January 2012 Edition); and

(b) FIFA Quality Concept – Handbook of Test Methods for Football Turf (January 2012 Edition), and any amendment or modification thereof.

“FIFA Recommended One / IATS or Two Star Certificate” means the certificate of that name awarded by FIFA following compliance with the applicable requirements of the FIFA Quality Concept.

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

“First Aider” means a person who holds a valid ‘Emergency Medical First Aid in Football’ or ‘Emergency First Aid in Football’ accreditation (or such equivalent qualification deemed acceptable by the FA from time to time).

“Football Creditor” means any one of the following:

- The Football Association Limited
- Any Club affiliated with an Affiliated Association
- Any League sanctioned by The Association or an Affiliated Association
- Any full time or part time employee of a Club, or former full time or part time employee of a Club, in respect of sums due to such person by way of arrears of remuneration or expenses. This excludes for these purposes all and any claims for redundancy, unfair or wrongful dismissal or other claims arising out of the termination of the contract or in respect of any period after the actual date of termination.
- The Professional Footballers’ Association Limited
- The Football Foundation
- Any Affiliated Association
- Any pension scheme or plan administered by or on behalf of the Competition.

“Football Turf (3G) Pitch (FTP)” means a field of play (as that term is defined in the Laws of the Game) that has, following installation and prior to the commencement of each subsequent Playing Season, been awarded a-the relevant FIFA Recommended Performance requirement (FIFA Two and One Star or Pro and Quality) and which otherwise conforms to the requirements of the Laws of the Game.

“Grass Pitch” means a field of play (as that term is defined in the Laws of the Game) that is natural grass, predominantly natural grass or intended to be predominantly natural grass and which conforms to the requirements of the Laws of the Game.

“Ground” means the ground on which the Club’s first team plays its Competition fixtures.

“Group” shall be as defined in the Rules of The FA.

“Insolvency Event” means any one of the following:

- a. entering into a Company Voluntary Arrangement pursuant to Part 1 of the Insolvency Act 1986 (“the 1986 Act”) or a compromise or arrangement with its creditors under Part 26 of the Companies Act 2006 or a restructuring plan under Part 26A of the Companies Act 2006 or any compromise agreement with its creditors as a whole; or
- b. lodging a Notice of Intention to Appoint an Administrator or Notice of Appointment of an Administrator at the Court in accordance with paragraph 26 or paragraph 29 of Schedule B1 to the 1986 Act, an application to the Court for an Administration Order under paragraph 12 of Schedule B1 to the 1986 Act (other than paragraph 12 (1)(c)) or where an Administrator is appointed or an Administration Order is made in respect of it (“Administrator” and “Administration Order” having the meanings attributed to them respectively by paragraphs 1 and 10 of Schedule B1 to the 1986 Act); or
- c. an Administrative Receiver (as defined by section 251 of the 1986 Act), a Law of Property Act Receiver (appointed under section 109 of the Law of Property Act 1925) or any Receiver appointed by the Court under the Supreme Court Act 1981 or any other Receiver is appointed over any assets which, in the opinion of the Board, are material to the Club’s ability to fulfill its obligations as a member of the League; or
- d. the coming into force of a moratorium pursuant to Part A1 of the Insolvency Act 1986; or
- e. shareholders passing a resolution pursuant to section 84(1) of the 1986 Act to voluntarily wind up; or

- f. a meeting of creditors is convened pursuant to section 95 or section 98 of the 1986 Act: or
- g. a winding up order is made by the Court under section 122 of the 1986 Act or a provisional liquidator is appointed under section 135 of the 1986 Act: or
- h. ceasing or forming an intention to cease wholly or substantially to carry on business save for the purpose of reconstruction or amalgamation or otherwise in accordance with a scheme of proposals which have previously been submitted to and approved in writing by the Board; or
- i. being subject to any insolvency regime in any jurisdiction outside England and Wales which is analogous with the insolvency regimes detailed in (a) to (g) above; and/or
- j. have any proceeding or step taken or any court order in any jurisdiction made which has a substantially similar effect to any of the foregoing.

“Intermediary” means any natural or legal person who carries out or seeks to carry out Intermediary Activity and has registered with The Association in accordance with The FA Intermediaries Regulations.

“Intermediary/Agent Activity” means acting in any way and at any time, either directly or indirectly, for or on behalf of a Player or a Club in relation to any matter relating to a Transaction. This includes, but is not limited to, entering into a Representation Contract with a Player or a Club. For the avoidance of doubt, a Club Official is not acting as an Intermediary or Agent when they carry out any Intermediary/Agent Activity in relation to any matter relating to a Transaction for or on behalf of that Club. Similarly, a Lawyer is not acting as an Intermediary or Agent when they solely and exclusively undertakes or provides Permitted Legal Advice in relation to any matter relating to a Transaction.

“Long Term Loan” means a loan transfer of a Player who is a qualifying Player within the terms of the Rules . from either (a) any date during the first Registration Period to any date during the second Registration Period, or (b) any date during the first or second Registration Period to the end of that Playing Season. For the purposes of this definition only, a “Registration Period” shall mean one of the periods determined by The FA during which players may be registered for a professional men’s club.

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

“Membership Year” means the period in each calendar year from the holding of one annual general meeting of the Company to the holding of the next annual general meeting.

“National League System” means the system of competitions controlled by the FA where promotion and relegation links exist between participating Leagues.

“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 required to make an Owners’ and Directors’ Declaration by the FA

“Online Player Registration System” means the relevant online player registration system as determined by The FA from time to time.

“Option” shall be as defined in the Rules of The FA.

“Owners’ and Directors’ Declaration” means a declaration to The FA required from an Officer from time to time.

“Paid in Full” shall mean when a Club has either.

paid (in cleared funds) to the supervisor of its Creditor Compromise or its administrator, sufficient funds to pay all its creditors in full (100p in the £) and to cover the costs of the Creditor Compromise or the administration and confirmation of this fact has been received in writing from the supervisor/administrator; or

paid (in cleared funds) sufficient to settle in full (100p in the £) any debts owed to creditors outside a Creditor Compromise.

“Parent Undertaking” shall be as defined in the Rules of The FA.

“Participant” shall be as defined in the Rules of The FA.

“Person” shall be as defined in the Rules of The FA

“Pitch” means a Grass Pitch or Football Turf Pitch.

“Pitch Test” means the test(s) conducted by a FIFA accredited field test institute or UKAS accredited test institute in accordance with the requirements of the FIFA Quality Concept or IATS.

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

“Player Status Rules” shall be as defined in the Rules of The FA.

“Playing Season” means the period between the date on which the first league fixture in the Competition is played each year until the date on which the last league fixture in the Competition is played. For Clubs participating in play off matches this does include the period when play off matches are played

“Play Off Position” means the position of a Club in the table at the end of each Playing Season which is provided for in Rule 13 as qualifying the Club to take part in a play-off match to qualify for promotion to the next step of football for the next Playing Season

“Proposed Acquiror” shall have the meaning as given to it in Rule 2.16

“Qualified Medical Practitioner” means a graduate health care professional e.g., a doctor, physiotherapist, paramedic, nurse, sport therapist or sports rehabilitator, having the appropriate valid medical insurance, and being registered with a recognised professional body, (e.g., the General Medical Council, Health Care Professions Council, Royal College of Nursing, Society of Sports Therapists, Sports Therapy Association, Sports Therapy Organisation or Federation of Holistic Therapists Directory Service).

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

“Satisfied” shall mean that a creditor has consented, and provided evidence of such, to accept a sum in full and final settlement of its debt from a Club. For the avoidance of doubt, a vote to approve a Company Voluntary Arrangement (‘CVA’) by the creditors of a Club, held in accordance with Insolvency Law in operation from time to time, shall deem those debts admitted to the CVA as being Satisfied. The Board shall determine at its absolute discretion whether an amount is Satisfied under the Rules.

“Scholar” means a player that has entered into a Scholarship Agreement.

“Scholarship Agreement” means an agreement entered into between a Club and a player pursuant to the Player Status Rules

“Short Term Loan” means a loan transfer for a period of no fewer than 28 days in any one season.

“Secured” shall mean that one of the following legally recognised undertakings has been provided for the payment of the specified sum in full by the AGM at the end of the Playing Season in which the transfer of membership takes place:

- (i) A solicitor’s undertaking for the full amount outstanding.
- (ii) A bank guarantee is held for the full amount outstanding.

In each case to be paid and satisfied in full by no later than the AGM at the end of the Playing Season in which the transfer took place.

The Board shall determine at its absolute discretion whether an amount is Secured or Satisfied under the Rules.

“Significant Interest” means the holding and/or possession of the legal or beneficial interest in, and/or the ability to exercise the voting rights applicable to, shares or other securities in the Club which confer in aggregate on the holder(s) thereof ten (10) per cent or more of the total voting rights exercisable in respect of the Shares of any class of Shares of the Club. All or part of any such interest may be held directly or indirectly or by contract including, but not limited to, by way of membership of any group that in the opinion of the Board are acting in concert, and any rights or powers held by an Associate (as defined in the Rules of The FA Challenge Cup) shall be included for the purposes of determining whether an interest or interests amounts to a “Significant Interest”.

“SSAP” means a sporting sanctions appeal panel to be appointed to determine an appeal against a deduction of points under Rule 13

“Stadium Accreditation” means the accreditation programme through which a Club’s stadium is assessed against the relevant requirements set out in the Criteria Document

“Subsidiary Undertaking” shall be as defined in the Rules of The FA.

“Team Sheet” means a form provided by the Competition referred to in Rule 8.21

“The FA” means The Football Association Limited

“Transaction” means any negotiation or other related activity, including any communication relating or preparatory to the same, the intention or effect of which is to create, terminate or vary the terms of a player’s contract of employment with a Club, to facilitate or effect the registration of a player with a Club, or the transfer of the registration of a player from a club to a Club (whether on a temporary or permanent basis). A completed Transaction is one that has so

achieved the creation, termination, or variation of the terms of the player's contract of employment with a Club, the registration of the player with a Club or the transfer of the registration from a club to a Club.

"Transmission-Free Period" means the period determined by The FA from time to time pursuant to Article 48 of the UEFA Statutes and the Regulations Governing the Implementation of Article 48 of the UEFA Statutes.

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

"Work Experience Player" means a Player whose registration is held by a competition other than the Competition and is registered under a Scholarship. The Club taking the Player on work experience will register the Player Non- Contract with a league in which they take part to fulfil the football element of the Scholarship, not the educational part

"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.

"Youth Loan" means a loan transfer for a period of no fewer than 28 days of a Player who is a qualifying Player within the terms of the Rules.

- 1.2 The Rules are taken from the Standardised Rules determined by The FA from time to time. In the event of any omissions from the Standardised Rules then the requirements of the Standardised Rules shall be deemed to apply to the Competition.
- 1.3 Words or expressions used in these Rules shall, if not inconsistent with the subject or context, bear the same meanings as in the Articles
- 1.4 All Clubs shall adhere to the Rules. Every Club shall be deemed, as a member of the Company to have accepted the Rules and to have agreed to abide by the decisions of the Board in relation thereto, subject to the provisions of Rule 16
- 1.5 The Competition will be known as "Southern Combination Football League" (or such other name as the Company may adopt). The Clubs participating in the Competition must be members of the Company. 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 Company.
- 1.6 The administration of the Competition under these Rules will be carried out by the Company acting (save where otherwise specifically mentioned herein) through the Board in accordance with the Rules Regulations and Practices of the FA
- 1.7 The Company shall be part of the National League System and shall sign such documents as are required from time to time to confirm such membership.

2. MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

- 2.1 Each Club shall register its Ground, and its pitch dimensions, with the Competition prior to the start of each Playing 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. Dimensions of the field of play for all Competition matches shall be:-

Length - Maximum 120 yards (110 metres) – Minimum 110 yards (100 metres)

Width - Maximum 80 yards (75 metres) – Minimum 70 yards (64 metres)

No Club shall move to another Ground without first obtaining written consent of the Board; such consent not to be withheld unreasonably. In consideration whether to give such consent the Board shall have regard to all the circumstances of the case and shall not grant consent unless it is reasonably satisfied that such consent:-

- would be consistent with the objectives of the Competition as set out in the Memorandum of Association.
- would be appropriate having in mind the relationship (if any) between the locality with which by its name or otherwise the applicant Club is traditionally associated and that in which such Club proposes to establish its Ground.
- would not adversely affect such Club's Officials, Players, supporters, shareholders, sponsors, and others having an interest in its activities.
- would not have an adverse effect on visiting Clubs.
- would not adversely affect Clubs having their registered Grounds in the immediate vicinity of the proposed location, and
- would enhance the reputation of the Competition and promote the game of association football generally.

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.

Without prejudice to the provisions of Rule 4.12 a Club shall forthwith notify the Competition of any proposed change in its circumstances relating to the occupation of its Ground. By way of example, and without limitation, a proposed change may include a sale of any freehold interest (with or without subsequent leaseback) or any surrender or variation or a lease or licence.

- 2.2 All Clubs shall have Grounds and headquarters situated in England, the Channel Isles, Isle of Man if applicable or Wales and the Competition Secretary shall send their names and particulars to The FA annually by the date appointed by, and in the format required by, The FA. Clubs playing in England shall be duly affiliated at all times to a recognised County Football Association. Welsh Clubs shall be affiliated to The FA of Wales. Each Club shall return to the Competition Secretary a fully completed questionnaire relating to Form "D" required by The FA by the date given in the circular letter accompanying the questionnaire issued by the Competition Secretary.
- 2.3 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 [unless agreed otherwise by the Competition at its sole discretion, applicable only to that Competition, and valid only for one season at a time but open to annual renewal]. 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.
- 2.4 The Club as at 31 March in any year have either:
- (i) Own the freehold of the Ground, or
 - (ii) A lease for the Ground that extends uninterrupted for a minimum of the current and following Playing Season, or
 - (iii) Possess an agreement for the use of the Ground that is acceptable to The Football Association following consultation with the relevant Competition.

Guidance: *From the 2025/26 Season, Clubs at Step 1 with a lease for their Ground shall be required to have a lease that extends uninterrupted for a minimum of that season and the following five Playing Seasons.*

In each case the Club must provide to the Competition of which it is a member and to The Football Association: If the Ground is freehold either currently dated Official Copies of the freehold title at the Land Registry in the name of the entity in membership of the Competition or, if unregistered, a Certificate of Title from the Club's solicitor showing that the Ground is owned by the entity in membership of the Competition, or If the Ground is held leasehold a copy of the signed and dated lease in the name of the entity in membership of the Competition; if the expiry date of the lease has already passed or is dated before the end of the next full Playing Season, a certificate from the Club's solicitor as to whether or not a notice has been given by the landlord to terminate the lease. In addition, the Club must provide evidence of registration at the Land Registry or explain why the Lease is not registered.

If the Ground is subject to an acceptable agreement a copy of the signed and dated agreement for the use of the Ground together with confirmation from The Football Association, following consultation with the relevant Competition that the agreement is acceptable.

The Club must disclose whether the Club's occupation of the Ground is subject to any third-party option, whether the ground is charged by way of security and whether or not any break clauses in the lease or agreement have been exercised either by the landlord or the tenant.

In all cases The Football Association and the Competition of which it is a member have the right to call for further information.

- 2.5 A Club's Ground must comply with the Criteria Document for the step in the National League System at which the Club is playing. Each Club that is required to hold a safety certificate issued in accordance with safety legislation must lodge a current copy with the Competition. If a Clubs' ground is subject to any reduction in capacity by a public authority it must immediately inform the Competition.

- 2.6 No club which is a “nursery” club [or a reserve side] of a 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.
- 2.7 Clubs seeking membership or applying to retain membership of the Company must comply with the requirements provided for in the Criteria Document for the step at which the Club is seeking to play or the step at 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 Stadium Accreditation Programme in pursuance of the Criteria 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 FA shall establish a procedure for inspecting Clubs’ grounds from time to time to ensure that the grade attained by that ground is maintained.
- 2.8 The Competition and the FA shall determine a time scale whereby all Clubs in membership must attain the grade provided for in the Criteria Document. The grade applicable for each Club for the commencement of a Playing Season shall be that existing at the previous 31st July (or by a later date which was agreed at the sole discretion of The FA’s Alliance Leagues Committee (Steps 1 to 4) or Leagues Committee (Steps 5 & 6), such grading to be ascertained by an inspection carried out on or before 31st March or as soon as practicable thereafter. Any Club not maintaining the grade set for the Competition may be relegated at the end of the Playing Season to a step determined by The FA.
- (Any delay in inspection shall in no way release a Club from its obligation to have its ground ready for inspection. If for any reason a Club’s existing ground, or any new ground in which it proposes to play its home matches in the season following inspection, is not available for grading by 31st March prior to the commencement of the relevant season then the Club must, by the 31st March, submit to the Board in writing its proposals for a venue for its home matches in the following season (“alternative proposal”), such alternative proposal to be considered (and if appropriate) approved at the next Board Meeting after 31st March. The alternative proposal must, inter alia, contain documentary evidence in support of any ground sharing arrangements and evidence that the proposed ground is demonstrably suitable at a level which the relevant Club will be competing. The alternative proposal may not be for a continuation of any ground share arrangement if the Club has had a ground sharing arrangement for the previous 2 seasons, or any part thereof, even if those arrangements have related to more than one ground.
- Any approval of the alternative proposal will be subject to the issue of a grading certificate. The Board will use all reasonable endeavours to inspect the ground after receiving the alternative proposal and prior to the Board meeting, but if it is unable to do so then any approval of the alternative proposal will be subject to the issue of a satisfactory grading certificate. In the event of a Club not having received a grading certificate by 31st March and not having had its alternative proposal approved at the relevant Board meeting, it shall be relegated forthwith at the end of the playing season to a level determined by The Football Association)
- 2.9 Any Club which is incorporated must be incorporated in England and Wales. Any Club wishing to incorporate shall notify The FA, its Affiliated Association, and the Company Secretary before it makes any resolutions in this regard and Rule 2.16 shall also apply where the Club participates at Step 1 or 2 of the National League System. Any person wishing to be appointed as an Officer to a Club which is incorporated must comply with the requirements of the FA Owners’ and Directors’ Test Regulations and send to the Competition Secretary a copy of the Owners’ and Directors’ Declaration within 5 days of sending the same to the FA (save where Rule 2.16 applies).
- 2.9 In the event that any Club which is an unincorporated association incorporates itself it shall notify the Competition Secretary in writing within 14 days of the passing of the resolution to take this action and shall with such notice provide the Competition Secretary with a copy of the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the company. Any amendments to the Memorandum and Articles of Association of a Club must be notified to the Competition Secretary in writing within 14 days of the passing of the resolution with a copy of the change(s)

Transfer of Membership

Transfer as a Going Concern

- 2.11.1 In the event that any Club which resolves to transfer its membership of the Competition from one legal entity to a different legal entity, other than in the circumstances shown at 2.9.2 below, the Board will use the following minimum criteria in deciding whether to approve that transfer:
- (a) The shareholders or members of the Club have voted to agree to the transfer of the Club’s membership to the new entity.

- (b) All Football Creditors in the Club must be paid in full or transferred in full (with each creditor's consent) to the new entity and evidenced as such.
- (c) All other creditors in the Club must be paid in full or Secured or transferred in full (with each creditor's consent) to the new entity and evidenced as such.
- (d) The proposed new entity has provided financial forecasts to the FA and the Competition showing its ability to fund the Club for the next twelve (12) months or to the end of the Playing Season following transfer (whichever is the longer) and that evidence of funding sources has been provided.
- (e) The FA must have given approval for the transfer to take place.

Transfer from Insolvency

2.11.2 In the event that any Club that is subject to an Insolvency Event resolves to transfer its membership of the Competition to a new entity, the Board will use the following minimum criteria in deciding whether or not to approve that transfer:

- (a) The shareholders or members of the Club have voted to agree to the transfer of the Club's membership to the new entity and/or a licenced insolvency practitioner(s) appointed to the Club has agreed to sell or transfer some or all of the Clubs assets to the new entity:
- (b) All Football Creditors in the Club must be Paid in Full and evidenced as such.
- (c) The proposed new entity has provided financial forecasts to the FA and the Competition showing its ability to fund the Club for the next twelve (12) months or to the end of the Playing Season following transfer (whichever is the longer) and that evidence of funding sources has been provided:
- (d) The FA must have given approval for the transfer to take place; and
- (e) All other creditors in the Club must be satisfied.

and evidenced as such. (This provision is to be read in conjunction with 2.9.3 below.)

In the event that requirement (e) is not fully complied with, and only where the Board, at its absolute discretion, deems there to have been exceptional circumstances surrounding the application for the transfer, it may approve the transfer (subject to compliance with all other provisions (a) to (d) above) and may apply such conditions as it deems appropriate including, without limitation, the deduction of points.

2.11.3. Nothing in Rule 2.9.2 above shall limit in any way the application of Rule 13B of these Rules.

2.12 The Competition shall allow for up to 56 member Clubs. There will be 2 divisions of up to 20 Clubs in each division where possible. The divisions will be called Premier Division and Division One. The Competition shall allow for up to 16 associate Member Clubs who are the recognised first teams of such clubs. The division will be called Division Two. It shall be allowed for these numbers to be increased to accommodate any anomaly in the National League System. The Competition shall also allow for the recognised second teams of Clubs participating in a higher league in the National League system to compete in the Under 23 Division. Meeting of the Company each year. The Youth Section shall be open to recognised Youth teams of Clubs competing in the League and also to Youth teams of Clubs participating in a higher league, organised by the Company into groups of teams as they deem fit. A Club entered into membership at the Annual General Meeting shall be subject to the application of the Rules until the date of the following Annual General Meeting.

2.13 Any Club or Club representative found guilty of serious irregularities regarding Players Contract payments under The FA Rules may be expelled from the Company in accordance with these Rules and, in addition, may be fined such sum as the Board shall determine.

2.14 The Company will hold a membership register of the full name of the company/unincorporated entity constituting each Club. If the Club is an incorporated entity, it must provide the Company with its company name and registration number. If the Club is an unincorporated entity, it must provide the Company with the name of an individual in whose name the membership of the Company will be vested. A Club must notify the Company of all proposed changes to the information held by the League in the membership register in respect of the Club including any proposed change of company name or the name of an individual in whose name the membership of the Company is vested.

Clubs are required to submit a fully completed membership agreement form prior to the Annual General Meeting each Season.

The Company will provide a copy of its membership register to The FA annually.

Ownership and Change of Control

2.15 Each Club shall publish its legal name, form (e.g., unincorporated association, company limited by shares or guarantee etc) and any identifier (e.g., company number). In addition, for those Clubs that are owned, then the Club shall also publish the identities of the ultimate owner (i.e. the name of an individual) of each

Significant Interest in the Club. Such information shall as a minimum be published on the Club's official website on a page accessible directly from the home page of that official club website and/or within the Club's official matchday programme.

2.16-2.20 Not applicable

2.21 In the event that an Insolvency Event occurs in relation to any Club, that Club must inform and keep informed the Competition Secretary and The FA immediately.

The Board shall have the power to suspend a Club on notification of it having entered an Insolvency Event.

At the discretion of the Board, a suspension may take effect from the giving of the notice, or it may be postponed subject to any conditions as the Board may think fit to impose.

In the event that a Club is suspended, or its suspension is postponed, the Board shall have power to make such payments as it may think fit to the Club's Football Creditors out of any monies due to that club from the Company.

2.22 An Officer must submit an Owners' and Directors' Declaration to The FA in accordance with the Reporting Requirements set out in the FA's Owners' and Directors' Regulations that apply from time to time. The Club must provide a copy of any such Owners' and Directors' Declaration to the Competition at the time it is submitted to the FA.

No individual will be permitted to act as an Officer if they fail to meet any of the requirements of the Owners' and Directors' Declaration, as set out in the Rules of The FA.

In the event that an individual/entity is found to have either:

Completed false or misleading statements on their Owners' and Directors' Declaration.

acted as an Officer when in breach of the requirements of the Owners' and Directors' Declaration.

Acted as an Officer without the FA having given written confirmation to the Club in accordance with the FA's Owners' and Directors' Regulations that the individual may so act; then the individual/entity or Club shall be subject to such fine or other sanction as may be determined by The FA.

In the event that the Competition receive a Notice from the FA issued in accordance with the FA's Owners' and Directors' Test Regulations for the suspension of that Club's Competition membership, then that Club shall be suspended from the Competition with effect from 14 days from the date of the Notice. An appeal of the effect of the Notice is to the FA and can only be made by the affected Club and in accordance with the appeal procedures set out in the FA Owners' and Directors' Test Regulations. The effect of the Notice shall be suspended pending the outcome of an appeal.

The FA shall advise the Competition and the Club in writing where it becomes satisfied that a Disqualifying Condition as defined in the FA Owners' and Directors' Test no longer applies. Upon receipt of this written notification from The FA, the Competition may remove the suspension of the Club's Competition membership. Where a Club is suspended and that causes a match in the Competition not to be played, the Board shall determine how the outcome of that match shall be treated.

2.23 Within fourteen days of a change in a Significant Interest at a Club or the appointment or removal of any director of a Club, written notice thereof, together with such details as are required to be filed with the Registrar of Companies, shall be deposited at the Competition Office.

2.24 If during the course of a season the Board decide that the organisation and management or finances of a particular Club fall below the standards appropriate to membership of the Competition, the Competition Secretary shall be instructed to warn the Club at once that it may be excluded from membership of the Competition at the end of that playing season. Such a Club shall have the right to appeal to The FA within 14 days of the date of notification of the Board's decision.

2.25 The Competition, through the Board shall be empowered from time to time by subscription, levy or otherwise to require Clubs to contribute such sum or sums of money to the funds of the League as may be necessary for the proper conduct of the business of the League. Such contributions by Clubs may be collected by deduction from sums due to Clubs under any promotion agreement [commercial contract] or from sponsorship money due or by whatever means the Board shall think fit. There shall be added to any sums to be contributed from Clubs, if applicable, Value-Added Tax at the then prevailing rate.

2.26 Any Club failing to be represented at an Annual General Meeting or any other General Meeting called in accordance with the Rules, without satisfactory reason being given shall be fined in accordance with the Fines Tariff. Whenever required to do so Clubs must ensure that their Manager, or an Assistant Manager, attend in person any Meeting of clubs called by the Board. Failure to do so without just cause shall be breach of these Rules and be dealt with in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

2.27 The Competition and each Club must be committed to promoting inclusivity and to eliminating all forms of discrimination.

- 2.28 The Competition and each Club does not and must not [by its rules or regulations or] 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 way of age, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief, ability or disability, or otherwise).
- 2.29 The Competition and each Club shall 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.
- 2.30 Any alleged breach of the Equality Act 2010 legislation must be referred to the appropriate sanctioning Association for investigation.
- 2.31.1 Each Club shall comply with the provisions of Appendix []-the 'Licencing System', as approved by the FA Council from time to time.

3. MEMBERSHIP – ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

- 3.1 Any Club applying allocated for membership of the Company shall submit to the Company a fully completed Membership application form and the application fee [and non-refundable ground inspection fee set out in the Fees Tariff.
- 3.2 Clubs which have qualified for membership of the Company must confirm their acceptance of membership on the appropriate Competition form to be received by the Company at least 14 days prior to the next Annual General Meeting of the Company accompanied where appropriate by the membership fee set out in the Fees Tariff.

The annual subscription shall be paid by each Club to the Company no later than 21 days following receipt of invoice. Clubs failing to pay will be fined in accordance with the Fines Tariff. Any Club which remains in default seven days prior to the commencement of the Southern Combination Football League season shall be expelled from the Competition.

4. POWER OF THE BOARD

- 4.1 The Board shall have power to deal with all matters of management of the Competition covered by the Rules. The Board shall conduct the business of the Competition and shall meet as often as is necessary for this purpose.

The Board may appoint such committees as it deems appropriate which shall be fully empowered to act on the Board's behalf subject to ratification by the Board. 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.

- 4.2 Save where specifically provided otherwise in these Rules, the Board shall have power to apply, act upon and enforce these Rules and shall have jurisdiction over all matters affecting the Company or the Competition including any not provided for in these Rules. The Board shall also have the power to issue an order or instruction, by way of a Board Directive, in the best interest of the Competition, on any matter not provided for in these Rules, with which Clubs must comply or be subject to sanction under Rule 4.6, save where any such Directive is inconsistent with a Rule or Regulation of The FA, in which event the Directive will not create a binding obligation on Clubs.

- 4.3 All decisions of the Board shall be binding, subject to a right of appeal to The FA pursuant to Rule 17. Decisions of the Board must be notified, in writing, to all concerned within fourteen days of the making of such decision.

Upon becoming aware of any breaches of these Rules the Board shall write to the entity suspected of a breach formally charging the party giving at least 7 days' notice of the time, date and venue of the meeting at which the charge shall be considered.

The party charged will respond in writing to the Board within 7 days stating whether or not the charge is admitted and in default the Competition will deal with the case on the evidence it has at the time. If the charge is disputed or if the party admitting the charge wishes to present a plea in mitigation, it shall have the right to a personal hearing. The party charged also has the right to waive the 7-day requirement and allow the charge to be considered in less than 7 days after the party has been charged.

If the party charged disputes the charge or wishes to have a personal hearing to present a plea in mitigation, then it shall submit its case in writing to be received by the League Secretary at least 7 days prior to the date of the meeting set to consider the charge and in default the Board will be at liberty to proceed to hear the charge without the benefit of written submissions from the party charged.

- 4.4 Where the Rules provide for the imposition of a financial penalty under the Fines Tariff then the Notice of Charge given by the Board under Rule 4.3 above shall refer to the penalty provided for in the Fines Tariff.

If the Rule provides that the penalty for such a breach is in the discretion of the Board then the notice shall also state as such. If the penalty set by Rules is not a financial penalty, then such penalty must still be referred to in the Notice of Charge.

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 prior to any action by the Competition in accordance with FA Regulations.

- 4.5 All fines and charges imposed by the Board shall be received by the Company within twenty-eight days of the date of notification of imposition (unless otherwise ordered). Any Club or person breaking this Rule shall be liable to such penalties as the Board may impose.
- 4.6 If a Club fails to comply with a Board Directive within the timescale set out in the notification of such order or instruction, it shall not be allowed to play or take part in the business of the Company until the expiry of 7 days from the day the order or instruction is complied with.
- 4.7 Except where otherwise mentioned, all communications shall be addressed to the Competition Secretary, who shall conduct the correspondence of the Competition [and keep a record of its proceedings].
- 4.8 A Club must at all times attend satisfactorily to the business of the Competition and/or the correspondence of the Competition or Company.
- 4.9 If a Club is asked to submit a report in relation to any alleged violation of these Rules it may have a personal hearing, providing it notifies its intention of such within fourteen days of the date of notification from the Company, or the case will be dealt with in its absence.
- 4.10 The Board shall have the power to arrange representative matches at their discretion.
- 4.11 A match (or matches) may be played each season between two clubs nominated by the Board, and it shall be a requirement for such match (or matches) to be played on the date(s) nominated by the Board. All matters concerning the match will be decided by the Board.
- 4.12 In the event of any issue concerning the membership of any Club with the Competition the Board may require a Bond 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.

5. INTERESTS IN MORE THAN ONE CLUB

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.

6. REGISTRATION OF PLAYERS

- 6.1 A qualifying Player registration

The FA's rules will apply in respect of all matters concerning players.

- 6.1.1 A Player is one who has been registered via the relevant Online Player Registration System and such registration has been: (a) approved by the Competition, and (b) in the case of a:
- (i) Contract Player – approved by the league the player is transferring from and The FA.
 - (ii) Loan Player (if loaned from a club participating in the Premier League or the EFL) – approved by the league the player is transferring from and The FA
 - (iii) Loan Player (if loaned from a club participating in the NLS) – approved by The FA.

- 6.1.2 At Steps 1 to 4, a Player's registration with a Club as a Contract Player shall continue until the earlier of the date upon which: (a) the contract between the Contract Player and the Club expires, (b) the Contract Player's registration is transferred to another club, or (c) the contract is cancelled in accordance with Rule 6.5.

It is the responsibility of all Clubs to ensure any player signing a registration form has, where necessary, the required International Transfer Certificate and in the case of Contract Players, Including those on loan, must have approval from The FA.

Any relevant registration/transfer forms must be uploaded onto the online Player Registration System within five(5) days of the Player signing the forms.

The Registration of players are subject to fees in accordance with the fees tariff.

The status of a player must be clearly stated on the registration information submitted. Hard copies of the registration form are not required to be submitted to the Competition. However, these must be completed, signed and retained by Clubs in case of dispute or in case requested by the FA and/or the Competition.

The registration of a Player will be valid from the date of registration to the end of that Playing Season only save for (a) a Contract or Loan Player whose contract or loan expires before the end of the Playing Season, or (b) a Contract Player registered with a club participation at Steps 1 to 4, where in each case the registration shall be valid for the term of the applicable contract or loan.

There must be a minimum gap of 14 days between the commencement date of a Player's registration with one Club and the commencement date of a Player's registration with any subsequent Club (save where that Player is to register and play as a goalkeeper)

- 6.1.3 A Player may only play under his correct status. Any change of a Player's status during the currency of a registration must be notified to the Competition within five (5) days of the change of registration being affected.

In the event of a Player changing his status with the same Club either from Contract to Non-Contract or from Non-Contract to Contract then that Player must sign a new registration form (which is to be retained by the club) , complete a new registration process via the Online Player Registration System and be re-registered. In default the Player re-registering will be ineligible to play in a match under the jurisdiction of the Competition and Rule 6.9 will be applied in such circumstances where a Club is found guilty of playing a Player who has changed status without re-registering.

A Player whose registration under Contract is cancelled by mutual consent and immediately re-registered by the same Club or a different Club on a non-contract basis shall not subsequently be registered as a Contract player with the Club for which his Contract was cancelled, within three months of the date of the cancellation except with the consent of the Board and The FA.

- 6.1.4 The Board shall have the power to make application to refuse or cancel the registration of any Player charged and found guilty of undesirable conduct subject to the right of Appeal to the FA or the relevant County Football Association. Undesirable conduct shall mean an incident of repeated conduct, 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 with.

(Note: action under this clause 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. For the purposes 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.)

The Board shall also have the power to place an embargo on the registration, transfer or loan transfer of Players by any Club deemed to be in breach of these Rules.

- 6.1.5 The Board shall also have the power to place an Embargo on the registration, transfer or loan transfer of Players by any Club deemed to be in breach of these Rules. Where a Club has been subject to an Embargo that is ongoing (if applied by the Competition or another) then the Embargo shall continue to apply until the Club can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Board that the circumstances that resulted in the Embargo no longer apply.

6.2 Registration Period

The Registration Period shall commence at midnight and end at 5.00pm on the following dates

STEP	COMMENCES	ENDS
1 & 2	On the day after a Club's final Match of the Playing Season	Fourth Thursday in March
3 & 4	On the day immediately following the AGM of the competition.	Fourth Thursday in March

5 & 6	On the day when the online registration process opens	Fourth Thursday in March
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After 5.00pm on the fourth Thursday in March new registrations, new loans, and transfer of registrations will be declined or will be approved subject to such limitations and restrictions as the Board may determine and, if so determined, the Player shall only be eligible to play in the matches for which permission is granted by the Board.

6.3 Player Status

- 6.3.1 The status of a player may be:-
Contract Player
Non-Contract
Work Experience
Scholar
Short Term Loan
Long Term Loan
Youth Loan

6.4 Registrations and Registration Procedures

6.4.1 Registration Deadlines / Player Eligibility

A Player will only be eligible to play in a match organised by the Company under these Rules if the appropriate information is provided via the Online Player Registration System and received by the Company at least four (4) hours before the scheduled kick-off time of such match. No Player whose registration, including Loan registrations, is received by the Company less than four (4) hours before the match organised by the Company in which he is required to play will be eligible. Any loan registration must also be approved by The FA and relevant league before that Player can be considered eligible to play.

The registration of a Player is not automatically valid, and it is the responsibility of the Club to ensure the player is NOT registered with any other Club. When the Player involved was previously registered with another Club it is necessary for that Club to complete a transfer form via the Online Player Registration System or for the players' original registration to have been cancelled prior to or at the same time as the registration to the new Club.

The registration of a Player by facsimile or electronic transmission is not automatically valid and it is the responsibility of the Club to ensure the player is NOT registered with any other Club. When the Player involved was previously registered with another Club it is necessary for that Club to complete the standard Competition transfer form or to have completed the standard Competition cancellation of registration form prior to or at the same as the registration to the new Club.

Registration of existing players from the previous season who wish to register with the same club for the following season, may be made online prior to the commencement of the playing season and the CLUB must ensure that the player signs the existing players form.

Clubs are responsible for all players being validly registered before fielding any player in a Competition match. Any Club found to have been in breach of any part of Rule 6.4.1 will be deemed to have played an ineligible player and will be dealt with in accordance with Rule 6.9.

- 6.4.2 Each Club must have at least sixteen (16) Players registered seven (7) days before the start of each Playing Season.

[6.4.3] Not applicable

- 6.4.4 In the event of a Player signing registration forms for more than one Club, priority of registration shall decide for which Club he is entitled to play. The Club submitting the latter form shall be notified of the prior registration of the Player, and the circumstances under which the registration forms were signed shall be investigated by the Board. Any Player found to have signed registration forms for more than one Club, or any Club found to have knowingly induced a registered Player of another Club to sign a registration form, shall be dealt with by the Board in such a manner as it shall think fit.

- 6.4.5 Except where mutually agreed between the Clubs in writing, and specific approval has been given by the Board a Club cannot register or transfer more than one Player, contract, or non-contract, from another Club at

any one time unless a period of 28 days has elapsed between the first and the second notice of approach or acknowledgement.

6.4.6 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.

LOAN AND WORK EXPERIENCE THRESHOLDS Number and Type of Registrations Permitted

6.4.7 Subject to Rule 6.4.8 the following numbers and types of registrations are permitted during a Playing Season:

<u>TYPE OF REGISTRATION</u>	<u>WHO DOES IT APPLY TO?</u>	<u>LENGTH</u>	<u>RIGHT OF RECALL</u>	<u>NUMBER PERMITTED DURING PLAYING SEASON</u>	<u>NUMBER PERMITTED TO/FROM ONE CLUB</u>
<u>SHORT TERM LOAN</u> (Also see Rule 6.6.2)	<u>Any Contract Player</u>	<u>Minimum: 28 days.</u> <u>Maximum: Until end of Playing Season ^1</u>	<u>Cannot be recalled within first 28 days (except goalkeepers)</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>2 permitted to or from any one Club or club at any one time</u>
<u>LONG TERM LOAN</u> (Also see Rule 6.6.3)	<u>Any Contract Player</u>	<u>(a) Full Playing Season; or</u> <u>(b) Any date during first professional game registration period to any date during second professional game registration period; or</u> <u>(c) Any date during second professional game registration period to the end of Playing Season</u>	<u>Within the first or second registration period during which players may be registered for a professional men's club (except where the Player is a goalkeeper or where the Player is being transferred permanently)</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>2 permitted to or from any one Club or club at any one time</u>
<u>YOUTH LOAN</u> (Also see Rule 6.6.4)	<u>(a) scholars in 2nd or 3rd year of a Scholarship at a Premier League or EFL club</u> <u>(b) Contract Players aged 20 or below on 1 July immediately preceding the Playing Season</u>	<u>Minimum: 28 days</u> <u>Permitted at any time of the Playing Season</u> <u>Cannot extend beyond the date immediately preceding the date of the Player's 21st birthday or the date of the Player's contract with their parent club expires</u>	<u>Player may continue to train and play for their parent club (in non-first team matches)</u>	<u>Unlimited (to or from clubs at Steps 1-4)</u>	<u>2 permitted to or from any one Club or club at any one time</u>
<u>WORK EXPERIENCE</u> (Also see Rule 6.6.5)	<u>Work Experience Player</u>	<u>No minimum or maximum limits</u>	<u>No specific restrictions on ability to recall player</u> <u>Player may</u>	<u>Unlimited</u>	<u>3 permitted to or from any one Club or club at any one time</u>

			<u>continue to play for their parent club (in non-first team matches)</u>		
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^{^1} Note: there are additional Short Term Loan restrictions for players registering from EFL clubs. These can be found in the EFL's Regulations.

6.4.8 No more than a combination of four(4) Short Term, Long Term or Youth Loans from any one club during a single playing season are permitted. One additional Youth Loan may be added to this figure.

- 6.4.9 A club may name up to a maximum of five (5) players on a Team Sheet who are registered as either a Short-Term Loan, Long Term Loan, [Youth Loan] or Work Experience. A breach of this rule by a Club which results in more than 5 of such players entering the field of play during the course of a Competition Match shall be treated as that club having played an ineligible player(s) and will be dealt with in accordance with Rule 6.9

Registration Embargo / Clubs in default of Payment obligations.

- 6.4.10 The Company may, at its discretion, refuse any further registration of players, i.e., place under a registration embargo, any Club which has not completed payment of a transfer or loan arrangement made with another Club (or club) or arranged for the payment to be adequately secured. The Club (or club) which holds the Player's Contract will continue to pay the Player in accordance with his Contract.

Additional Goalkeeper Registrations

- 6.4.11 The company at its discretion may approve at any time the registration of an additional goalkeeper on a short-term basis if none of the Club's registered goalkeepers are available ahead of a competitive Match.

6.5 TRANSFERS

- 6.5.1 The transfer of a Contract Player's registration from one Club to another must be in writing, on a completed transfer agreement that is signed by the Contract Player and the two Clubs and accompanied by the Player's contract and Registration form. The forms must be submitted via the relevant Online Player Registration System. Such Contract Player does not become a registered Player of the Club seeking his transfer until the forms have been approved by The FA and the Competition(s).

CANCELLATIONS

Where a Club cancels the registration of a Contract Player, for any reason whatsoever, the Club must submit a notification via the relevant Online Player Registration System or on the relevant Competition/FA

Form and such cancellation must be approved by the relevant parties. To be valid such notification must be signed by an authorised signatory of that Club and the Player.

Where a Club cancels the registration of a Non-Contract Player for any reason whatsoever, the Club must submit via the relevant Online Player Registration System and/or the relevant Competition form. To be valid, such notification must be signed by an authorised signatory of the Club.

TERMINATIONS

Where the registration of a Contract Player has been terminated by either the Club or the Player, this must be in accordance with the provisions Of the Player Statues Rules.

- 6.5.2 The transfer of a Non-Contract Player's registration from one Club to another must be (a) in writing, on the relevant Competition transfer form, signed by the Non-Contract Player and the two Clubs (as required by the Competition), and (b) submitted via the relevant Online Player Registration System for approval and registration. Such Non-Contract Player does not become a Registered Player of the Club seeking his transfer until the transfer has been approved by the Competition. A Non-Contract Player whose registration for a Club is cancelled or transferred for any reason whatsoever cannot, without the consent of the Board, return to his original Club until a minimum of fourteen (14) days has elapsed from the date of the cancellation or transfer.
- 6.5.3 A Club shall submit to the Board any contract it proposes to enter into which gives the Club or any other party to the proposed contract any rights relating to the transfer of the registration of a Player at a date in the future from or to the Club or any rights relating to the employment for the Player by the Club. Any such proposed contract shall be subject to the approval of the Board.

6.6 Temporary Transfers (Loans)

6.6.1 Where the Rules of the relevant League permit Short Term Loans, Youth Loans and Long-Term Loans of Contract players shall be allowed to or from Clubs in membership of:-

- The Premier League
- The EFL
- Any League operating at Step 1 to 6 of the National League System

on such terms and conditions as shall be mutually agreed by the two clubs and the player. For Loan Transfers between Clubs in the same Competition the transfer must be completed via the Online Player Registration System, with a Competition Temporary Transfer Form completed and retained by the Club. For Loan Transfers between Clubs in different Competitions the transfer must be completed via the Online Player Registration System, to include any applicable loan form (as communicated by The FA from time to time)

The player being taken on loan, must sign a Competition contract registration form which will be valid for the full period of the loan, including any extension to the loan period. If the original Loan agreement contains a pre-agreed recall clause, a Player may be recalled by the loaning Club submitting written confirmation to the borrowing Club, the Competition and The FA.

Where no pre-agreed recall clause exists, the cancellation must be agreed between the loaning Club, the borrowing Club and the Player. The loaning Club must submit written confirmation to the borrowing Club, the Competition and The FA.

The Competition's standard cancellation form must be used to prematurely end the Temporary Transfer period. The temporary registration for the borrowing Club will automatically be deemed to be cancelled upon maturity of the temporary transfer period.

Where a Short-Term Loan, (or Youth Loan) expires, and is not renewed so as to run continuously, any subsequent Short-Term Loan, of that Player to the same Club will be subject to a minimum duration of 28 days and will be considered a new loan (including for the purposes of Rule 6.4.7.

Guidance

A continuous renewal of a Short Term Loan (or Youth Loan) means that the start date of the renewal must commence from the date immediately following the date of the expiry of the last loan period. For example, if a loan expires on a Saturday, in order for it to be considered continuous, the extension must commence on the next day (i.e. the Sunday).

Any such loan continuation will not be accepted if the registering Club does not submit the relevant documents within 5 days of signature, or if the registering Club has played a fixture in the period between the date of expiry of the last loan and the time the relevant documents are submitted.

Where a Short-Term Loan (Youth Loan) or Long-Term Loan (or period of Work Experience) expires on or after the last match of the season and the Club finishes in a Play-off Position and both clubs agree, the Loans shall be extended to include the clubs remaining Play-Off Matches. Any such extension is not subject to any time limits that would otherwise apply and must be agreed in writing by the players' parent club and be registered with the Competition in accordance with these Rules. and registered with The FA in accordance with the Player Status Rules

6.6.2 Short Term Loan Transfers – A Club can have up to a maximum of Twelve (12) short term Loans during a playing season. The maximum period of a Short-Term Loan transfer must be twenty-eight (28) days with a maximum period to the end of the Playing Season. Clubs playing in Competitions at Steps 1 to 4 of the National League System may register players on a Short-Term Loan from clubs in the EFL.

The Competition shall not approve more than two (2) Short Term Loan transfers to or from any one club, EFL clubs, at any one time.

(subject to the overall limit of four (4) Players joining a Club from another club in any Playing Season as set out at Rule 6.6.1).

On completing the Competition Temporary Transfer Form (for internal Temporary Transfers) or FA form H3, (for Temporary Transfers involving two competitions) a Club must retain copies in case of dispute or if called in case requested by the Competition or The FA. Clubs must also take the appropriate action on the Online Player Registration System.

To extend the period of any Short-Term Loan transfer a further Competition Temporary Transfer Form (for internal Temporary Transfers) or FA form H3 (for Temporary Transfers involving two competitions) must be completed and copies retained as directed above. If the Short-Term Loan transfer is extended only the Club for whom the Player was originally registered will be allowed to cancel the agreement at any time within the

extension period, i.e., after 28 days. In the case of a goalkeeper Clubs may mutually agree, if they so wish, to include a recall clause in the agreement to enable the Club for who the Player was originally registered to recall the Player at any time during the loan period. Players other than goalkeepers may not be recalled within the first month, i.e., 28 days of any loan.

Any Short-Term Loan transfer which may terminate after the last day for registrations may be extended for a further period provided the loan period does not extend beyond the current Playing Season.

Short Terms Loan Transfers which become permanent before their expiry date shall not count against a Club's quota of days or Players.

6.6.3 Long Term Loan Transfers –Clubs may have up to a maximum of Six (6) Long Term Loan Transfers of any age during a Playing Season.

Clubs playing in Competitions at Steps 1 to 6 of the National League System may register players on a Long-Term Loan from other clubs playing in Competitions at Steps 1 to 6 of the National League System.

Only Clubs playing in Competitions at Steps 1 to 4 of the National League System may register players on a Long-Term Loan from clubs in the Premier League or EFL.

A Player on Long Term Loan may be recalled on any date from the beginning of the Loan until the agreed summer transfer window deadline, provided that the initial 28 days have elapsed, except in the case of a goalkeeper and within the agreed winter transfer window, except for a goalkeeper or where the Player is to be transferred permanently by the Club (or club) holding his registered contract in each case, subject to the agreement of the loaning Club, the borrowing Club and the Player which may be pre-agreed in a recall clause in the original Loan agreement.

To extend the period of any long-term loan transfer a further Competition Temporary Transfer Form (for internal Temporary Transfers) or FA form H3 (for Temporary Transfers involving two competitions) must be completed and copies retained as directed above.

The Competition shall not approve more than two (2) Long Term Loan transfers to or from any one club, including Premier League and EFL clubs, at any one time. (subject to the overall limit of four (4) Players joining a Club from another club in any Playing Season as set out at Rule 6.6.1).

6.6.4 Not Applicable

6.6.5 Not Applicable

6.7 CLUB LIST OF PLAYERS AND TRANSFER LIST

[Clubs shall furnish the Competition Secretary by 1st June with the following details:

6.7.1 a list of Contract Players whose agreements do not terminate at the end of the current season.

6.7.2 a list of contract Players in respect of whom the Club has exercised an Option in accordance with the Player Status Rules.

6.7.3 a list of Contract Players in respect of whom the existing agreements do not include an Option but which the Club is desirous of offering further engagements, in accordance with the Player Status Rules.

6.7.4 a list of Contract Players in respect of whom the Club has exercised an Option in accordance with the Player Status Rules but whose registration the Club is prepared to transfer.

6.7.5 a list of Contract Players the Club has released.

6.7.6 a list of all Players whose registration the Club wishes to be cancelled.

Clubs shall also complete the standard Competition forms and return these by this date.

A Club relegated from the EFL shall advise the Competition Secretary by 30th June the names of Players retained by that Club for the season, taking into consideration the contents of the EFL Regulations.

6.8 SUBSTITUTE PLAYERS

A Club at its discretion may use five substitute Players at any time in a match, provided this is in accordance with the Laws of the Game. A substitution can only be made when play is stopped for any reason and the Referee has given permission. When a Club is making a substitution, it shall use a board to show the number of the Player to be substituted and the number of the substitute Player. The substitution board used shall be branded as determined by the Competition.

A maximum of five substitutes may be nominated.

All nomination substitutes must be included on the official Team Sheet handed to the Referee before the match in accordance with Rule 8.20. A substitute may not be used to replace a Player who has been suspended from the match by the Match Officials.

If a Player does not take part in the match for which he is a nominated substitute, he shall be deemed as not having played for the Club in that match.

6.9 PLAYING AN INELIGIBLE PLAYER

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, (save for in relation to a knock-out match or matches – e.g. the Play-Offs – in which case the Club shall be disqualified from the relevant knock-out competition(s) and have levied upon it a fine. The Board may also order that such match or matches be replayed on such terms as are decided by the Board which may also levy penalty points against the Club in default.

The Company may vary this decision in respect of the points gained or disqualification only in circumstances where

- (a) the ineligibility is due to the failure to obtain an International Transfer Certificate or
- (b) where the ineligibility is related to a change in Player's status with the Club for whom he is registered or
- (c) where the Board determine that exceptional circumstances exist.

6.10 FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

- 6.10.1 Subject to clauses 6.10.2 to 6.10.7, and to the Rules and Regulations of The FA, a Club may negotiate a financial arrangement with its Players.
- 6.10.2 All Players under a written contract must be registered with the Competition and The FA.
- 6.10.3 All payments and benefits due and/or made to the Player must be shown in the contract.
- 6.10.4 All payments made to Players must be made by the Club and fully recorded in the accounting records of the Club.
- 6.10.5 All salaried payments (whether to Contract or Non-Contract Players) must be subject to PAYE and National Insurance.
- 6.10.6 All salary payments due on written Contracts must be stated gross, before PAYE and National Insurance deductions.
- 6.10.7 Any Players paid expenses should be reimbursed via an expense claim form. The club should retain all expense records in a format acceptable to HM Revenue and Customs.

7. CLUB COLOURS

- 7.1 On or before a date specified by the Company each year, every Club shall notify the Competition Secretary, in writing, of details of their first-choice colours for outfield players and their goalkeeper (shirts, shorts and socks) and such details shall be printed in the Handbook published by the Company for the ensuing Playing Season.

The colours registered by each Club shall be worn during the following season when playing at home. Shirts must be numbered 1 to 20 or 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. No changes to the first-choice colours or combination of colours shall be permitted without the consent of the Board Subject to the consent of the Board. each Club is authorised on one occasion per Playing Season to wear an alternative strip in a home match.

- 7.2 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 other Players in the match and the Match Officials.

Neck and cuff rim colours on shirts are not regarded as basic colours for the purpose of the Rule, subject to the foregoing a Club may, if it wishes, wear colours not registered with the Competition for away matches. It is the responsibility of the visiting Club to check that their colours will not clash.

The Goalkeeper may wear tracksuit trousers acceptable to the Match Referee.

- 7.3 No Club shall be permitted to register or play in shirts the colour of which is likely to cause confusion with the outfits worn by the Match Officials (i.e., black, or dark blue).
- 7.4 The Players' shirts must be clearly numbered in accordance with the Team Sheet handed to the match referee before a match and in the Match Day Programme and there must be no change of numbers during the match except for a change of goalkeeper or if permitted by the match referee because of a blood injury. [The shirt numbers, and short numbers if worn, used in all matches played under the jurisdiction of the Competition must be the official numbers as determined by the Competition.]
- 7.5 The Captain shall wear a distinguishing armband [provided by the Competition] to indicate his status.
- 7.6 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. When playing in other competitions the shirts of all Players must include the Competition logo
- 7.7 A club may apply to the Board for permission to use either (a) a variation of the Competition logo referred to in Rule 7.6 (for example, a variation in size or colour) or (b) in relation to one sleeve of the shirt only, and alternative in place of the Competition logo referred to in Rule 7.6 (for example, advertising) The cost of producing any variation or alternative shall be the sole responsibility of the applicant Club.
Advertising must comply with The FA's Kit and Advertising Regulations.
- 7.8 The colours of clothing worn by ball boys/girls must not clash with the colours of either competing Club and the Match Officials.

8. PLAYING OF MATCHES

ARRANGEMENT OF FIXTURES

- 8.1 The Board shall fix the date on which the Playing Season shall Commence.
- 8.2 All matches shall be played under the Rules and Regulations of The FA and in accordance with the Laws of the Game as determined by the International Football Association Board.
- 8.3 All Competition matches shall be arranged as soon as practicable. The copyright in all lists of arrangements of such fixtures shall be vested in the Company.
- 8.4 All matches shall be played on the home and away principle and the Board shall determine how the fixtures shall be arranged.
Saturday fixtures in the Competition shall take precedence over all other competitions in which a Club may engage with the exception of:
- The FA Challenge Cup/Welsh Cup
 - The FA Challenge Vase Competition
 - The Nominated Cup Competition for which the club is eligible, of the Affiliated Association to which it was first affiliated.
- Scheduled Saturday fixtures in the Competition must not be re-arranged without permission of the Competition Secretary. Clubs may be ordered to re-arrange outstanding matches, at the discretion of the Board, and where necessary their prospective opponents instructed accordingly. Clubs with open dates on Saturdays may be instructed to play any outstanding Competition fixture on such date. A minimum of 'six days' notice will be given in respect of any such arrangement.
Midweek fixtures in the Competition shall not take precedence over fixtures in the Nominated Cup Competition of the Affiliated Association to which it was first affiliated.
- 8.5 In the event of any club being required to play an FA Cup, FA Trophy or FA Vase match within 48 hours of a scheduled Competition fixture it shall have the right to apply in writing as soon as practically possible (but in any event no later than 48 hours after becoming aware of the relevant Cup fixture) to have its Competition fixture postponed with or without the consent of its opponent. At the same time as it makes the application a copy shall be sent to its opponent who shall raise any objection within a further 24 hours of notification. Thereafter the Competition shall decide in its absolute discretion as soon as reasonably possible as to whether or not the application is approved. The Competition may, in its absolute discretion, consider an application to Competition fixture made by an applicant Club more than 48 hours after it became aware of the relevant Cup fixture.
- 8.6 The standard kick-off times shall be as follows:
Saturday matches - 3.00 pm

Midweek matches - 7.45 pm [unless a Club notifies the Competition Secretary in writing before the commencement of each Playing Season to state that it wishes all its home midweek matches to kick off at pm]. All agreed changes to time of kick-off to be notified to the Board immediately for confirmation.

Clubs with ground sharing agreements must arrange for home matches to be played on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday. If a clash of fixtures occurs with the sharing Club and for any reason a match is unable to be played on a Saturday, the match must be played on either the day before i.e., on Friday, or the day after i.e., on Sunday. If Clubs are unable to agree on the date, then it will be played on the Sunday unless the Board decides otherwise. The decision of the Board shall be final and binding. Official bank holidays and Sundays - 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.

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 Competition Secretary.

The Competition 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.

- 8.7 The Board may change any Competition fixtures during the season to suit the overall interests of the Competition and shall have the power to decide whether a ground is suitable for Competition matches and to order a Club whose ground is deemed unsuitable to play its home matches at an alternative suitable ground.
- 8.8 Three weeks' notice is required from Clubs wishing to re-arrange a Saturday match to Friday evening or Sunday. A request made in less than this period of time will only be considered by the Board in exceptional circumstances and granted at their sole discretion.
- 8.9 A Club may not enter its first team in any outside competition, other than those listed in Rule 8.4, without the prior permission of the Board. The Competition Secretary must be informed in writing of all fixtures, postponements, abandonments, and results of all matches played in any other competition.
- 8.10 When a Club obtains the consent of the Board to postpone a fixture due to the non-availability of its Players, that Club shall be liable to pay any expenses directly attributable to such postponement which have been incurred, by the opposing Club. Any claim by the opposing Club must be submitted to the Competition Secretary within three working days of such postponement, with a copy to the Club that obtained the postponement. If the reason for the postponement is the illness of the Club's Players, medical certificates for those Players must be submitted to the Competition Secretary within three working days of such postponement together with a list of all Players registered by that Club with the Competition at the date of postponement with full details of each Player's inability to play entered against each name on the list. The amount of claim will be at the discretion of the Board.

PRE-MATCH ARRANGEMENTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

- 8.11 Each Club must take every precaution to keep its ground in good Playing condition and amenities (including floodlights) in good working order and complying with the Criteria Document throughout the Playing Season.
- 8.12 All Clubs must have a mobile telephone and an email address operational at all times. These will be listed in the Competition Handbook unless a Club requests otherwise.
- 8.13 The home Club shall advise the visiting Club and the Match Officials of the date and time of kick-off of each match and the team colours, including the colour of the goalkeeper's jersey, it will be wearing, to be received at least five days prior to the match and the visiting Club and the Match Officials must acknowledge receipt to be received at least three days before the match.

Where the home Club has an Artificial Football Turf Pitch. It shall advise the visiting Club and Match Officials of any footwear requirements that apply at least five days prior to the match. The visiting Club must disseminate this information to its players and club officials.

The visiting Club must include in its acknowledgement the team colours, including the colour of the goalkeeper's jersey, it will be wearing.

- 8.14 The home Club is responsible for publishing a full match programme acceptable to the Board for each of its Competition matches. A full match programme available electronically only shall be acceptable providing that each Club has approval from the Board before the commencement of the Playing Season and must be continuous for the whole of that Playing Season. A Team Sheet will not be considered sufficient to comply with this Rule.

The visiting Club must send in writing to the home Club details of their matchday squad and management team together with any supplementary information required by the Competition from time to time (this may include their club crest, Club history, up-to-date pen pictures of their current Players registered with the Competition for the season [latest team photograph] and/or kit colours at least five days before the scheduled date of the match between the two Clubs.

The home Club programme must include the details sent by the visiting Club in the match day programme.

Clubs will be responsible for all comments in their match day programme in respect of the Competition, the Company or other member Clubs, notwithstanding any disclaimers to the contrary. No part of a Club's programme issued for a match in any competition shall, in the opinion of the Board, bring the Competition or the Company into disrepute.

All Clubs will be responsible for their official website or similar computer related information system, which is within the public domain. Nothing shall be included on the website which in the opinion of the Board brings the Competition or the Company into disrepute.

- 8.15 The postponement of matches due to ground conditions must be carried out in accordance with Rule 14.2.
- 8.16 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.
- 8.17 The Board shall determine the policy of the Competition for the issuing of match day passes. A home Club cannot refuse the admission into the ground of an away Club Official, as defined in the Rules of the Association, save for that individual being subject to a suspension or banning order from the Association or Competition.
- 8.18 All clubs at Steps 1 to 4 are required to have a working and serviced defibrillator available at all home matches.

MATCH MANAGEMENT

- 8.19 Clubs shall be permitted access to the field of play at least sixty (60) minutes prior to the scheduled kick off time, such access to include the use of fully working floodlights where necessary. Players and Club officials accessing an Artificial Turf Pitch must adhere to any applicable footwear requirements.
- 8.20 All matches shall be of ninety minutes duration. The half time interval in all matches shall not exceed fifteen minutes. Any match which is not of ninety minutes duration may be ordered to stand as a completed match or replayed for the full period of ninety minutes or be awarded to the Club not at fault, as the Board may decide, on such terms as the Board shall decide.
- 8.21 Each Club must hand the Team Sheet containing 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 forty-five 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.
- 8.22 Any Club altering its team selection or numbering after Team Sheets have been exchanged may be fined. A Player who is named on the Team Sheet 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.
- 8.23 Clubs taking the field of play – For all matches under the jurisdiction of the Competition, Clubs shall be required to enter the field of play together, preceded by the Match Officials, not less than 5 (five) minutes before the advertised time of kick-off.
- 8.24 Each Club shall be prepared to kick-off at the scheduled time unless a satisfactory explanation is offered. Any Club commencing a Competition match with less than 11 Players may be subject to a fine. Each team participating in a match shall represent the full available strength of each competing Club.
- 8.25 In all Competition Matches, the number of Clubs Players and officials seated on the team benches, in the designated technical area, must not exceed 11 unless the team bench facility provides more than 11 individual seats.
- 8.26 Only one person at a time has the authority to convey tactical instructions to the Players during the match from within the technical area.
- 8.27 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.
- 8.28 The occupants of the technical area must behave in a responsible manner at all times. Misconduct by occupants of this area will be reported by the Referee to The FA, who shall have the power to impose sanctions as deemed fit. Any occupant dismissed from the technical area shall immediately go to a location within the ground from which they cannot view the remainder of the game.
- 8.29 With the exception of the team manager, the team coach and any substitutes who are warming up or warming down, all other personnel are to remain seated on the trainer's bench. The team manager or team coach is allowed to move to the edge of the technical area to issue instructions to his team.

- 8.30 Not applicable
- 8.31 Not applicable

MATCH STREAMING BY A CLUB

- 8.32.1 Unless determined otherwise by The FA, a Club participating in a Competition Match may offer a live stream of that match online subject to compliance with the following conditions:
 - 8.32.1 Consent of the Board to the live stream taking place must be obtained.
 - 8.32.2 The two competing Clubs must consent to the live stream taking place and agree any associated live streaming arrangements (including the costs associated with those arrangements, if applicable);
 - 8.32.3 Subject to Rule 8.32.4, the live stream cannot take place during the Transmission-Free Period.
 - 8.32.4 Where the live stream is to take place during the Transmission-Free Period, it must be geo-blocked so that it is not accessible in the UK (or any Crown Dependency of the UK); and
 - 8.32.5 A copy of the live stream footage must be provided to The FA, the Board or the opposing Club upon request following the Competition Match.
- 8.33 A Club must provide evidence of compliance with the conditions set out in Rule 8.32 upon request by The FA or the Board
- 8.34 The FA or the Board may take action against any Club for a failure to comply with any of the conditions set out in Rule 8.32 or any failure to comply with a request made pursuant to Rule 8.33.

POST MATCH MANAGEMENT

- 8.35 Each Club [shall enter information from the match result form by the Method instructed by the Competition and] shall submit the fully completed copy of the appropriate match result forms by first class post, [or facsimile,] [or email,] [or the relevant IT system], [or as otherwise instructed by the competition] to the Appointing Authority and the Competition [within 3 days of the match]. 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 sent to the Appointing Authority within three days of the match by the method instructed by the Appointing Authority. Clubs in default of any provision of the Rule will be subject to a fine for each offence.
- 8.36 In the event that a match is abandoned before half time the Club, Playing at home will issue a voucher to each spectator valid for free admission if the match is ordered to be replayed. In the event that the match is abandoned during or after the half time interval the Club playing at home is not obliged to issue such a voucher.
- 8.37 In the event that a match is abandoned for reasons over which neither Club has control, the club playing at home shall retain the gate receipts for such uncompleted match and the Board shall determine the terms upon which any replayed match shall be played.
- 8.38 In the event of a match being abandoned due to the conduct of one Club or its members or supporters the Board has the power to order that the match is not replayed and to award either one or three points to the Club not at fault. It cannot levy a financial penalty due to the conduct of a Club.
- 8.39 In the event of the match being abandoned due to the conduct of both Clubs or their members or supporters no financial penalty can be applied by the Board to either Club and the Board shall determine whether the original match stands as a completed match or is replayed and, if replayed, the terms upon which the match is to be replayed.
- 8.40 In the event of a match having to be postponed and one Club is found to be at fault then opponents for that match shall be compensated by the Club at fault. In the case of a visiting Club where it has undertaken all or part of its journey then travelling expenses and meal allowances may be claimed based on the total mileage involved in the whole journey. In exceptional circumstances, expenses for overnight accommodation up to a maximum of 18 persons may be claimed. In some instances, compensation may also be claimed when neither of the Clubs is at fault. The Board will determine the amount of compensation payments to be made, if any.
All claims for compensation by either Club in the case of either 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.

POST MATCH ADMINISTRATION

- 8.41 The home Club shall be responsible for notifying the Competition immediately following the conclusion of each home Competition match the result of that match together with the attendance, the times of all goals scored in the match and the scorer of each goal. In any FA or AFFILIATED ASSOCIATION Competition the home Club if two Clubs are playing the tie, or the Club if the match involves a team outside of the Competition, must also follow this procedure.
- 8.42 In the event of the match being postponed, not completed, or abandoned, the home Club must immediately telephone the Competition results service, the Competition Secretary and, in the case of a match postponement, the Appointing Authority, the visiting Club and the Match Officials. When a postponement occurs in any FA or County Cup competition, the home Club, if two Clubs are playing the tie, or the Club if the match involves a team outside of the Competition, must also follow this procedure.
- 8.43 Where a match has been postponed for any reason, the two Clubs concerned must agree within 7 days of the postponement a new date (which shall, save in exceptional circumstances, be within 42 days of the original date) and in default the Board is empowered to order Clubs to play on a date it considers suitable.
- Any Club without just cause failing to fulfil an engagement to play a Competition match on the appointed date shall for each offence be liable to expulsion from the Competition and/ or such other disciplinary action the Board may determine, including the deduction of up to a maximum of three points from the offending Club's record, any expenses incurred by their opponents, and a fine.
- In the event of a Club being in breach of the previous paragraph of this Rule then the Board may award points to the Club not at fault as if the match had been played and the League table shall reflect the position as if the match had been played with the result awarded by the Board.

9. REGISTERED INTERMEDIARIES/ AGENTS

- 9.1 A Intermediary/Agent cannot have an involvement in any Club in an official capacity (as defined by the Board) nor may he hold office with the Competition.
- 9.2 All Clubs must comply with The FA Regulations concerning intermediaries/Agents.

10. FINANCIAL RECORDS

- 10.1 All Clubs shall keep their accounting records for recording the fact and nature of all receipts and payments so as to disclose with reasonable accuracy, at any time, the financial position including the assets and liabilities of the Club.
- 10.2 The home Club shall retain all gate receipts. Where a match is declared all ticket the Away [visiting] Club shall be entitled to 15% of the total number of tickets available (or a minimum of 600 at step 3, whichever is the greater), subject to any stipulation by the relevant safety authority affecting these figures. **A reasonable allocation of the total disabled spectator accommodation where appropriate shall be made available to disabled supporters of the Away Club.**
- Clubs must ensure that all gate receipts are fully and properly recorded and accounted for in the accounting records of the club.
- Clubs should have a system in operation for home games that enables them to accurately report on the following.
- A record of all tickets sold in advance.
 - A reconciliation of cash received by category of entrant through each turnstile.
 - The number of entrants through each turnstile
 - A schedule of the numbers admitted to parts of the stadium that do not pass through a turnstile.
 - A list of complimentary tickets authorised.
- This documentation should be reconciled to the overall takings and declared attendance for each home game.
- 10.3 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.

- 10.4 In the event of a transfer of a Player where a consideration is agreed, the consideration can only be paid between the two clubs (the transferor and transferee clubs).

The full name of each contracting club should be stated in the transfer agreement. The full consideration involved must be recorded in the accounting records of both clubs.

- 10.5 Any Club temporarily transferring a Player's registration to another club should invoice the receiving club in accordance with the terms of the loan agreement. The Player concerned should remain on the payroll of the Club holding his permanent registration for the period of the loan.

- 10.6 All loans extended to a Club must be documented in full in the accounting records of the Club.

Documentation supporting each loan must be retained and should include the following information:

The value of the loan

The length of the loan

The interest rate charged, and whether this is fixed or variable,

Repayment terms

The full names of the individual or corporate body extending the loan.

The terms in the event of a default on the loan

The document should be signed by two directors, Officers or Executive Committee Members who are independent of the party extending the loan.

- 10.7 Within nine months of its accounting reference date, each Club shall submit to the Company a copy of its full annual financial statements as Within nine months of its accounting reference date, each Club shall submit to the Company a copy of its full annual financial statements as approved by the Club's board or committee and confirmation that the annual financial statements have been circulated to its members/shareholders.

- 10.8 All Clubs must comply with The FA's 'Third Party Interest in Players' Regulations

11. FOOTBALL CREDITORS

Where a Club defaults in making any payments to any Football Creditor, the Club shall be subject to such penalty as the Board may decide, including, but not limited to, an Embargo; a points deduction; a Bond; a suspension; or any combination thereof.

12. CHAMPION, RELEGATION

- 12.1 Three points will be awarded for a win at home or away and one point for a drawn match at home or away.

- 12.2 At the end of the Playing Season of each competition a table will be compiled showing the playing record of each Club in each division of the Competition. The playing record of each Club must include any points deduction made by the Competition or by the FA and in any situation where points per game are calculated the calculation will be made after taking into account the deduction of any such points.

The position of each Club in the table so compiled shall be determined in order with the Club being awarded the highest number of points being first and the Club being awarded the second highest number of points being placed second and so on. In the event of two or more clubs being awarded the same number of points the highest placed Club shall be decided as follows:

- 12.2.1 Goal difference – If any two or more Clubs have scored the same number of points their position in the division shall be determined on goal difference, that is to say, the difference between the total number of goals scored by and against a Club in League Matches in that Season, and the higher or highest placed Club shall be the Club with the higher or highest goal difference. The goals scored against by each Club shall be deducted from the goals scored by that Club and the largest positive and smallest negative difference shall be placed the highest.
- 12.2.2 In the event of the goal difference being equal the highest placed Club shall be the Club which has scored the most goals.
- 12.2.3 In the event that two or more Clubs have the same goal difference and have scored the same number of goals then the highest placed Club shall be the Club which has won the most matches.

- 12.2.4 In the event of the two Clubs still being equal the Club which has the better playing record against the other Club in their head-to-head Competition matches during the Season will be the highest placed Club.
- 12.2.5 If the records of two or more Clubs are still equal and it is necessary for any reason to determine the position of each then the Clubs concerned shall play off a deciding match or matches on a neutral ground or grounds with the net gate money after deducting the usual matches expenses being divided equally between the two competing Clubs.
- 12.3 Promotion, relegation and lateral movement of Clubs shall be in accordance with the principles established by the Leagues Committee of The FA.
- 12.4 If no Clubs are eligible or wish promotion, the number of Clubs to be relegated will be reduced.
- 12.5 In the event of a Club, not being placed in a relegation position at the end of the season, wishing to resign from the Competition at the end of the season, or having been removed from membership under the Articles the number of Clubs to be relegated shall be reduced accordingly.
- 12.6 In the event of a Club opting to be relegated or being removed from membership under the Articles such Club or Clubs will replace the Club or Clubs otherwise due for relegation in accordance with Regulation 5.4 in the Regulations for the Establishment and Operation of the National League System.

13. INSOLVENCY PROVISIONS

13.A. SPORTING SANCTIONS

- 13.A.1 If an Insolvency Event shall occur in relation to any Club that Club shall be deducted 10 (ten) points.
- 13.A.2 Where a Club takes or suffers an Insolvency Event:-
- 13.A.2.1 during the Playing Season but prior to 5:00 p.m. on the fourth Thursday in March, the points deduction will apply immediately;
- 13.A.2.2 during the Playing Season but after 5:00 p.m. on the fourth Thursday in March then Rule 13.3 shall apply; and
- 13.A.2.3 outside the Playing Season, the points deduction shall apply in respect of the following Playing Season such that the Club starts that Playing Season on minus 10 points (including a Club or Clubs Relegated from the higher League, where such Club shall be subject to Rule 13 of the higher League Rules) or where it has been necessary under the National League System Regulations for a Club or Clubs to be moved from one league to another and such Club would have been subject to Rule 13.
- 13.A.3 Where the circumstances set out in Rule 13.2.2 apply and at the end of that playing Season, having regard to the number of Competition points awarded (ignoring any potential deduction):-
- a) the Club would be relegated in accordance with The higher League Rules, the points deduction will apply in the next following Season; or
- b) the Club would not be relegated as aforesaid; the points deduction will apply in that Playing Season and higher League Rules will then apply (if appropriate) following the imposition of the points deduction.
- 13.A.4 For the purposes of this Rule 13
- a) where any Insolvency Event is taken or suffered other than on a Business Day (as defined by the Insolvency Rules 1986 as amended from time to time) then for the purposes of determining the timing of any points deduction only the action taken or suffered will be deemed to have been taken or suffered on the immediately preceding Business Day; and
- b) if a Company Voluntary Arrangement is approved, then approval of that Company Voluntary Arrangement shall be deemed to have been given at the date of the first meeting of creditors called to consider that Company Voluntary Arrangement, and not the date of any adjourned meeting of the creditors or the meeting of shareholders.
- 13.A.5 For the avoidance of doubt, where a Club is subject to more than one Insolvency Event (for example Administration followed by a Company Voluntary Arrangement), the Club shall only be deducted one set of 10 points, such deduction to apply with effect from the first Insolvency Event.
- 13.A.6 The Competition shall serve the Club with written notice of the points deduction (the 'Notice').
- 13.A.7 A Club may appeal against such a points deduction. Any such appeal will be conducted in accordance with, Part C: Appeals: Non-Fast Track of the Disciplinary Regulations save that the following paragraphs of those Regulations will not apply –1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 21, 23, and 24 In place of those Regulations, the following Rules 13A.8 to 13A.12 will apply.

13.A.8 The Notice of Appeal shall be lodged with the FA within 7 days of the date of the Notice.

13.A.9 A Club may appeal against an automatic deduction of points solely on the ground that the insolvency proceedings arose solely as a result of a Force Majeure event (the 'Appeal'). For the purposes of this Rule 13, a 'Force Majeure' event shall be an event that, having regard to all of the circumstances, is reasonably considered to have been unforeseeable and unavoidable.

13.A.10 The Appeal Board shall have the power to:-

13.A.10.1 Confirm the deduction of ten points; or

13.A.10.2 Set aside the deduction of ten points and substitute a deduction of
Such lower number of points as it shall deem appropriate; or

13.A.10.3 Order that there shall be no sanction at all.

13.A.11 the decision of the Appeal Board shall be final and binding. Any costs incurred by any party in appeal proceedings brought before the Appeal Board shall be met by the Club in any event and shall be considered as a sum due to the Company.

13.A.12 Any sanctions imposed pursuant to these provisions shall not be taken into account in respect of any other sanctions, penalties or fines that may be imposed by the Competition in respect of any breaches of its Rules, Regulations or Articles of Association by the Club.

13.B. GENERAL INSOLVENCY

13.B.1 In the event of a Club entering an Insolvency Event between the end of the AGM and start of the AGM immediately following thereafter ('the next AGM') then it shall automatically be relegated by one Step at the next AGM, unless one of the following requirements has been met, namely

(i) Prior to the next AGM it has Paid in Full all its creditors (including but not limited to Football Creditors); or

(ii) Prior to the next AGM it has Paid in Full its Football Creditors and entered a compliant Creditor Compromise. For the purposes of this Rule, a Creditor Compromise shall be considered compliant if it provides for the following:

That all Creditors will be paid in Full.

The first payment under the terms of the Creditor Compromise shall be made within 28 days of the approval of the Creditor Compromise and shall constitute a minimum of 10% of the total sum payable.

The balance shall be paid in equal amounts over the remaining period of the Creditor Compromise.

The period of the Creditor Compromise shall not extend beyond three years from the date of approval.

Notwithstanding the above, in the event of a Club being subject to an Insolvency Event at the date of the AGM, then the Club may be subject to such sanction as the Board may determine, (including expulsion from membership of the Competition) unless the Board is satisfied that by no later than 5pm on 31st July (or, if the 31st July falls on a weekend, 5pm on the immediately preceding Business Day) that the Club (or any new entity to which its membership is subsequently transferred under 2.9.2 above) is in a financial position to compete all of its fixtures for the immediate following Playing Season.

This sanction shall apply in addition to any Club being relegated pursuant to its playing record in the same period namely that in the event of the Club having already been relegated by one Step it shall be relegated two Steps.

This provision is subject to Rule 2.9.1 in respect of Clubs which have transferred their membership pursuant to an Insolvency Event and in that case where there is any conflict between any provision of Clause 14 and 2.9.1 then this Clause 14 shall prevail.

13.B.2 A Club shall not be eligible for promotion or to compete in the Play Offs, at the end of the Playing Season if at 5pm on the date on which the last scheduled League fixture is due to be played that Club:

a) has entered an Insolvency Event between the date of the AGM and 5pm on the date on which the last scheduled League fixture is played and has not Paid in Full all its creditors to which the Insolvency Event applies (including but not limited to Football Creditors) or Paid in Full all its Football Creditors and entered a Creditor Compromise to have Paid in Full all other creditors over an agreed period not extending more than three years following the date of approval of the Creditor Compromise: or

b) has not complied with the terms of a Creditor Compromise by which it is bound or is to seek to extend the period of the Creditor Compromise.

13.B.3 The sanctions contained herein shall be in addition to and not in substitution for any other sanctions contained within the Rules and, in particular, the sanctions set out in Rule 13.A. For the avoidance of doubt, where a Club is subject to more than one connected Insolvency Event, for example Administration followed by a Company Voluntary Arrangement, any sanction applied to it in accordance with Rule 13.B.1 shall be applied in one Playing Season only except as provided for in Rule 13.B.1

Compliance With/Extension of Creditor Compromises

13.B.4 Any Club must inform the Competition in writing (and provide supporting evidence) within seven (7) days of the Club:

- (i) making a payment under the terms of a Creditor Compromise and provide evidence of that payment.
- (ii) becoming aware of any failure to comply with the terms of any Creditor Compromise entered into by it (including the failure to make a payment by the due date) or
- (iii) making an application to extend or vary the terms of the Creditor Compromise entered into by it and provide a copy of the application.
- (iv) completing all its obligations under an Insolvency Event and receiving confirmation of such from the relevant Insolvency Practitioner; or
- (v) becoming aware of any consent by creditors to compromise the whole or part of the debt admitted into the Creditor Compromise

13.B.5 Following the approval of a Creditor Compromise, if creditors subsequently consent to compromise the whole or part of the debt admitted to the Creditor Compromise or if any Club makes a successful application to vary the terms of its Creditor Compromise so that the Creditor Compromise is not compliant as provided for in Rule 14.B.1 then that Club shall be automatically relegated by one Step at the end of the Playing Season in which the event takes place. If the Club has already been relegated due to its position in the final table of the Division in which it is competing, then it shall be relegated two Steps.

13.B.6 In the event of any Club

- (i) Failing to comply with the terms of any Creditor Compromise entered into by it (whether securing Payment in Full of all of its creditors or not) including the failure to make a payment by the due date; and/or
- (ii) Breaching any of the provisions of Rule 13.B.4 or failing to notify the Competition of any consent by creditors to compromise the whole or part of the debt admitted thereby rendering the Creditor Compromise as non-compliant as required in Rule 13.B.1.

Then the Board shall have the power to impose such sanction as it deems appropriate, including, but without limitation to expulsion of that Club, the relegation of that club, the deduction of points and an Embargo.

13.B.7 Where a Club has transferred its membership under Rule 2.9.2 the Provisions of Rule 13B in relation to a Creditor Compromise shall be applied to the former entity that was subject to the Insolvency Event and/or the new entity

13.B.8 National League Only

13.B.9 In the case of a Club or Clubs relegated from a league in the National League System or subject to lateral movement under the National League System Regulations, Rule 13.B.1 shall apply from the date of the AGM of the League of which the Club or Clubs were a member in the immediately preceding Playing Season where the AGM of the Company is later.

14. MATCH OFFICIALS

14.1 Match Officials for all Competition matches shall be appointed by the Appointing Authority.

- 14.2 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. Inspections should be carried out wherever possible in sufficient time to avoid unnecessary travel by the visiting team.
- 14.3 In the event of any of the Match Officials appointed for a match not being in attendance at the match or becoming unable to complete the match it shall be completed under the control of the remaining Match Officials unless the competing Clubs are able to agree upon a substitute who is acceptable to the Match Referee; should the appointed Match Referee fail to appear then the senior Assistant Referee must take charge. Any substitute agreed for a match shall be considered a Match Official for the purposes of that match.
- In the event that a Club causes a match to be abandoned in relation to the operation of this Rule then that Club shall be charged with failing to fulfil a fixture (Rule 8.37 refers).
- For matches where neutral assistants are not appointed, each team shall provide a Club Assistant Referee. Any player named as a substitute must not act as a Club Assistant Referee. Any Club in breach of this rule will be liable to a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- 14.4 Match Officials should be present at the appointment at least 60 minutes 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.
- 14.5 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.
- 14.6 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 the method instructed by the Appointing Authority within 3 days of the match.
- 14.7 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 (including matches abandoned for any reason). 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.
- 14.8 The home Club shall be responsible for providing Assistant Referees with distinctive flags of a suitable size in an acceptable condition.
- 14.9 Three match balls proposed to be used in the match and, if applicable, supplied by the Company under a ball sponsorship agreement must be submitted to and approved by the Referee before the commencement of the match in his/her dressing room.
- 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. [The official Competition match ball must be used in all Competition matches and pre-match warm-ups.]
- 14.10 The away Club is responsible for the provision of its own practice balls for use prior to the start of each match. The home Club shall supply to the visiting Club a minimum of three practice balls for use prior to the start of the match. The balls provided must be in good condition and, if applicable as supplied by the Competition under a ball sponsorship agreement.
- 14.11 Match Officials officiating in Competitions using the reporting functionality in The FA's Match Official Administration System (MOAS) must report all breaches of Rule via MOAS within 48 hours of the conclusion of the match.
- Match Officials officiating in Competitions not using the reporting functionality in MOAS must report all breaches of Rule to the Competition Secretary in writing within three days of the match on the appropriate form by first class post or electronically.

15. WITHDRAWAL OF CLUBS

- 15.1 A Club must notify the Company not later than 31st March each year of its intention to withdraw from the Competition at the end of that Playing Season. Withdrawal of either a reserve or Youth Team must be notified as early as possible but in any event by the date of the Competition AGM. Failure to do so will make a Club liable to a fine .

This Rule shall not operate so as to preclude promotion, relegation or Lateral movement of any Club to another competition in accordance with Rule 12.

- 15.2 If, between the holding of the Company annual general meeting and the commencement of the next Playing Season, any Club either:
- (i) ceases to operate for any reason; or
 - (ii) gives notice to the Company that it does not intend to compete in the Competition during the next Playing Season then no adjustment shall be made to the number of Clubs participating in the Competition for that Playing Season and the remaining Clubs will form the Competition for that Playing Season.

- 15.3 If, after the commencement of a Playing Season, any Club either:
- (i) ceases to operate for any reason; or
 - (ii) gives notice to the Company that it does not intend to continue competing in the Competition for any reason

Then the Company will expunge the playing record of that Club and any monies due to that Club from the Company shall be forfeited. The Company shall have the discretion to issue charges against that Club and to issue fines against that Club in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

- 15.4 From the operative date in Rule 15.2 or 15.3, the Club concerned shall no longer be a member of the Company and shall not be entitled to any further payment from the Company but may be required to make payment to the Company.

16. PROTESTS, APPEALS, DISPUTES ARISING FROM PLAYER CONTRACTS

Protests, claims or complaints relating to the Rules.

- 16.1 Subject to Rules 16.5 to 16.10 below, all protests, claims or complaints relating to these Rules shall be heard and determined by the Board, (or a sub-committee duly appointed by the Board) which shall have the power to regulate its own procedure. The Clubs or Players protesting, claiming or complaining must email such protest, claim or complaint to the competition secretary and deposit a fee which shall be forfeited in the event of the protest, claim or complaint not being upheld, and the unsuccessful party (or parties) may, in addition, be ordered to pay the costs at the direction of the Board.
- 16.2 All such protests claims and complaints must be received in writing by the Competition Secretary within fourteen days of the event or decision to which the protest, claim or complaint relates.
- 16.3 The Board may compel any party to the protest, claim or complaint to pay such expenses as the Board shall direct.
- 16.4 An intention to appeal against a decision of the Board must be lodged with The FA within seven days of the Board providing written notification of its decision.

A notice of appeal against a decision of the Board must be lodged with The FA within fourteen days of the written notification of its decision, accompanied by the relevant fee which may be forfeited in the event of the appeal not being upheld. A copy of the notice of appeal must also be sent to the Competition Secretary.

All appeals to The FA must be lodged in accordance with- Part C: Appeals Non-Fast Track of The FA's Disciplinary Regulations.

Disputes arising from a Player's Contract

Disciplinary Matters

- 16.5 Within seven days of receipt of any notice of a fine or suspension imposed by a Club under the Player's contract, the Player may appeal that decision to the Board by giving notice of appeal to the Club and the Board. The Board shall have the power to regulate its own procedure and shall hear the appeal within fourteen days of receipt of the notice of appeal. The grounds of appeal available to the Player shall not be limited and the Board shall have full power to review the facts and any evidence (including hearing from any relevant witnesses).
- 16.6 Within seven days of receipt of the Board's decision, either the Club or the Player may appeal against the decision of the Board to the Contractual Disputes Tribunal in accordance with the Player Status Rules. An appeal to the Contractual Disputes Tribunal shall be heard within 14 days of receipt of the notice of further appeal or, if exceptional circumstances exist which means that the appeal cannot be heard in that timeframe,

it shall be heard as soon as practicable. Any reference to the 'League Appeals Committee' in the Player's contract shall be deemed as a reference to the Contractual Disputes Tribunal.

Termination

- 16.7 A Club, on giving fourteen days' notice to a Player to terminate his Player's contract, must state in the notice his right of appeal to the Board and also the address of the Competition Secretary to whom he must appeal. The notice must advise the Player of the necessity of forwarding two copies of his appeal with the deposit fee specified in the Fees Tariff, to the Competition Secretary within seven days of the receipt of the notice from the Club. A copy of such notice must be received by the Competition Secretary within seven days of the sending of the notice in order to be valid.
- 16.8 A Player on giving fourteen days' notice to his Club to terminate his Player's contract must also notify the Company and The FA of the reasons for the termination of the agreement. . A copy of such notice must be received by the Competition Secretary within seven days of the sending of the notice in order to be valid.
- 16.9 If the recipient of a notice referred to in Rules 16.7 and 16.8 above wishes to do so, he may appeal against the relevant notice to the board within seven days of the date of receipt of the notice in writing by email to the Competition Secretary with the relevant appeal fee as set out in Schedule A to these Rules. The Board shall have the power to regulate its own procedure. The grounds of appeal available to the appellant shall not be limited and the Board shall have full power to review the facts and any evidence (including hearing from any relevant witnesses).
- 16.10 Within seven days of receipt of the Board's decision, either the Club or the Player may appeal against the decision of the Board to the Contractual Disputes Tribunal in accordance with the Player Status Rules. An appeal to the Contractual Disputes Tribunal shall be heard within 14 days of receipt of the notice of further appeal or, if exceptional circumstances exist which means that the appeal cannot be heard in that timeframe, it shall be heard as soon as practicable. Any reference to the 'League Appeals Committee' in the Player's contract shall be deemed as a reference to the Contractual Disputes Tribunal.

17. MISCONDUCT OF CLUBS, OFFICERS, PLAYERS

a. Undertakings to be given by Club Employees

All Clubs must incorporate in any contracts of employment with their employees, including Player, an undertaking on the part of the employee not to bring The Competition or any Club into disrepute and an undertaking on the part of the employee not knowingly to do anything or omit to do anything which will cause the Club to be in breach of the Laws of the Game, the Rules of the Football Association or the Rules of the Competition.

Without prejudice to the generality of this rule, all Clubs must ensure they, and where appropriate any Officers of the Club, comply with the obligations of the Football Association's Owners' and Directors'_Test.

b. Misconduct in pre-arranging the result of matches.

Any Club, Official or Player offering or receiving a payment or any form of inducement to or from any Club or the Official or Player of any Club; or any Club, Official or Player receiving or seeking to receive any payment or other form of inducement from any other person or organisation to win, lose, or draw a Match under the jurisdiction of the Competition or in which the Club participates by reason of membership of the Competition shall be deemed guilty of misconduct.

c. 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.

18. TROPHY

The Company shall present to the Winners and Runners Up of all divisions in the Competition 20 souvenirs, 19 for the Players, and 1 for the team manager. 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.

The Clubs concerned will also receive a permanent souvenir. The trophies are the property of the Company and may never be won outright. A runners' up trophy and medals may also be awarded at the discretion of the Company.

The recipient Club shall be responsible for engraving their details on the trophy before returning same.

The following agreement shall be signed on behalf of the winners of the trophies:

"We, A.B. the ofFootball Club, C.D. and E.F members of and representing the said Club, having been declared winners of the [] Trophy and the same having been delivered to us by the said Competition, do hereby on behalf of the said Club, jointly and severally agree to return the same to the Competition Secretary, on or before 1st March next in good order and condition, suitably inscribed, in accordance with the Rules of the Competition and if the said 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."

Any Club not returning the Competition trophy by the due date, returning them in poor condition or without being engraved will be fined in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

19. ALTERATIONS TO RULES

No alteration to the Rules shall be made until they have been approved by The FA. Alterations to Rules shall be approved at a general meeting of the Company.

Proposals for alterations to Rules, together with the name of their proposers and seconders, shall be received by the Competition Secretary not later than 31st October prior to the date fixed for the annual general meeting of the Company in each year or not later than eight weeks before the holding of an Extraordinary General Meeting called for the purpose of amending the Rules.

20. ADMISSION CHARGES

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

Admission charges must be the same for home and visiting supporters at Competition matches for equivalent accommodation. If there is no equivalent accommodation, the Board may in its absolute discretion consider the charges set by the home Club and determine a reasonable equivalent admission charge for visiting supporters, which shall be implemented by the home Club until the end of the current Playing Season.

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

Concessionary admission charges or pricing policies for disabled people and their carers/helpers, senior citizens, students, children, unemployed, armed forces etc, if available for home supporters, must be offered on a similar basis to visiting supporters.

(The minimum charge shall apply pro-rata to any Season Ticket albeit with a discount of up to 15%. A Club may provide its Sponsors with complimentary tickets at any time but the value of the said complimentary tickets shall not exceed 10% of the value of the relevant sponsorship per season.)

21. LONG SERVICE

21.1 The Board shall be empowered to grant a long service award for 21 years' service with a member Club or 25 years in any other capacity, providing such an award has not already been made by any other competition.

22. CENTENARY AWARDS

A Club celebrating its centenary whilst in membership of the Competition shall be presented with a commemorative award by the Board.

23. PLAYING SURFACES

23.1 The Pitch

with effect from the commencement of Season 2016-17 Competition Matches may be played on:

- (a) Grass Pitch; or
- (b) Football Turf Pitch in Steps 1 to 6

23.2 Ground Maintenance

The Club is to be responsible for the maintenance of the Pitch and for the general maintenance of the ground. The Club must ensure that adequate arrangements are in place to maintain its Pitch in good order, as required under these Rules.

23.3 Pitch Standards

All Pitches must be flat and free from surface depressions and excessive undulations. The maximum slopes allowable shall not exceed an even gradient of vertical to horizontal 1:41 in any direction.

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

23.4 Where a Club proposes to install a Football Turf Pitch (or replace an existing Football Turf Pitch) the following shall apply:

For matches played under the auspices of National League at Step 1 & 2 of the National League System:-

- (a) the Club shall disclose to the Competition, as soon as reasonably practicable but in any event not later than 7 days following the Club's final match of the Playing Season preceding the scheduled commencement of installation, full details of the proposed contractor installing the Football Turf Pitch and the timescales for installation. The proposed Football Turf Pitch must have a design and specification that is capable of attaining the FIFA Recommended Two Star Certificate following installation.
- (b) no installation works shall commence until such time as the Competition has approved the proposed installation and the timetable thereof. Installation may only take place outside the Playing Season.
- (c) installation must be scheduled to be completed in sufficient time to enable the completion of a Pitch Test and for confirmation of the results thereof to be supplied to the Competition no later than 14 days prior to the commencement of the following Playing Season.
- (d) the Club shall procure that:
 - (i) a Pitch Test is carried out on the newly installed Football Turf Pitch; and
 - (ii) the FIFA accredited field test institute provides the Competition with a copy of their official reports to FIFA immediately following completion of the Pitch Test; and
- (e) the Club shall provide a copy of the FIFA Quality Pro Certificate within 7 days of receipt to the Competition.

For matches played at Step 3 and below of the National League System:-

- (f) the Club shall disclose to the Competition, as soon as reasonably practicable full details of the proposed contractor installing the Football Turf Pitch and the timescales for installation. The proposed Football Turf Pitch must have a design and specification that is capable of attaining the FIFA Quality Certificate or Quality Pro Certificate following installation; Clubs must be awarded the FIFA Quality Pro Certificate by 31 May in the season before promotion to Step 2, save for those pitches installed on or prior to 31 July 2016 as set out in Rule 23.5 below.
- (g) no installation works shall commence until such time as the Competition has approved the proposed installation and the timetable thereof;.
- (h) the Club shall procure that:
 - (i) a Pitch Test is carried out on the newly installed Football Turf Pitch; and
 - (ii) the FIFA accredited field test institute provides the Competition with a copy of their official reports to FIFA immediately following completion of the Pitch Test; and
- (i) the Club shall provide a copy of the FIFA Quality certificate or Quality Pro Certificate within 7 days of receipt to the Competition in which it is in membership.

23.5 Only Clubs with FIFA Quality Pro certified Football Turf Pitches will be eligible to take part in matches under the auspices of the National League at Step 1 & 2 of the National League System SAVE THAT (a) a Club which has a ground with the recommended FIFA Quality Certificate installed by 31 July 2016 can be promoted to Step 2 of the National league System providing that it undertakes that upon renewal of the Pitch the Club will install a Pitch that is awarded a FIFA Quality Pro Certificate or be relegated to the appropriate Step. or (b) a Club can be promoted to Step 2 provided that:

- (i) By 31 May in the season prior to promotion, the Club undertakes that its Pitch will be awarded a FIFA Quality Pro Certificate by no late than the following 31 May (ie. 31 May in the Clubs first season participating at Step 2)

- (ii) The club's undertaking must include the following information:
 - Details about how any necessary works will be completed (including any relevant planning permissions required and a plan for those to be obtained).
 - Details of the costs involved in completing the works and evidence to demonstrate how those costs will be funded. And
- (iii) By 31st March in the Club's first season participating at Step 2, the Club provides an update to the Board detailing the process made with reference to the undertaking an updated funding position and such other information as the Board considers necessary.

Failure by a Club to obtain a FIFA Quality Pro Certificate for its Pitch by 31 May in the Club's first season participating at Step 2 will lead to the Club being relegated to the appropriate Step

23.6 Without prejudice to the obligations set out in Paragraph 23.3 above, Clubs that have a Football Turf Pitch shall:-

- (a) take such steps and/or refrain from such actions as are necessary to ensure that the Football Turf Pitch continues to meet the requirements for a FIFA Quality Certificate or Quality Pro Certificate (as applicable) at all times during each Playing Season including, without limitation, complying with all requirements of the FIFA Quality Standard..
- (b) where required to undertake Pitch Tests:
 - (i) procure that the FIFA accredited field test institute undertaking any Pitch Test provides to The Competition a copy of their official reports to FIFA immediately following completion of the Pitch Test.
 - (ii) provide a copy of the FIFA Quality Certificate or Quality Pro Certificate to the competition and the Football Foundation by 31 July prior to the commencement of each Playing Season (as applicable); and
- (c) co-operate with all reasonable requests made by the Competition, the Association or FIFA for the performance of the Football Turf Pitch to be measured.

Where either (i) a Club fails to undertake a Pitch test where required to do so, or (ii) The Pitch Test is failed, that club shall not be permitted to use its ground for Competition Matches and the club must enter a groundshare with another Club or club which is acceptable to the Competition, including but not limited to that Club or club's ground meeting the relevant Stadium Accreditation programme requirements.

23.7 Where the Board is aware, by whatever reason, a Football Turf Pitch fails to meet the requirements of the FIFA Quality Certificate or Quality Pro Certificate (as applicable), including following any Pitch Test, the Club shall forthwith, at its cost, take such steps as the Board shall specify to ensure the Football Turf Pitch is restored to the requirements of the FIFA Quality Certificate or Quality Pro Certificate (as applicable).

23.8 The Competition shall have the right to order the postponement of a match where the Football Turf Pitch fails to meet the requirements of the FIFA Quality Certificate or Quality Pro Certificate (as applicable).

23.9 Where a Club has a Football Turf Pitch, any visiting Club is allowed to train, at no cost to that Club, on the Football Turf Pitch on the day before the relevant match or at a mutually agreed time. The length of this training session may not exceed one hour, unless agreed otherwise with the home Club. The visiting Club must notify the home Club of its intention to exercise this right no later than 2 weeks prior to the scheduled match (or within 48 hours of the arrangement of the fixture, if later).

23.10 A breach of any of the requirements of Rule 23 which results in the postponement or abandonment of a match shall be dealt with in accordance with Rule 8.37.

23.11 Pitch Protection

[In order to protect any Pitch, unless otherwise mutually agreed between both participating Clubs, the following procedures shall be adopted by Players and Officials in the periods immediately before and after a Match and at half time:

- (a) the Pitch shall only be used for warming up or warming down by Players named on the Team Sheet.
- (b) pre-match warming up by either team shall not commence until 45 minutes before the kick-off time at the earliest, shall not last for more than 30 minutes, and shall end no later than 10 minutes before the kick-off time.
- (c) if portable goals are provided, they shall be used for all goalkeeping drills other than crossing practice.
- (d) the goalmouth area shall be used by goalkeepers only if portable goals are not provided or for crossing practice and then only for not more than 20 minutes.

(e) for the purposes of warming up and warming down each team shall use only part of the Pitch between the edge of a penalty area and the halfway line or as otherwise directed by the groundsman.

(f) all speed and stamina work shall be undertaken off the Pitch parallel to the touchline opposite the side to be patrolled by the assistant referee or, in the absence of sufficient space, in that part of the Pitch described in paragraph (e) above or as otherwise directed by the groundsman.

(g) Players using the Pitch at half time as aforesaid shall give due consideration to any other activity or entertainment taking place on the Pitch at the same time.

(h) the Home Club may water the Pitch at half time provided it gives reasonable notice to the referee and the other Club that it intends to do so and that any such watering is carried out evenly over the entire length and width of the Pitch; and

(i) any warming down after the conclusion of the Match shall last for no longer than 15 minutes and for that purpose neither penalty area shall be used].

23.12 Not Applicable

24. INSURANCE

24.1 PLAYERS

All Clubs shall be members of a Players' personal accident insurance scheme. The policy cover shall be at least equal to the minimum recommended cover determined from time to time by The Football Association.

Each Club shall submit to the Board a copy of the insurance policy document together with the last premium payment receipt fourteen days prior to the start of the Playing Season.

24.2 PUBLIC LIABILITY

All Clubs must have Public Liability cover of at least ten million pounds (£10,000,000)

Each Club shall submit to the Board a copy of the insurance policy document together with the last premium payment receipt fourteen days prior to the start of the Playing Season.

Any Club in breach of this Rule shall be fined in accordance with the Fines tariff.

25. QUALIFIED MEDICAL PRACTITIONER

(a) *The safety of Players (and, where applicable, others) is of paramount importance. These Rules and set out the medical requirements for Clubs participating within the National League System. Nothing in these Rules:*

- *prevents any Club from arranging medical provisions that exceed any minimum medical requirements prescribed by these Rules; or*
- *replaces, reduces, or affects in any way the obligations imposed on Clubs or any other persons by statute or common law in the fields of medicine, occupational health and/or health and safety (or any other area).*

While not forming part of these Rules, from time to time The FA issues guidance in respect of medical matters, which is published on The FA's website and distributed to Participants as appropriate.

8.35 Subject to Rule 25.2, the following table sets out the designated Qualified Medical Practitioner or First Aider which each Club, operating at its respective Step of the National League System, shall have in attendance throughout all Competition Matches:-

Step 1 Clubs	Each Club shall have at least one Qualified Medical Practitioner having a valid Advance Trauma Medical Management in Football (ATMMiF) qualification.	
Step 2 Clubs	Each Club shall have at least one Qualified Medical Practitioner, having a valid Intermediate Trauma Medical Management in Football (ITMMiF) qualification.	
Step 3 Clubs	Each Club shall have at least one Qualified Medical Practitioner, having a valid Emergency Medical First Aid in Football (EMFAiF) qualification.	
Step 4 Clubs	Each Club shall have at least one First Aider, or Qualified Medical Practitioner having a valid Emergency Medical First Aid in Football (EMFAiF) qualification.	
Step 5 Clubs	Each Club shall have at least one First Aider having a valid Emergency First Aid in Football (EFAiF) qualification.	
Step 6 Clubs	Each Club shall have at least one First Aider who has a valid Emergency First Aid in Football (EFAiF) qualification.	

25.2 In exceptional circumstances, where the home Club is unable to ensure that Qualified Medical Practitioner or First Aider shall be present at a Competition Match, the home Club shall;

- 25.2.1 Make alternative arrangements appropriate for the level of Competition match.
- 25.2.2 Liaise with the away Club in advance of the Competition Match to ensure that each Club is aware of the medical provision that will be available at the Competition Match.
- 25.2.3 Fully document any alternative arrangements within the home Club's Emergency Medical Emergency Action Plan and share the updated plan with the away Club, prior to the Competition Match taking place.
- 25.3 Clubs shall ensure their Qualified Medical Practitioner or First Aider keeps detailed up-to-date medical records for all Players in the form and in accordance with the requirements and guidelines published by The FA from time to time.
- 25.4 When a Player's registration is about to be transferred, the Club that Player is registered to must make such records as referred to in Rule 25.3 available to the Qualified Medical Practitioner or First Aider of the Club that the Player is being transferred to. This procedure shall also apply to all Players whose registrations are temporarily transferred under the provisions for Long, Short and Youth Loans.
- 25.5 All Clubs are required to have a Medical Emergency Action Plan (MEAP) in place. A copy of which must be submitted to the Competition on the standard form provided by no later than 1st August in each year and placed clearly in the home, away and match officials dressing rooms.

Event Doctors

- (b) 25.6 Any persons employed as an Event Doctor shall comply with any relevant health and safety legislation.

26. PLAYER TRANSFERS BETWEEN CLUBS

When Players are transferred (Contract, Non-Contract, Scholars, or loan on temporary transfer) between member Clubs (or between member Clubs and clubs) it is the responsibility of each Club to ensure that the Competition receives copies of all relevant documents pertaining to the transfer including full details of any payment schedules agreed in writing or otherwise between the two Clubs. Should a Club fail to meet the payment schedules lodged with the Competition on receipt of notification an embargo on further Players registrations will be placed upon the defaulting Club together with a 1% levy per day on the outstanding payments. A Transfer Administration Fee will be payable by the receiving Club in accordance with the Fees Tariff.

27. CLUB MEMBERSHIP FORM

- 27.1 The Secretary and Chairman of each Club shall complete and sign the following agreement which shall be deposited within 14 days of the Annual General Meeting of the Competition:

" We (name of Chairman) ----- of ----- FC

AND

(name of Secretary)----- of ----- FC

having read the Rules and Regulations of the Southern Combination Football League, 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 Board, subject to the right of appeal in accordance with Rule 17."

- 27.2 All Clubs shall annually complete the appropriate registration form for the League, and it shall be received by the Competition Secretary not later than 1st June prior to the commencement of any season. Any Club failing to do so will be liable to a fine not exceeding that shown in the Fines Tariff.
- 27.3 Clubs must inform the League of any Kit Sponsorship obtained by them and have permission to do so granted by the Board. Clubs shall not obtain sponsorship which will conflict with the interest of any Sponsors of the Competition.

28. PROVISION FOR FULL & ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Clubs in membership of Divisions One and Two shall be Full Members and all other Clubs in membership of this League shall be Associate Member Clubs.

29. PROMOTION AGREEMENTS

See Rule 12

30. GENERAL MEETINGS

- 30.1 The Annual General Meeting shall be held in June or early July.
- 30.2 The Competition Secretary shall give 21 days' formal notice of the meeting to all Clubs and shall send the Agenda with invitations to all Clubs, Management Committee, Hon. Life Vice Presidents, Vice Presidents, Auditors and Solicitors 7 clear days prior thereto.
- 30.3 Each Club shall be entitled to send 2 delegates who shall be members of the Club Management Committee or Board of Directors.
- 30.4 Members of the League Management Committee, Hon. Life Vice Presidents, Auditors, Solicitors, and all delegates shall be allowed to participate in discussion, but voting shall be restricted to Club delegates. Each delegate of Clubs in Full Membership shall have one vote, each Club in Associate Membership shall have one vote. Observers may attend but shall not take part in the proceedings.
- 30.5 A quorum for the conduct of business at a meeting of the Clubs shall not be less than twenty Full Member Clubs.
- 30.6 The President may formally preside at any meeting of the Clubs, but the Chairman shall assume responsibility for conducting the business of the meeting. The Chairman shall have the right to exercise a casting vote.
- 30.7 The Officers of the League if elected shall be the Patron, President, Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary.

All other Official positions will be advertised and appointed by the Officers and approved by the Management Committee. The Officers shall form the Executive Committee together with three(3) members nominated by the Management Committee and shall be elected annually by the meeting. Appointed Officials may attend Executive Meetings when called upon. All nominations for Officers shall be in writing, signed by the Chairman and Secretary of the proposing member Club and shall be received by the Competition Secretary on or before 30th April in each year, and if posted, by recorded delivery. The Competition Secretary will acknowledge receipt of the nominations within 48 hours. Nominations may be made by the Management Committee.

- 30.8 The League may elect at the meeting any new Life Members. Life Members shall number not more than ten, proposed by the Management Committee for their services to the League.
- 30.9 The League may elect at the meeting any new Life Vice Presidents, proposed by the Management Committee for their services to Sussex football.
- 30.10 The meeting may elect annually Vice Presidents, Auditors and Solicitors.
- 30.11 On the Competition Secretary receiving a request, in writing, signed by the Secretary, Chairman or Vice Chairman of at least 10 Clubs in membership of the League, or by order of the Management Committee, he shall convene a Special General Meeting. Such meeting shall be held within 42 days of the requisition or order and only such business as specified by the Management Committee or requisition shall be considered. If the business for the Special General meeting includes an alteration to the rules of the League, the Competition Secretary shall give all Clubs not less than 28 days' notice of the date, time, and place of the meeting and of such proposed alteration. Notice of any amendment to such proposed alterations to the Rules must be notified in writing to the Competition Secretary so as to reach him not less than 21 days prior to the date for the holding of the Special General Meeting. The Competitions Secretary shall subsequently send the Agenda with invitations as specified in Rule 30.2.
- 30.12 Any Club failing to attend any General Meeting, or any other meeting called by the League without adequate explanation acceptable to the Management Committee shall be fined in accordance with the Fines Tariff (see Rule 2.19).

31. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- 31.1 The Management Committee shall consist of the Officers, Life Members and Club representatives, all of whom shall have one vote, and shall be responsible for the conduct of the affairs of the League.
- 31.2 All nominations for the Management Committee Club Representatives shall be in writing, signed by the Chairman and Secretary of the proposing Member Club. It shall be received by the Competition Secretary on or before 31st May in each year and, if posted, by Recorded Delivery. The Competition Secretary will acknowledge receipt of the nomination within 48 hours. No Club shall nominate more than one representative or provide more than one Officer of the League at any one time.
- 31.3 The twelve representatives of the Clubs, shall each serve three years, one third of those representatives shall retire in rotation each year and be eligible for re-election.
- 31.4 Any representative absent from three consecutive meetings of the Management Committee without reasonable explanation, shall be considered to have resigned. If a casual vacancy occurs on the Management Committee, it shall be filled by the unsuccessful nominee next in order of voting at the previous AGM.

- 31.5 The Management Committee will appoint three Club Representatives to the Executive Committee.
- 31.6 The Management Committee may, by a four-fifths majority, at any time amend standing orders.
- 31.7 The Management Committee will, following each Annual General Meeting, appoint those members to serve on appropriate Committees of Joint Liaison with other Leagues, within the Constitution of those Committees.
- 31.8 The Youth Section shall be managed by a separate Committee consisting of the Youth Secretary and such assistants to be approved by the Management Committee together with a maximum of three representatives elected by the Clubs in membership of the Youth Section.
- 31.9 The Management Committee shall have the power to deal with all matters covered by these rules, and any other matters, as they deem fit, dealing with any offending Club, player or official. Breaches of the Laws of the Game, the Rules and Regulations of the Football Association are dealt with in accordance with FA Rules 9 and 26.
- 31.10 The Management Committee may appoint other persons who may be co-opted to serve on all sub-committees as it may deem necessary and may delegate any or all of its power to such sub-committees. The Officers of the League shall be ex-officio members of all sub-committees.
- 31.11 The decision or recommendations of any sub-committee shall be reported to the Management Committee. Decisions of the Management Committee or of a sub-committee when delegated the powers of the Management Committee shall be binding subject to right of appeal (Rule 17).
- 31.12 Clubs should be administered in accordance with the standard expected of Clubs participating in a Senior League. Attention should be properly given to all correspondence and, where from any Officer of the League, shall be replied to within fourteen days of the date of such correspondence. Any Club failing to comply with this Rule shall be fined in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- 31.13 All fines and charges approved by the Management Committee shall be paid to the League Treasurer within twenty-eight days of the date of notification (unless otherwise ordered). Any Club failing to comply with this Rule shall be fined in accordance with the Fines Tariff for each week or part week in default thereafter.
- 31.14 Each season a Handbook will be published by the League of which each Full Member club must purchase at least fifteen copies and Associate Member Clubs must purchase at least 10 copies, at a price to be decided by the Management Committee at their meeting in June.
- 31.15 The management Committee shall have discretionary powers to arrange representative matches. Players travelling expenses shall be as for Match Officials.
- 31.16 All members of the Management Committee shall, when travelling on official League business, be entitled to claim reimbursement of all reasonable expenses.

32. COMPETITION OFFICERS

- 32.1 The Competition Officers will be:
President, Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Fixtures Secretary, Referees Secretary, Registration Secretary, Fines Officer, Youth Secretary.
- 33 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.
- 34. Each Club must utilise any match boards provided by the Competition's sponsor and must procure that any corporate bench kit shall be worn during competitive and first team matches, as directed by the Competition.
In the event that a Competition does not have a bench kit sponsor, a Club may enter into its own bench kit sponsor agreement providing any such agreement is in writing and the Club obtains the consent of the Competition in writing before entering into such agreement which must include a break clause which facilitates ending the agreement if the Club is promoted, relegated or laterally moved to another competition, or the Competition negotiates a new agreement in the future. A full copy of such agreement must be provided to the Competition Secretary within five (5) days of the sending of such request by the Competition.
In the event of any Club having an existing agreement with a competitor to any of the Competition's sponsors in respect of match boards, and/or other commercial or advertising obligations, the Club is permitted to honour that agreement on an on-going basis, with the consent of the Competition provided the Club's agreement was signed before that of the Competition and a full copy of any such agreement must be provided to the Competition Secretary within five (5) days of the sending of such request by the Competition. For the avoidance of doubt, the Club would not be permitted to extend said agreement beyond the existing term.
- 35. Each Club shall permit photography, filming and audio and web broadcasting at their home ground to

enable the Competition to comply with the terms of any Commercial Contract (as defined in the Articles), which may be entered into by the Company and will provide all necessary facilities as may reasonably be requested by the Competition or any broadcaster as may be nominated by the Competition.[Appendix....]

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

[The amount of central funding available for distribution will be agreed by the Board from time to time and will be distributed to Clubs, subject to the Board's discretionary rights above, in the ratio of 70% of the total agreed fund to Clubs in the Premier Division and 30% to Clubs in the North and South Divisions. The Board's discretion not to distribute central funding to a Club or Clubs will extend to, but may not be limited to, Clubs subject to a winding-up petition and/or an Insolvency. Event. Payment of central funding withheld under this rule will not be distributed retrospectively.]

37. CLUB FINANCIAL RECORDS

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.

Section 1.02 SCHEDULE A

FEES TARIFF

RULE	SUBJECT MATTER	AMOUNT (£)
2.5	Grading	£100
3.1	Application for membership	£100
3.1	Grading	£100
3.2	Membership	£250
3.2	Annual Subscription	£500
6.1.1	Registration Forms	£2
6.1.1	Additional forms	£2
13.A.7	Sporting sanctions appeal	£100
16.1	Appeal to Board	£50
16.4	Appeal to The FA	£75
16.5	Appeal by Player	£50
16.6	Appeal by Club	£50
16.10	Arbitration	£500

RULE	OFFENCE	UP TO A MAXIMUM FINE OF (£)
2.2	Failure to return Form D questionnaire	£20 - £80
2.2	Failure to complete Form D	£20 - £80
2.2	Failure to provide affiliation number	£10 - £25
2.8	Failure to notify change in Memorandum and Articles within 14 days	£25 - £100
2.13	Failure to publish legal name and ownership	£25 - £100
2.14	Failure to notify occurrence of an Insolvency Event	£100 - £400
2.20	Failing to attend any General Meeting	£50 - £200
3.2	Failure to pay Annual Subscription 7 days before AGM	£25 - £100
4.5	Failure to pay amount due within 28 days	£25 = 10% - £100 + 10%
4.8	Failing to attend to business	£25 - £100

RULE	OFFENCE	UP TO A MAXIMUM FINE OF (£)
6.4.2	Failure to register 16 players prior to start of the season	£50 - £200
6.7	Failure to return Retained List by the due date	£10 - £25
6.8	(i) Failure to use a board for substitutions in a match (ii) Named substitute not registered but not taking part	£25 - £100 £15 - £60
6.9	Playing ineligible Player	£50 - £200
7.1	Failure to provide details of colours by due date	£25 - £100
7.1	Failure to wear registered colours at home	£25 - £100
7.1	Failure to number all shirts	£25 - £100
7.1	Failure to have numbers on striped etc. shirts on contrasting patch	£25 - £100
7.2	Failure to change relevant item in event of clash	£25 - £100
7.2	Goalkeeper not wearing kit different to ALL OTHER Players	£25 - £100
7.4	Failure to wear official shirt/short numbers in a match	£25 - £100
7.4	Failure of Player to wear number in accordance with Team Sheet	£25 - £100
7.5	Captain not wearing armband	£15 - £60
7.6	Failure to wear official sleeve logos in a match	£15 - £60
8.32-8.36, 14.3	Causing Abandonment	£250 - £1000
8.38	Failure to notify postponement or abandonment	£100 - £400
8.39	Failure to fulfil fixture	£250 - £1000
8.39	Failure to agree new date of postponed match in time set	£25 - £100
8.15	Failure to carry out inspection procedure in accordance with 14.2	£25 - £100
8.12	Failure to have fax, mobile phone or email operational at all times	£25 - £100
8.23	Failure to start with Eleven Players	£50 - £200
8.23	Failure to play full strength team	£50 - £200
8.20	Late Team Sheet	£15 - £60
8.20	Incomplete Team Sheet	£15 - £60
8.21	Altering Team Sheet after exchange (except for Player injured in warm up)	£15 - £60
8.13	Failure to notify details of match to visiting Club and / or Match Officials	£15 - £60
8.16	Failure to notify cancellation or rearrangement to Match Officials	£15 - £60

RULE	OFFENCE	UP TO A MAXIMUM FINE OF (£)
8.18	Failure to have a defibrillator present at home matches (Steps 1 to 4 only)	N/A
8.6 / 8.23	Late kick off	£15 + £2 per minute – £30 + £2 per minute
8.4	Failure to play County Cup match midweek	£50 - £200
8.9	(i) Playing in competition without permission (ii) FAILURE TO NOTIFY RESULT TO THE COMPETITION SECRETARY	£50 - £200 £15 - £60
8.37	Failure to provide details of match immediately following end of match	£15 - £60
8.14	Failure to provide acceptable match programme	£50 - £200
8.14	Failure to provide programme information to hosts when playing away	£25 - £100
8.24 - 8.28	Benches	£25 - £100
8.29	Failure of all occupants of the technical area to wear corporate bench kit	N/A
8.30	Failure by a home Club to provide a full match video	N/A
10.8 / 10.14	Failure to submit accounts within nine months of accounting reference date	£50 - £200
8.31	Failure to send result form within the required timescales as detailed in 8.31	£15 - £60
14.7	Failure to pay Match Officials on day of match in dressing room	£25 - £100
14.8	Failure to provide flags	£15 - £60
14.9	Failure to play with Match balls required by The Competition	£25 - £100
14.10	Failure to provide practice balls to visitors	£15 - £60
15	Failure to give notice of resignation by due date	£500 - £2000
18	Failure to return trophy by due date	£25 - £100
18	Failure to return trophy engraved	£25 - £100
18	Failure to return trophy in good condition	£25 - £100
24.1	Failure to insure Players	£100 - £400
24.2	Failure to implement public liability insurance to required level	£100 - £400
25	Failure to have medical personnel as stated	£25 - £100
34	Failure to utilise match boards provided by the Competition's sponsor in a match	£25 – £100

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STANDARD CODE OF RULES (applicable for Division Two & Under 23)

This document contains the Standard Code of Rules developed by The Football Association for open age football (the "Standard Code").

The Standard Code is mandatory for all Competitions at Regional NLS Feeder League level and below, and Tier 7 and below of The FA Women's Pyramid

Competitions seeking sanction must draft their Rules in conformity with the Standard Code, using the same numbering and standard headings.

The mandatory rules are printed in normal text and the optional rules in italics.

It should be noted that in many cases rules are so printed because they are alternatives and the procedure to apply should be retained and the others omitted.

In all cases where a [] is shown the necessary name, address, number, or wording to complete that rule must be inserted.

Competitions may add to the core of the Standard Code, which is mandatory, providing the additions are approved by the Sanctioning Authority and do not conflict with the mandatory rules or any relevant principles and policies established by the FA.

1. DEFINITIONS

(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.

"Club" means a club for the time being in membership of the Competition.

"Club Portal" means the system used by Clubs to affiliate teams as determined by The FA from time to time.

"Competition" means the SOUTHERN COMBINATION FOOTBALL LEAGUE.

"Competition Match" means any match played or to be played under the jurisdiction 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.

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

"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, as set out at Schedule A.

"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, as set out at Schedule A.

"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.

"Participant" shall have the same meaning as set out in the rules of The FA from time to time.

"Player" means any Contract Player, Non-Contract Player or other player who plays or who is eligible to play for a Club.

"Player Registration System" means the FA system to register players as determined by The FA from time to time.

"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 Sussex County Football Association Limited.

"Scholarship" means a Scholarship as defined in the FA rules.

"Season" means the period of time between one AGM and the next AGM.

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

"SGM" means a special general meeting held in accordance with the constitution of the Competition.

“Team” means a team affiliated to a Club, including where a Club provides more than one team in the Competition in accordance with the Rules.

“The FA” means The Football Association Limited.

“Virtual Meetings” means meetings held electronically.

“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) Unless stated otherwise, terms referring to natural persons are applicable to both genders. Any term in the singular applies to the plural and also the other way round.

GOVERNANCE RULES

2. COMPETITION NAME, CONSTITUTION

- (A) The Competition will be known as SOUTHERN COMBINATION 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 automatically cease to be a member of the Competition.
- (B) This Competition shall consist of not more than 20 Clubs approved by the Sanctioning Authority.
- (C) The geographical area covered by the Competition membership shall be The County of Sussex and neighboring areas.
- (D) The administration of the Competition under these Rules will be carried out by the Management Committee in accordance with the rules, regulations and policies of the FA.
- (E) 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 to them, subject to the provisions of Rule 7.
- (F) 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.
- (G) 1. All Clubs must be affiliated to an Affiliated Association.
2. This Competition shall apply annually for sanction to the Sanctioning Authority and the constituent Teams of Clubs may be grouped in divisions, *each not exceeding 10 in number*.
- (H) Inclusivity and Non-discrimination
- (i) The Competition and each Club must be committed to promoting inclusivity and to eliminating all forms of discrimination and should abide and adhere to The FA Equality Policy and any legislative requirements (including those contained in the Equality Act 2010).
 - (ii) This Competition and each 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.
 - (iii) Any alleged breach of the Equality Act 2010 legislation must be referred to the appropriate Sanctioning Authority for investigation.
- (I) Clubs must comply with the provisions of any initiatives of The FA which are adopted by the Competition including, but not limited to, England Football Accredited and RESPECT programmes. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (J) All Participants shall abide by The Football Association Regulations for Safeguarding Children and Regulations for Safeguarding Adults at Risk as determined by The FA from time to time.
- (K) Clubs shall not enter any of their Teams playing in the Competition in any other competitions (with the exception of FA and County FA Competitions) except with the written consent of the Management Committee. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff. A Club must immediately inform the Competition of the details of any fixtures(s) in any other competition in which the Club has entered, for which written consent of the Management Committee has to be obtained.
- (L) At the AGM or a SGM called for the purpose, a majority of the delegates present shall have power to decide or adjust the constitution of the divisions at their discretion. When necessary, this Rule shall take precedence over Rule 22.
- (M) Only one Team from a Club shall be permitted to participate in a single division unless there is no viable alternative

because of logistical issues and/or reasons linked to participation and geographical boundaries. The Competition will obtain the prior approval of the Sanctioning Authority. 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 by transfers of registration in accordance with these Rules.

3. CLUB NAME

Any Club wishing to change its name must obtain permission from the Sanctioning Authority following consultation with the Competition. In the event that permission is granted, the Club must advise the Competition Secretary. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

4. ENTRY FEE, SUBSCRIPTION, DEPOSIT

(A) Applications by Clubs for admission to the Competition or the entry of an additional Team(s) from the same Club must be made in writing to the

Secretary by 1st June and must be accompanied by an Entry Fee for each Team as set out in the Fees Tariff, which shall be returned in the event of non-

Election.

Applications, of which due notice has been given, will be received at the AGM or an SGM if confirmed by a majority of the accredited voting members present.

When Rule 22(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 payable in accordance with the Fees Tariff for each *Club/Team* payable at a date agreed at the AGM or set by the competition.

(C) In the event of any issue concerning the membership of any Club with the Competition the Management Committee may require a Deposit to be paid (in accordance with the Fees Tariff) by or on behalf of the Club on such terms and for such period as it may in its entire discretion think fit. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

(D) A Club shall not participate in this Competition until the entry fee, annual subscription, and deposit (if required) have been paid.

(E) Clubs must ensure that all its teams participating in the Competition are recorded as affiliated on the Club Portal for the forthcoming Playing Season by the 31st of July. Clubs must advise the Competition Secretary in a manner prescribed by the Sanctioning Authority, or on the prescribed form, of details of its headquarters, its Officers and any other information required by the Competition. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

5. MANAGEMENT, NOMINATION, ELECTION

a) The Management Committee shall comprise the Officers of the Competition and ordinary members who shall all be elected at the AGM.

b) Retiring Officers shall be eligible to become candidates for re-election without nomination provided that the Officer notifies the Secretary in writing not later than 31st March in each year. All other candidates for election as Officers of the Competition or members of the Management Committee shall be nominated to the Secretary in writing, signed by the secretaries of two Clubs, not later than 31st March in each year. Names of the candidates for election shall be circulated with the notice of the AGM. In the event of there being no nomination in accordance with the foregoing for any office, nominations may be received at the AGM.

c) The Management Committee shall meet a minimum of twice a season or as and when required. On receiving a requisition signed by two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Management Committee the Secretary shall convene a meeting of the Management 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 Officers and sent to the Secretary. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

6. POWERS OF MANAGEMENT

(A) The Management Committee 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 Management Committee for ratification. The Management Committee 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 FA or Affiliated Association.

(B) Subject to the permission of the Sanctioning Authority having been obtained, the Management Committee 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 on each Club to contribute equally such sums as may be necessary to meet any deficiency at the end of the Season.

(C) Each member of the Management Committee shall have the right to attend and vote at all Management Committee meetings and have one vote

at all such meetings, but no member shall be allowed to vote on any matters directly relating to that member or to the Club so represented or where there may be a conflict of interest. (This shall also apply to the procedure of any sub-committee).

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

(E) The Management Committee shall have powers to apply, act upon and enforce these Rules and shall also have jurisdiction over all matters

affecting the Competition. Any action by the Competition must be taken within 28 days of the Competition being notified.

With the exception of Rules 6(J), 8(H), and 9, for all alleged breaches of a Rule the Management Committee shall issue a formal written charge.

to the Club concerned. The Club charge shall be given 7 days from the date of notification of the charge to reply. In such reply a Club may:

- (i) Accept the charge and/or submit in writing a case of mitigation for consideration by the Management Committee; or
- (ii) Accept the charge and notify the competition that it wishes to put its case of mitigation at a hearing before the Management Committee; or
- (iii) Deny the charge and submit in writing supporting evidence for consideration by the Management Committee; or
- (iv) Deny the charge and notify the competition that it wishes to have a hearing before the Management Committee.

Where the Club charged fails to respond within 7 days, the Management Committee shall determine the charge in such manner and upon such evidence as it considers appropriate.

Having considered the reply of the Club (whether in writing or at a hearing), the Management Committee shall make its decision and, in the event that the charge is accepted or proven, decide on the appropriate penalty (with reference to the Fines Tariff where applicable).

Where required, hearings shall take place as soon as reasonably practicable following receipt of the reply of the Club as more fully set out above.

With the exception of Teams playing at Regional NLS Feeder League level, the maximum fine permitted for any breach of a Rule is £250 and, when setting any fine, the Management Committee must ensure that the penalty is proportional to the offence, taking into account any mitigating circumstances.

The maximum fine permitted for a breach of a Rule by a Team playing at Regional NLS Feeder League level, of the National League System is £500.

No Participant under the age of 18 can be fined.

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

(F) All decisions of the Management Committee shall be binding subject to the right of appeal in accordance with Rule 7. Decisions of the Management Committee must be notified in writing to those concerned within 7 days.

(G) A minimum of Two Thirds (2/3) of its members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business by the Management Committee or any of its sub-committees .

(H) The Management Committee, as it may deem necessary, shall have power to fill any vacancies that may occur in their number.

(I) A Club must comply with an order or instruction of the Management Committee and must attend to the business and/or the correspondence of the Competition to the satisfaction of the Management Committee. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the # Fines Tariff.

(J) Subject to a Club's right of appeal in accordance with Rule 7 below, all fines and charges must be paid within 14 days of the date of notification of the decision. Any Club failing to do so will be fined in accordance with the Fines Tariff. Further failure to pay the fine including the additional fine within a further 14 days will result in fixtures being withdrawn until such time as the outstanding fines are paid.

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

(L) The Management Committee shall have the power to fill any vacancy that may occur in the membership of the Competition between the AGM or SGM called to decide the constitution and the commencement of the Playing Season, subject to the provisions of the National League System Regulations or Women's Football Pyramid Regulations (which shall take precedence if applicable)

(M) The business of the Competition as determined by the Management Committee may be transacted by electronic mail or facsimile.

7. PROTESTS, CLAIMS, COMPLAINTS, APPEALS

(A) (i) All questions of eligibility, qualification of Players or interpretations of the Rules shall be referred to the Management Committee or a sub-committee duly appointed by the Management Committee.

(ii) Objections relevant to the dimensions of the pitch, goals, flag posts or other facilities will not be entertained by the Management Committee unless a protest is lodged with the referee prior to the commencement of Match.

(B) Except in cases where the Management Committee 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 with the Secretary within 14 days (excluding Sundays) of the Competition Match or occurrence to which they refer. A protest or complaint shall not be withdrawn except by permission of the Management Committee. A member of the Management Committee who is a member of any Club involved shall not be present (except as a witness or representative of his Club) when such a protest or complaint is being determined.

(C) No protest of whatever kind shall be considered by the Management Committee unless the complaining Club shall have deposited with the Secretary a sum in accordance with the Fees Tariff. 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 inquiry or to order that the costs to be shared by the parties.

- (D) 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 before the protest or complaint being heard.
- (i) All parties must have received a minimum of 7 days' notice of the hearing should they be instructed to attend.
 - (ii) Should a Club elect to state its case in person then it should indicate such when forwarding the written response.
- (E) The Management Committee shall also have power to compel any party to the protest to pay such expenses as the Management Committee shall direct.
- (F) Any appeal against a decision of the Management Committee must be lodged with the Sanctioning Authority within 14 days of the posting of the written notification of the decision causing the appeal, accompanied by a fee (as set out in the Fees Tariff), 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. The procedure for the appeal shall be determined by the Sanctioning Authority, and the Sanctioning Authority may (but is not obliged to):
- i. invite submissions by the parties involved.
 - ii. convene a hearing to hear the appeal.
 - iii. permit new evidence; or
 - iv. impose deadlines as are appropriate.

Any appeal shall not involve a rehearing of the evidence considered by the Management Committee.

(G) No appeal can be lodged against a decision taken at an AGM or SGM unless this is on the ground of unconstitutional conduct.

(H) 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 (as set out in the Fees Tariff) 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.

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.

8. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

(A) The AGM shall be held not later than 31st July in each year. At this meeting the following business shall be transacted provided that at least 60%

members are present and entitled to vote:-

- (i) confirm the minutes of the last AGM.
- (ii) Adopt the annual report, balance sheet and statement of accounts from the previous season or accounting period.
- (iii) Election of Clubs to fill vacancies.
- (iv) Constitution of the Competition for the ensuing Season.
- (v) Election of competition Officers and Management Committee members.
- (vi) Appointment of auditors/verifiers.
- (vii) Alteration of Rules, if any (see Rule 14).
- (viii) Agree the date for the beginning of the Playing Season and kick off times applicable to the Competition.
- (ix) Agree the date for the end of the Playing Season (save for Regional NLS Feeder League level which shall be determined by The FA).
- (x) Other business of which due notice shall have been given and accepted by the chair as being relevant to an AG

(B) A copy of the duly audited/verified balance sheet, statement of accounts and agenda shall be forwarded to each Club at least 14 days prior to

the meeting, together with any proposed Rule changes.

(C) A signed copy of the duly audited/verified balance sheet and statement of accounts shall be sent to the Sanctioning Authority within 14 days of its adoption by the AGM.

(D) Each Club shall be empowered to send two delegates to an AGM. Each Club shall be entitled to one vote only. 14 days' notice shall be given of any AGM.

- (E) Clubs who have withdrawn their membership of the Competition during the Playing 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. *This provision will not apply to Clubs expelled in accordance with Rule 12.*
- (F) All voting shall be conducted by a show of hands, or count of email or virtual responses (for virtual meetings), unless a ballot be demanded by at least 50% of the delegates qualified to vote or the Chair so decides.
- (G) No individual shall be entitled to vote on behalf of more than one Club.
- (H) 1. Any continuing Club must be represented at the AGM. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
2. Any Club that has submitted a valid application to join the Competition for the forthcoming season must have the opportunity to be put forward for membership and to have a vote taken on their membership application.
- (I) Officers of the Competition and Management Committee members shall be entitled to attend and vote at an AGM, but cannot also cast a vote on behalf of a Club (see Rule 8.G)
- (J) Where a Competition is an incorporated entity, the Officers of the Competition shall ensure that the Articles of Association of the Competition are consistent with the requirements of these Rules.

9. SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS

- a) On receiving a requisition signed by two-thirds (2/3) of the Clubs in membership the Secretary shall call an SGM.
- b) The Management Committee may call an SGM at any time.
- c) At least seven (7) days' notice shall be given of a meeting under this Rule, together with an agenda of the business to be transacted at such meeting.
- d) Each Club shall be empowered to send two delegates to all SGMs. Each Club shall be entitled to one vote only.
- e) Any Club failing to be represented at a SGM shall be fined in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- f) Officers of the Competition and Management Committee members shall be entitled to attend and vote at all SGMs, but cannot also cast a vote on behalf of a Club (See Rule 9.D)

10. AGREEMENT TO BE SIGNED

Each Club shall 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) (name) [] of (address) [] (Chairman)/(Director) and (B) (name) [] of (address) [] (Secretary)/(Director) of [] Football Club (Limited) have been provided with a copy of the Rules and Regulations of the [] Competition and do hereby agree for and on behalf of the said Club, if elected or accepted into membership, 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 7."

The agreement shall be signed :

- (i) Where a Club is an unincorporated association, by the Club chair and secretary; or
- (ii) Where a Club is an incorporated entity, by two directors of the Club.

Any change of Chair, secretary or Directors of the Club as named on the above agreement must be notified to the Sussex County Football Association(s) to which the Club is sanctioned and to the Secretary of this competition.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

11. CONTINUATION OF MEMBERSHIP, WITHDRAWAL OF A CLUB

- (A) Any 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 of such intention by 31st March each season. This does not apply to a Club moving in accordance with Rule 22(B). Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (B) The Management Committee shall have the discretion to deal with a Team being unable to start or complete its fixtures for a Playing Season, including, but not limited to, issuing a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

- (C) Notwithstanding the powers of the Management Committee pursuant to Rule 6(l), in the event of a Club failing to discharge all its financial obligations to the Competition in excess of £50, the Management Committee shall be empowered to refer the debt under The FA Football Debt Recovery provisions.

12. EXCLUSION OF CLUBS, TEAMS. MISCONDUCT OF CLUBS, OFFICERS, PLAYERS, MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- (A) At the AGM or SGM called for the purpose in accordance with the provisions of Rule 9, notice of motion having been duly circulated on the agenda by direction of the Management Committee, the accredited delegates present shall have the power to:

- (i) remove a member of the Management Committee from office.
- (ii) exclude any Club or Team from membership, both of which must be supported by more than two thirds

(2/3) of those present and

Voting. Voting on this point shall be conducted by ballot. A member of the Management Committee or Club which is the subject of

the vote being taken shall be excluded from voting.

- (B) At the AGM, or at an SGM called for the purpose in accordance with the provisions of Rule 9, 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, provided this is supported by more than two-thirds (2/3) 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 Officer or member of a Club found 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 such penalty as a General Meeting or Management Committee may decide, and their Club shall also be liable to expulsion in accordance with the provisions of 12 (A) and/or 12 (B) of this Rule.

13. TROPHY

- (A) The following agreement shall be signed on behalf of the winners of the cup or trophy:-

“We (A) (name) and (B) (name), the Chair and Secretary of [] FC (Limited), members of and representing the Club, having been declared winners of cup or trophy, and the cup or trophy 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 in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

- (B) At the close of each Competition awards may/shall be made to the winners and runners-up if the funds of the Competition permit.

14. ALTERATION TO RULES

- (A) Alterations, for which consent has been given by the Sanctioning Authority, shall be made to these Rules only at the AGM or at an SGM specially convened for the purpose called in accordance with Rule 9. Any alteration made during the Playing Season to these Rules shall not take effect until the following Playing Season, except in exceptional circumstances and approved by the Sanctioning Authority or The FA.

- (B) Notice of proposed alterations to be considered at the AGM shall be submitted to the Secretary by 31st January each year. The proposals, together with any proposals by the Management Committee, shall be circulated to the Clubs by 30th April and any amendments to these proposals shall be submitted to the Secretary by 17th May. The proposals and proposed amendments to these proposals shall be circulated to Clubs with the notice of the AGM. A proposal to change a Rule shall be carried if a majority of those present, and entitled to vote and voting are in favour.

- (C) A copy of the proposed alterations to Rules to be considered at the AGM or SGM shall be submitted to the Sanctioning Authority or The FA (as applicable) at least 28 days prior to the date of the meeting.

15. FINANCE

- (A) The Management Committee shall determine with which bank or other financial institution the funds of the Competition will be lodged.
- (B) Not applicable.

- (C) The financial year of the Competition will end on 31st May.
- (D) The accounting records, or a certified balance sheet, of a Competition shall be prepared and shall be *audited/verified* annually by a suitably qualified person(s) who shall be appointed at the AGM.

16. INSURANCE

- (A) All Clubs must have valid public liability insurance cover for a minimum of ten million pounds (£10,000,000) at all times.
- (B) All Clubs must have valid personal accident cover for all Players registered with them from time to time. The Players' personal accident insurance 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 Authority. In instances where The FA is the Sanctioning Authority, the minimum recommended cover will be the cover required by the Affiliated Association to which a Club affiliates.
- (C) Failure to comply with Rule 16(A) or 16(B) will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

17. DISSOLUTION

- (A) Dissolution of the Competition shall be by resolution approved at an SGM by a majority of three quarters (3/4) of the members present and shall take effect from the date of the relevant SGM.
- (B) In the event of the dissolution of the Competition, the members of the Management Committee 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 Authority.
 - 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 Authority may decide.

MATCH RELATED RULES

18. QUALIFICATION OF PLAYERS

(A) A Player is one who, being in all other respects eligible, has:

1. Registered through the Player Registration System and received approval from the Competition *except in the case of a Player who has been registered on the day of a match. For any players registered on the day of a match, a Club Officer must email the Competition with details of the registration 4 hours prior to the scheduled kick off time in order for the player to be eligible to play in that match.*

The Player shall not play again in any subsequent match in the Competition until the Club has registered the player through The FA Player Registration System and is in possession of the approval from the Competition. A maximum of 1 Players may be registered in this manner

OR

2. *signed a fully and correctly completed Competition registration form in ink on a match day prior to playing which is countersigned by an Officer of the Club and witnessed by an Officer of the opposing Club, and submitted to the Competition within two days (Sundays excluded) subsequent to the Competition Match. The Player shall not play again in a subsequent match in the Competition until the Club has registered the player through The FA Player Registration System and is in possession of the approval from the Competition.*

Any registration that is not fully and correctly completed will be returned to the Club unprocessed and the player classed as unregistered. If a Club attempts to register a player via the Player Registration System but does not fully and correctly complete the necessary information via the Player Registration System the registration will not be processed.

For Clubs registering Players under Rule 18.A, registration forms will be provided in a format to be determined by the Competition. For Clubs registering Players by the Player Registration System, Clubs must access the Player Registration System in order to complete the registration process.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

(B)

1. 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, or Tiers 1-4 of the Womens Pyramid System
2. 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.
3. Each must have at least 11 Players registered 7 days before the start of each Playing Season. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
4. In the event of a Non Contract Player changing his status to that of a contract player with the same Club, or with a Club in another competition their registration as a Non Contract Player will automatically be cancelled and declared void unless the Club conforms to the exception detailed in Rule 18.B.1
5. For UNDER 23 Development section; only those players are eligible to take part who have reached age of 16 years on 31st August of current season and not reached age of 23 Years as at midnight on 31st August of the current season. Each club will be permitted to include on its team sheet a maximum of FOUR overage players.

(C) A Player that owes a Football Debt (as defined under the Football Debt Recovery Regulations) shall be permitted to register for a club

but will be suspended from Football activities if the player does not comply with the terms of the Football Debt Recovery Regulations in respect of that Football Debt.

(D) A fee as set out in the Fees Tariff shall be paid by each Club/Team for each Player registered.

(E) The Management Committee 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 In the Competition,. The valid registration submitted first shall take precedence. The Secretary shall notify the Club last applying to register the player of the fact of the previous registration.

(F) It shall be a breach of Rule for a Player to:-

- i. Play for more than one Club in the Competition in the same Playing Season without first being transferred.
- ii. Having registered for one Club in the Competition, register for another Club in the Competition in that Playing Season except for the purpose of a transfer, or where the Competition adopts rule 18.P
- iii. Submit a signed registration form as per Rule 18 A.2 or submit a registration through the player Registration System that the Player had willfully neglected to accurately or fully complete.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

(G) 1. The Management Committee shall have the power to accept the registration of any Player subject to the provisions of Rules 18(G) (ii) and below.

2. The Management Committee shall have power to refuse, cancel or suspend the registration of any Player or may fine any Player, at their discretion (in accordance with the Fines Tariff) who has been charged and found guilty of registration irregularities (subject to Rule 7).

3. The Management Committee 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 7) subject to the right of appeal to the Sanctioning Authority. Application should be made to the parent County of the Club the Player is registered or intending to be registered with.

Undesirable conduct shall mean an incident of repeated proven misconduct, which may deter a Participant from being involved in this Competition.

4. A Player who has previously had a registration removed in accordance with Rule 18(G)(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 may consider a further charge of bringing the Competition into disrepute.

(Note: Action under Rule 18(G) (iii) shall not be taken against a Player for misconduct until the matter has been dealt with by the Sanctioning Authority, and then only in cases of the Player bringing the Competition into disrepute and will in any event be subject to an appeal to the Sanctioning Authority or The FA. 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 any competition (and is not restricted to the Competition) in a period of two years or less from the date of the first offence.)

(H). Subject to compliance with FA Rule C 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 3 days of receipt of the notification. Upon receipt of the club's consent, or upon its failure to give written objection within 3 days, the 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 three 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.

(I) A Player may not be registered for a Club nor transferred to another Club in the Competition after 31st March except by special permission of the Management Committee.

(J) Registrations are valid for one Playing Season only.

(K) Not Applicable.

(L) A Team shall not include more than 3, Players who has/have taken part in 3 or more senior Competition Matches during the current Playing Season unless a period of 21 clear days has elapsed since they last played. 21 clear days is counted by excluding the day when the relevant Player last Played and the date when the Player intends to play again.

For the purpose of this Rule a senior competition(s) are at step 4 or above of the NLS. (Does not apply to U23 Divisions)
Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff. .

(M) (i) Subject to Rule 18(M)(ii), any Club found to have played an ineligible Player in a Competition Match or Matches where points are awarded shall have the points gained from that Competition Match deducted from its record, up to a maximum of 12 points, and have levied upon it a fine (in accordance with the Fines Tariff).

(ii) The Management Committee may vary the sanction as relates to the deduction of points set out at Rule 18(N)(i) 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.

(iii) Where a Club is found to have played an ineligible Player in accordance with Rule 18(M)(i) above, the Management Committee may also, at its discretion order one or more of the following (if appropriate):

- a) Award the points available in the Competition Match in question to the opponents, subject to the Competition Match not being ordered to be replayed; or
- b) Levy penalty points against the Club in default; or
- c) Order that such Competition Match or Matches be replayed (on such terms as are decided by the Management Committee).

(N) The following clause applies to Competitions involving Players in full-time secondary education:-

1) Priority must be given at all times to activities of school and school organizations. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine

in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

2) The availability of children and young people must be cleared with the Head Teachers (except for Sunday leagues competitions).

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

(O) *Not Applicable.*

(P) *Not adopted*

19. CLUB COLOURS

- a) Every team must register the colour and design of its shirts and shorts with the Secretary by 30th June and the competition secretary shall decide as to their suitability.
- b) Any team wishing to change the colour(s) of its shirts(s) and short(s) during the Playing Season must obtain permission from the competition secretary in advance of making that change.
- c) Goalkeepers must wear colours which distinguish them from all other Players and the Match Officials.
- d) No Player, including the goalkeeper, shall be permitted to wear black or very dark shirts.
- e) Any Team not being able to play in its normal colours as registered with the Competition shall notify its opponents of the colours in which they will play (including the colours of the goalkeeper's jersey) at least five days before the Competition Match.
- f) If, in the opinion of the referee, two Teams have the same or similar colours, the *away* Team shall make the change. Should a Team delay the scheduled time of kick off for a Competition Match by not having a change of colours they will be fined in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- g) Shirts must be numbered, and no two shirts shall have the same number, failing which a fine will be levied in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

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

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

Clubs must take all reasonable precautions to keep their Grounds in a playable condition. All Competition Matches shall be played on pitches deemed suitable by the Management Committee. If through any fault of the home Team a match has to be replayed, the Management Committee shall have power to order the venue to be changed.

The Management Committee shall have power to decide whether a pitch and/or facilities are suitable for Competition Matches and to order the Club concerned to play its Competition Match(es) on another ground.

Artificial Football Turf Pitches (3G) are allowed in this Competition provided they meet the required performance standards and are listed on the FA's Register of Football Turf Pitches - <https://footballfoundation.org.uk/3g-pitch-register> . All Football Turf Pitches used 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 20(C).

Within Regional NLS Feeder Leagues, all Competition Matches shall have a duration of 90 minutes. All other Competition Matches shall have duration of 90 minutes unless a shorter time (not less than sixty (60) minutes) is mutually arranged by the two Clubs in consultation with the referee prior to the commencement of the match, and in any event shall be of equal halves. Two matches involving the same two Teams can be played on the same day providing the total playing time is not more than 120 minutes.

The times of kick-off shall be agreed at the AGM and can only be altered by the mutual consent of the two competing Clubs and the competition. Referees must order matches to commence at the appointed time and must report all late starts to the Competition.

The home Team must provide goal nets, corner flags and at least two footballs fit for play and the referee shall make a report to the Competition, if not provided. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

No overhead netting is allowed for 9v9 and 11v11 affiliated matches

Regional NLS Feeder Leagues: Overhead wires used to support pitch divider netting are removed for all affiliated matches at Regional NLS Feeder League level

For those leagues which are not Regional NLS Feeder Leagues: Overhead wires used to support pitch divider netting are ideally removed for affiliated matches but if they cannot be removed then discretion is given to the match official to restart the match in accordance of the laws of the game.

(B) Except by permission of the Management Committee all Competition Matches must be played on the dates originally agreed but priority shall be given to The FA and parent County Association Cup Competitions. All other matches must be considered secondary. Clubs may mutually agree to bring forward a Competition match with the consent of the competition. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

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).

(C) An Officer of the home Club must give notice of full particulars of the location of, and access to, the Ground and time of kick-off and kit colours (including goalkeeper) to the Match Officials and an Officer of the opposing Club at least 5 clear days prior to the playing of the competition match. The opposing Club must confirm receipt and give notice of its kit colours (including goalkeeper) at least three days prior to the playing of the competition match. If either is not so provided, the relevant Club shall seek such details and report the circumstances to the Competition. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

(D) In accordance with the Laws of the Game, the minimum number of Players which will constitute a Team for a Competition Match is 7. Failure to comply with this rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

(E) (i) Home and away matches shall be played. In the event of a Club failing to keep its engagement the Management Committee shall Decide whether it should either:

a. award the points from the Competition Match in question to the Club's opponent (without the awarding of goals)

or

b. Order the Competition Match to be rescheduled. The Management Committee shall also have the power to order

the rescheduled Competition Match to be played on neutral ground or on the opponent Club's Ground if they are satisfied that such action is warranted by the circumstances.

In addition, the Management Committee may at its discretion order one or more of the following (if appropriate)

- a. Impose a fine (in accordance with the Fines Tariff)
- b. Deduct points from the defaulting Club,
- c. Order the defaulting Club to pay any reasonable expenses incurred by the opponents.

(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, A Team.

(iii) Any Club unable to fulfil a fixture or where a Competition Match has been postponed for any reason must, without delay, give notice to the , the Competition , the secretary of the opposing Club and the Match Officials. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

(iv) In the event of a Competition Match not being played or abandoned owing to causes over which neither Club has control, it should be played in its entirety on a date to be mutually agreed by the two Clubs and approved by the competition. Failing such agreement and notification to the competition within 7 days the competition shall have the power to order the Match to be played on or on or before a given date. Where it is to the advantage of the Competition , the Management Committee shall also be empowered to order the score at the time of an abandonment to stand.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

(v) The Management Committee shall review all Competition 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 Management Committee shall order the score at the time of the abandonment to stand. In all cases where the Management Committee are satisfied that a Match was abandoned owing to the conduct of one Team or its Club member(s) they shall award the points for the Match to the opponent. In cases where a Match has been abandoned owing to the conduct of both Teams or their Club member(s), the Management Committee shall rule that neither Team will be awarded any points for that Match, and it shall not be replayed. No fine(s) can be applied by the Management Committee for an abandoned Match.

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 FA 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 18(N) above. Where both Teams were under suspension the game must be declared null and void and shall not be replayed.

(F) A Club may at its discretion and in accordance with the Laws of the Game use substitute Players in any Competition Match. A Club may name up to 5 substitute Players of whom not more than FIVE may be used.

A Player who has been substituted 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.

Where a Competition does allow return substitutes, a Club may use up to 5 from 5 substitutes Players in a Competition Match. The referee [and a representative of the opposing Club] shall be informed of the names of the Players taking part in the Match (including Substitutes) not later than 45 minutes before the start of the Competition Match and a Player not so named may not take part in that Competition Match.

A Player who has been named as a substitute before the start of the Competition Match but does not actually play in that game shall not be considered to have been a Player in that Competition Match within the meaning of Rule 18 of this Competition.

(G) The half time interval shall be of 15 minutes' duration, but it shall not exceed 15 minutes. The half time interval may only be altered with the consent of the referee.

(H) The Teams taking part in a Competition Match shall identify a Team captain who may wear an armband and shall have a responsibility to offer support in the management of the on-field discipline of their teammates. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

(I) Where a suspension imposed in relation to a Football Debt (as defined under the Football Debt Recovery Regulations) upon a Club by the FA or Affiliated Association is not lifted, and/or the Club does not provide confirmation from the FA or Affiliated Association that such suspension is lifted to the Competition Secretary by 1 day before a fixture, that fixture will be treated as an unfulfilled fixture and dealt with in accordance with Rule 20(E).

21. REPORTING RESULTS

(A) The competition must receive within Three days of the date played, the result of each Competition Match in the prescribed manner. This must include the forename(s) and surname of the Team Players (in block letters) and also the *referee markings required by Rule 23, or any other information required by the Competition*. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

(B) The Home Club/both Clubs shall telephone/SMS/email/FA Full Time / FA Matchday as directed by the Competition to notify the result of each Competition Match to the results line by 5.30pm or 10.00pm for midweek games. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

(C) The match result notification, correctly completed, shall be signed by an Officer of the Club, or as prescribed by the Competition. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

22. DETERMINING CHAMPIONSHIP

(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 Competition Match. The Teams gaining the highest number of points in their respective divisions at the end of the Playing Season shall be adjudged the winners. Competition Matches must not be played for double points.

In the event of two or more Teams being equal on points at the end of the Playing Season, rankings shall be determined by

(D) In the event of a Team withdrawing from the Competition before completing 75% of its fixtures for the Playing Season all points obtained by or recorded against such defaulting Team shall be expunged from the Competition table. For the purposes of this Rule 22(D) a completed fixture shall include any Competition Match(es) which has been awarded by the Management Committee.

(E) Not Applicable

23. MATCH OFFICIALS

(A) Registered referees (and assistant referees where approved by The FA or County FA) for all Competition Matches shall be appointed in a manner approved by the Management Committee and by the Sanctioning Authority.

(B) 1. 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.

2. In cases where there are no officially appointed Match Officials in attendance, the Clubs shall agree upon a referee. An individual thus agreed upon shall, for that Competition Match, 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 Competition Match.

(C) Where assistant referees are not appointed each Team shall provide a Club assistant referee. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

(D) Regional NLS Feeder Leagues: 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.

For those leagues which are not Regional NLS Feeder Leagues: The appointed referee shall have power to decide as to the fitness of the Ground in all Competition Matches and that decision shall be final, subject to the determination of the Local Authority or the owners of a Ground, which must be accepted.

(E) Subject to any limits/provisions laid down by the Sanctioning Authority, Match Officials appointed under this Rule shall be paid a match fee in accordance with the Fees Tariff inclusive of travel expenses.

Match Officials will be paid their fees and/or expenses by the home Club before/immediately after the Competition Match. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

(F) In the event of a Competition 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*. Where a Competition Match is not played owing to one Club being in default, that Club shall be ordered to pay the Match Officials, if they attend the Ground, their full fee and expenses. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

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

(H) Each Club shall, in a manner prescribed from time to time by The FA, award marks to the referee for each Competition 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 (in accordance with the Fines Tariff) or dealt with as the Management Committee shall determine.

(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 Sanctioning Authority.

(J) The referee shall submit a report form, supplied by the Competition, giving the result of the Competition Match, the number of Players in each Team and the time of kick-off to the (Registration) Secretary within two days of the Competition Match.

(K) Match Officials shall be supplied, each season, with a copy of the Competition Rules free of charge.

(L) Match Officials shall comply with the provisions of any initiatives of The FA and/or Sanctioning Authority adopted by the Competition

SCHEDULE A

FEES TARIFF		
RULE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	MAXIMUM FEE
4 (A)	CLUB ENTRY FEE	£100.00
4 (B)	CLUB/TEAM ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION	£80.00
4 (C)	DEPOSIT	£0.00
7 (C), 7 (E), 7(G)	PROTEST/APPEAL FEES	£50.00
18 (D)	PLAYER REGISTRATION FEE	£1.00
18 (H)	TRANSFER FEE	£20.00
23 (E)	REFEREE FEES	£40.00
23 (E)	ASSISTANT REFEREE FEES	£25.00

FINES TARIFF		
RULE	DESCRIPTION	MAXIMUM FINE
2 (G)	FAILURE TO AFFILIATE	£25.00
2 (I)	FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH FA INITIATIVES	£15.00
2 (K)	UNAUTHORISED ENTRY OF TEAMS INTO COMPETITIONS	£25.00
3	FAILURE TO OBTAIN CONSENT FOR A CHANGE OF CLUB NAME	£15.00
4 (C)	FAILURE TO PAY A DEPOSIT	£15.00
4(E)	FAILURE TO ENSURE TEAMS ARE RECODED AS AFFILIATED IN THE CLUB PORTAL	£15.00
5(E)	COMMUNICATIONS CONDUCTED BY PERSONS OTHER THAN NOMINATED OFFICERS	£25.00
6 (H)	FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH AN INSTRUCTION OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	£25.00
6 (I)	FAILURE TO PAY A FINE WITHIN REQUIRED TIMEFRAME	£25.00
8 (H)	FAILURE TO BE REPRESENTED AT AGM	£50.00
9	FAILURE TO BE REPRESENTED AT SGM	£50.00
10	FAILURE TO SUBMIT THE REQUIRED WRITTEN AGREEMENT OR TO NOTIFY CHANGES TO SIGNATORIES	£25.00
11(A)	FAILURE TO PROVIDE NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL BEFORE DEADLINE	£250.00
11 (B)	FAILURE TO COMMENCE/COMPLETE FIXTURES	£175.00
13 (A)	FAILURE TO SUBMIT THE REQUIRED WRITTEN AGREEMENT REGARDING THE TROPHY	£50.00
16(A)	FAILURE TO HAVE THE REQUIRED INSURANCE	£25.00
16(B)	FAILURE TO HAVE THE REQUIRED INSURANCE	£25.00
18 (A)	FAILURE TO CORRECTLY REGISTER A PLAYER	£100.00
18 (B) (ii)	FAILURE TO HAVE THE REQUIRED NUMBER OF REGISTERED PLAYERS PRIOR TO THE SEASON COMMENCING	£30.00
18 (F)	REGISTERING OR PLAYING FOR MULTIPLE CLUBS, OR INACCURATE COMPLETION OF A REGISTRATION FORM	£150.00
18 (G)(ii)	REGISTRATION IRREGULARITIES	£150.00
18 (M)	FIELDING MORE THAN THE PERMITTED NUMBER OF PLAYERS WHO HAVE PARTICIPATED IN SENIOR COMPETITIONS MATCHES	N/A
18 (N)	PLAYING AN INELIGIBLE PLAYER	£50.00
18(O)	FAILURE TO GIVE PRIORITY TO SCHOOL ACTIVITIES	N/A
19	DELAYING KICK OFF DUE TO NO CHANGE OF COLOURS	£15.00
19	FAILURE TO NUMBER SHIRTS	£15.00
20(A)	DELAYING KICK OFF DUE TO FAILURE TO PROVIDE REQUIRED	£15.00
20 (B)	FAILURE TO PLAY MATCHES ON THE DATE FIXED	£25.00
20 (C)	FAILURE TO PROVIDE DETAILS OF A FIXTURE	£15.00
20 (D)	PLAYING MATCH WITH LESS THAN REQUIRED NUMBER OF PLAYERS	£10.00 per player
20 (E) (i) & (iv)	FAILURE TO PLAY FIXTURE	£250.00
20 (H)	NO CAPTAIN'S ARMBAND	£15.00
21 (A)	LATE RESULT NOTIFICATION FORM	£15.00
21 (B)	FAILURE TO PROVIDE RESULT	£15.00
21(C)	RESULT NOTIFICATION NOT SIGNED BY APPROPRIATE SIGNATORIES	£15.00
23 (C)	FAILURE TO PROVIDE CLUB ASSISTANT REFEREE	£15.00

23 (E)	FAILURE TO PAY MATCH OFFICIALS' FEES AND EXPENSES	£25.00
23 (F)	FAILURE TO PAY MATCH OFFICIALS WHERE A MATCH IS NOT	£25.00
23 (H)	FAILURE TO PROVIDE REFEREE'S MARK	£15.00

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SCHEDULE A

Fees Tariff

Fines Tariff

SOUTHERN COMBINATION YOUTH FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Season 2024/2025

1. DEFINITIONS

(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. “Board of Directors” means appointed in accordance with the articles of association of that company.

“Club” means a club for the time being in membership of the Competition.

“Club Portal” means the system used by Clubs to affiliate Teams as determined by The FA from time to time. “Competition” means the Southern Combination Youth Football League.

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

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

“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, as set out at Schedule A.

“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, as set out at Schedule A.

“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.

“Mini Soccer” means those participating at ages under 7s to under 10s.

“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.

“Participant” shall have the same meaning as set out in the rules of The FA from time to time.

“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.

“Player Registration System” means The FA system to register players as determined by The FA from time to time.

“Rules” means these rules under which the Competition is administered. “Sanctioning Authority” means The SCFA.

“Scholarship” means a Scholarship as defined The FA rules.

“Season” means the period of time between an AGM and the subsequent AGM.

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

“SGM” means a special general meeting held in accordance with the constitution of the Competition.

“Team” means a team affiliated to a Club, including where a Club provides more than one team in the Competition in accordance with the Rules.

“The FA” means The Football Association Limited.

“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.

“Virtual Meetings” means meetings held electronically.

“Youth Football” means those participating at ages under 11s to under 18s.

(B) Unless stated otherwise, terms referring to natural persons are applicable to both genders. Any term in the singular applies to the plural and vice-versa.

GOVERNANCE RULES

2. COMPETITION NAME AND CONSTITUTION

- (A) The Competition will be known as southern Combination Youth Football League. 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.
- (B) This Competition shall consist of not more than 48 Teams approved by the Sanctioning Authority.
- (C) The geographical area covered by the Competition membership shall be Sussex and its bordering Counties.
- (D) 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
- (E) 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 7.
- (F) The Rules are taken from the Standard Code of Rules for Youth Competitions (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
- (G) All Clubs must be affiliated to an Affiliated Association. This Competition shall apply annually for sanction to the Sanctioning Authority and the constituent Teams of Clubs may be grouped in divisions, each not exceeding 12 in number.
- (H) Inclusivity and Non-discrimination
 - (i) The Competition and each Club must be committed to promoting inclusivity and to eliminating all forms of discrimination and should abide and adhere to The FA Equality Policy and any legislative requirements (to include those contained in the Equality Act 2010).
 - (ii) This Competition and each 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.
 - (iii) Any alleged breach of the Equality Act 2010 legislation must be referred to the appropriate Sanctioning Authority for investigation.
- (I) 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. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (J) All Participants shall abide by The Football Association Regulations for Safeguarding Children as determined by The FA from time to time.
- (K) Clubs shall not enter any of their Teams playing at a particular age group in the Competition in any other competition (with the exception of FA and County FA Competitions) except with the written consent of the Management Committee. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff. A Club must immediately inform the Competition of the details of any fixtures(s) in any other Competition in which the Club has entered , for which written consent of the Management Committee has been obtained.
- (L) At the AGM or a SGM called for the purpose, a majority of the delegates present shall have power to decide or adjust the constitution of the divisions at their discretion. When necessary this Rule shall take precedence over Rule 22.

3. CLUB NAME

Any Club wishing to change its name must obtain permission from the Sanctioning Authority and from the Management Committee. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

4. ENTRY FEE, SUBSCRIPTION, DEPOSIT

- (A) Applications by Clubs for admission to the Competition must be made in writing to the Secretary by the **1st June** and must be accompanied by an entry fee as set out in the Fees Tariff, which shall be returned in the event of non-election.

At the discretion of the voting members present applications, of which due notice has been given, may be received at the AGM or a SGM or on a date agreed by the Management Committee.

Each Club shall only enter 1 Team into this Competition.

- (B) The annual subscription shall be payable in accordance with the Fees Tariff per Team and shall be payable on or before **1st July** in each year.
Fees are only required when a Club does not have a Team playing in the senior section of Southern Combination Football League.
- (C) Not applicable in this competition
- (D) A Club shall not participate in this Competition until the entry fee, annual subscription and Deposit (if required) have been paid.
- (E) Clubs must ensure that its Teams participating in the Competition are recorded as affiliated on the Club Portal for the forthcoming Playing Season by the following date, **1st September**. Clubs must advise the Secretary in a manner prescribed by the Sanctioning Authority, or on the prescribed form, of details of its headquarters, its Officers and any other information required by the Competition. Of its Sanctioning Authority affiliation number for the forthcoming Playing Season. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (F) An all-female team can apply to the Competition to play an age group down in a mixed gender competition, subject to rule 8A(iii)&(iv) and provided the team has obtained approval from its Sanctioning Authority.

5. MANAGEMENT, NOMINATION, ELECTION

- (A) The Management Committee shall comprise the Officers of the Competition, whom are appointed by the Competition's Board of Directors and 0 members who shall all be elected at the AGM.
- (B) Retiring Officers shall be eligible to become candidates for re-election without nomination provided that the Officer notifies the Secretary in writing not later than **1st May** in each year.
All other candidates for election as Officers of the Competition or members of the Management Committee shall be nominated to the Secretary in writing, signed by the secretaries of two Clubs, not later than **31st May** in each year. Names of the candidates for election shall be circulated with the notice of the AGM. In the event of there being no nomination in accordance with the foregoing for any office, nominations may be received at the AGM.
The Management Committee shall meet as and when required, save that no more than three calendar months shall pass between each meeting.
- (C) On receiving a requisition signed by two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Management Committee the Secretary shall convene a meeting of the Management 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 Officers and sent to the Secretary.
Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff

6. POWERS OF MANAGEMENT

- (A) The Management Committee 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 Management Committee for ratification. The Management Committee 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 FA or Affiliated Association.
- (B) Subject to the permission of the Sanctioning Authority having been obtained the Management Committee 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.
- (C) Each member of the Management Committee shall have the right to attend and vote at all Management Committee 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 also apply to the procedure of any sub-committee).
In the event of the voting being equal on any matter, the Chair of the Management Committee shall have a second or casting vote.

- (D) The Management Committee shall have powers to apply, act upon and enforce these Rules and shall also have jurisdiction over all matters affecting the Competition. Any action by the Competition must be taken within 28 days of the Competition being notified. With the exception of Rules 6(I), 8(H) and 9, for all alleged breaches of a Rule the Management Committee shall issue a formal written charge to the Club concerned. The Club charged shall be given 7 days from the date of notification of the charge to reply. In such reply a Club may:-
- (i) Accept the charge and submit in writing a case of mitigation for consideration by the Management Committee on the papers; or
 - (ii) Accept the charge and notify that it wishes to put its case of mitigation at a hearing before the Management Committee; or
 - (iii) Deny the charge and submit in writing supporting evidence for consideration by the Management Committee on the papers; or
 - (iv) Deny the charge and notify that it wishes to put its case of mitigation at a hearing before the Management Committee.

Where the Club charged fails to respond within 7 days, the Management Committee shall determine the charge in such manner and upon such evidence as it considers appropriate.

Where required, hearings shall take place as soon as reasonably practicable following receipt of the reply of the Club as more fully set out above.

Having considered the reply of the Club (whether in writing or at a hearing), the Management Committee shall make its decision and, in the event that the charge is accepted or proven, decide on the appropriate penalty (with reference to the Fines Tariff where applicable).

The maximum fine permitted for any breach of a Rule is £100 and, when setting any fine, the Management Committee must ensure that the penalty is proportional to the offence, taking into account any mitigating circumstances.

No Participant under the age of 18 can be fined.

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

- (E) All decisions of the Management Committee shall be binding subject to the right of appeal in accordance with Rule 7.

Decisions of the Management Committee must be notified in writing to those concerned within 7 days.

- (F) 50% of its members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business by the Management Committee or any sub-committee thereof.
- (G) The Management Committee, 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 must comply with an order or instruction of the Management Committee, and must attend to the business and/or the correspondence of the Competition to the satisfaction of the Management Committee.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

- (I) Subject to a Club's right of appeal in accordance with Rule 7 below, all fines and charges must be paid within 14 days of the date of notification of the decision

Any Club failing to do so will be fined in accordance with the Fines Tariff. Further failure to pay the fine including the additional fine within a further 14 days will result in fixtures being withdrawn until such time as the outstanding fines are paid.

- (J) A member of the Management Committee appointed by the Competition to attend a meeting or Competition Match may have any reasonable expenses incurred refunded by the Competition.
- (K) The Management Committee shall have the power to fill any vacancy that may occur in the membership of the Competition between the AGM or SGM called to decide the constitution and the commencement of the Playing Season.
- (L) The business of the Competition as determined by the Management Committee may be transacted by electronic mail or facsimile.

7. PROTESTS, CLAIMS, COMPLAINTS, APPEALS

- (A) (i) All questions of eligibility, qualification of Players or interpretations of the Rules shall be referred to the Management Committee or a sub-committee duly appointed by the Management Committee.
- (ii) Objections relevant to the dimensions of the pitch, goals, flag posts or other facilities of the venue will not be entertained by the Management Committee unless a protest is lodged with the referee before the commencement of the Competition Match.

- (B) Except in cases where the Management Committee 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 with the Secretary within 7 days (excluding Sundays) of the Competition Match or occurrence to which they refer. A protest or complaint shall not be withdrawn except by permission of the Management Committee. A member of the Management Committee 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) No protest of whatever kind shall be considered by the Management Committee unless the complaining Club shall have deposited with the Secretary a sum in accordance with the Fees Tariff. 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 inquiry or to order that the costs to be shared by the parties.
 - (D) 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 7 days' notice of the hearing should they be instructed to attend.
 - (ii) Should a Club elect to state its case in person then it should forward a deposit of £25 and indicate such when forwarding the written response.
 - (E) The Management Committee shall also have power to compel any party to the protest to pay such expenses as the Management Committee shall direct.
 - (F) Any appeal against a decision of the Management Committee must be lodged with the Sanctioning Authority within 14 days of the posting of the written notification of the decision causing the appeal, accompanied by a fee (as set out in the Fees Tariff), 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. The procedure for the appeal shall be determined by the Sanctioning Authority, in such respect the Sanctioning Authority may (but is not obliged to):
 - (i) invite submissions by the parties involved; or
 - (ii) convene a hearing to hear the appeal; or
 - (iii) permit new evidence; or
 - (iv) impose deadlines as are appropriate.
- Any appeal shall not involve a rehearing of the evidence considered by the Management Committee.
- (G) No appeal can be lodged against a decision taken at an AGM or SGM unless this is on the ground of unconstitutional conduct.

8. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- (A) The AGM shall be held not later than **31st July** in each year. At this meeting the following business shall be transacted provided that at least 24 members are present and entitled to vote:-
 - (i) To receive and confirm the minutes of the preceding AGM.
 - (ii) To receive and adopt the annual report, balance sheet and statement of accounts.
 - (iii) Election of Clubs to fill vacancies.
 - (iv) Constitution of the Competition for the ensuing Season.
 - (v) Election of Officers of the Competition and the Management Committee members (Appointed by the Board of Directors).
 - (vi) Appointment of auditor (Appointed by the Board of Directors).
 - (vii) Alteration of Rules, if any (see Rule 14).
 - (viii) Fix the date for the commencement of the Playing Season and kick off times applicable to the Competition.
 - (ix) Fix the date for the end of the Playing Season.
 - (x) Other business of which due notice shall have been given and accepted as being relevant to an AGM.
- (B) A copy of the duly audited/verified balance sheet, statement of accounts and agenda shall be forwarded to each Club at least 14 days prior to the meeting together with any proposed Rule changes.
- (C) A signed copy of the duly audited/verified balance sheet and statement of accounts shall be sent to the Sanctioning Authority within 14 days of its adoption by the AGM
- (D) Each Club shall be empowered to send two delegates to an AGM. Each Club shall be entitled to one vote only. 14 days' notice shall be given of any AGM.
- (E) Clubs who have withdrawn their membership of the Competition during the Playing 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. This provision will not apply to Clubs expelled in accordance with Rule 12.
- (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 Chair so decides.
- (G) No individual shall be entitled to vote on behalf of more than one Club.

- (H) (i) Any continuing Club must be represented at the AGM. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (ii) Any Club that has submitted a valid application to join the Competition for the following season must have the opportunity to be put forward for membership and to have a vote taken on their membership application. .
- (I) Officers of the Competition and Management Committee members shall be entitled to attend and vote at an AGM.
- (J) Where a Competition is an incorporated entity, the Officers of the Competition shall ensure that the Articles of Association of the Competition are consistent with the requirements of these Rules

9. SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS

- (A) Upon receiving a requisition signed by two-thirds (2/3) of the Clubs in membership the Secretary shall call a SGM.
- (B) The Management Committee may call a SGM at any time.
- (C) At least seven (7) days' notice shall be given of a meeting under this Rule, together with an agenda of the business to be transacted at such meeting.
- (D) Each Club shall be empowered to send two delegates to all SGMs. Each Club shall be entitled to one vote only.
- (E) Any Club failing to be represented at a SGM shall be fined in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (F) Officers of the Competition and Management Committee members shall be entitled to attend and vote at all SGMs.

10. AGREEMENT TO BE SIGNED

Each Club shall 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), (name) [] of (address) [] Chair/Director and (B) (name) [] of (address) [] (Secretary/Director) of [] Football Club (Limited) have been provided with a copy of the Rules and Regulations of the Southern Combination Youth Football League Competition and do hereby agree for and on behalf of the said Club, if elected or accepted into membership, 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 7."

The agreement shall be signed by:

- (i) Where a Club is an unincorporated association, the Club Chair and Secretary; or
- (ii) Where a Club is an incorporated entity, two directors of the Club.

Any alteration of the Chair and /or Secretary of the Club on the above agreement must be notified to the FA to which the Club is affiliated and to the Secretary.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

11. CONTINUATION OF MEMBERSHIP, WITHDRAWAL OF A CLUB

- (A) Any Club intending, or having a provisional intention, to withdraw a Team from the Competition must do so at least 7 days before the AGM. This does not apply to a Club moving in accordance with Rule 22(B).
Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff
- (B) The Management Committee shall have the discretion to deal with a Team being unable to start or complete its fixtures for a Playing Season, including, but not limited to, issuing a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff
- (C) Notwithstanding the powers of the Management Committee pursuant to Rule 6(I), in the event of a Club failing to discharge all its financial obligations to the Competition in excess of £50, the Management Committee shall be empowered to refer the debt under The FA Football Debt Recovery provisions

12. EXCLUSION OF CLUBS OR TEAM. MISCONDUCT OF CLUBS, OFFICERS, PLAYERS, MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- (A) At the AGM or SGM called for the purpose in accordance with the provisions of Rule 9, notice of motion having been duly circulated on the agenda by direction of the Management Committee, the accredited delegates present shall have the power to: (i) remove a member of the Management Committee from office, (ii) exclude any Club or Team from membership, both of which must be supported by more than two-thirds (2/3) of those present and voting. Voting on this point shall be conducted by ballot. A member of the Management Committee or Club which is the subject of the vote being taken shall be excluded from voting.

- (B) At the AGM, or at a SGM called for the purpose in accordance with the provisions of Rule 9, the accredited delegates present shall have the power to exclude from further participation in the Competition any Team whose conduct has, in their opinion, been undesirable, which must be supported by more than two-thirds (2/3) 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 Officer 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 such penalty as a General Meeting or Management Committee may decide, and their Club shall also be liable to expulsion in accordance with the provisions of clauses (A) and/or (B) of this Rule.

13. TROPHY

- (A) The following agreement shall be signed on behalf of the winners of the cup or trophy:- “We A [name] and B [name], the Chair and Secretary of [] FC (Limited), 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 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 in accordance with the Fines Tariff

- (B) At the close of each Competition awards may/shall be made to the winners and runners-up if the funds of the Competition permit.

14. ALTERATION TO RULES

Alterations, for which consent has been given by the Sanctioning Authority, shall be made to these Rules only at the AGM or at a SGM specially convened for the purpose called in accordance with Rule 9. Any alteration made during the Playing Season to these Rules shall not take effect until the following Playing Season.

Notice of proposed alterations to be considered at the AGM 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** and any amendments thereto shall be submitted to the Secretary by **17th May**. The proposals and proposed amendments thereto shall be circulated to Clubs with the notice of the AGM. A proposal to change a Rule shall be carried if a majority of those present, entitled to vote and voting are in favour.

A copy of the proposed alterations to Rules to be considered at the AGM or SGM shall be submitted to the Sanctioning Authority or The FA (as applicable) at least 28 days prior to the date of the meeting

15. FINANCES

- (A) The Management Committee shall determine with which bank or other financial institution the funds of the Competition will be lodged
- (B) All expenditure in excess of £100 shall be approved by the Management Committee.
- (C) The financial year of the Competition will end on the **31st May**.
- (D) The books, or a certified balance sheet, of a Competition shall be prepared and shall be *audited/verified* annually by a suitably qualified person(s) who shall be appointed at the AGM

16. INSURANCE

- (A) All Clubs must have valid public liability insurance cover of at least ten million pounds (£10,000,000) at all times
- (B) All Clubs must have valid personal accident cover for all Players registered with them from time to time. The Players’ personal accident insurance 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 Authority. In instances where The FA is the Sanctioning Authority, the minimum recommended cover will be the cover required by the Affiliated Association to which a Club affiliates.

Failure to comply with Rules 16(A) or 16(B) will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

17. DISSOLUTION

- (A) Dissolution of the Competition shall be by resolution approved at a SGM by a majority of three quarters (3/4) of the members present and shall take effect from the date of the relevant SGM.
- (B) In the event of the dissolution of the Competition, the members of the Management Committee 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 Authority.
- (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 Authority may

decide.

MATCH RELATED RULES

18. QUALIFICATION OF PLAYERS

- (A) A Player is one who, being in all other respects eligible, has:-
- (a) signed a fully and correctly completed Competition registration form in ink, countersigned by their parent or guardian and by an Officer of the Club, and who has been registered with the Registrations Secretary 1 day prior to the Player playing and whose completed registration counterfoil has been received by the Club prior to playing in a Competition Match. The registration document must incorporate emergency contact details of the Player's parents or guardians. These details must be available at matches and training events the Player attends within the management of the Club or Competition;
 - (b) or registered through Player Registration System.

Any registration which is sent by either of the means set out at Rules 18(A)(a) or (b) above that is not fully and correctly completed will be returned to the Club unprocessed. If a Club attempts to register a player via Player Registration System but does not fully and correctly complete the necessary information via Club Portal, the registration will not be processed.

For Clubs registering Players under Rules 18(A)(a) registration forms will be provided in a format to be determined by the Competition. For Clubs registering Players via Player Registration System (under Rule 18(A)(b)) Clubs must access Club Portal in order to complete the registration process.

Registration forms may also be submitted to the Registrations Secretary by electronic mail prior to the Player playing in a Competition Match. The original document must also be forwarded by post to the appropriate Officer of the Competition within three days of the Competition Match.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

- (B) (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) A Player registered with a Premier League or EFL Academy under the Elite Player Performance Plan contained within Youth Development Rules will not be permitted to play in this Competition, except for those in the under 11 age- group and below where consent has been given by the relevant Premier League or EFL (such consent can be withdrawn at any time). Trial players are not considered to be registered with a Premier League or EFL Academy for these purposes and therefore the prohibition on playing in the Competition does not apply to them. The relevant Premier League/EFL Academy remains responsible for managing the frequency of the player's playing time. Details of the Youth Development Rules are published on The FA website. A Player registered with an FA Emerging Talent Centre or an FA Professional Game Academy may play in this Competition subject to the FA Girls' Emerging Talent Centre Operating Criteria and Professional Game Academy Youth Development Rules
- (iii) Each Team must have the following number of Players registered 7 days before the start of each Playing Season:

FORMAT	MINIMUM NUMBER
5v5	5
7v7	7
9v9	9
11v11	11

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

- (C) A child who has not attained the age of 6 shall not play, and shall not be permitted or encouraged to play, in a match of any kind.

The relevant age for each Player is determined by their age as at midnight on **31st August** of the relevant Playing Season i.e. children who are aged 6 as at midnight on 31 August in a Playing Season (together with those who attain the age of 6 during the Playing Season) will be classed as Under 7 Players for that Playing Season. Children who are aged 7 as at midnight on **31st August** in a Playing Season will be classed as Under 8 Players for that Playing Season, and so on.

Notwithstanding the above, a child is permitted to play up in the age group above their chronological age group, irrespective of any changes of format or competition structure, save that a child who attains the age of 6 after **31st August** is permitted to play only in the Under 7 age group, and may not play in the Under 8 age group, for that Playing Season.

The age groups that children are eligible to play in are set out in the table below, along with the permitted football formats for each of those age groups. For the purposes of this Rule 18(CO), provisions relating to playing in specified age groups shall include participating in training as well as playing in matches. Children shall not play, and shall not be permitted or encouraged to play, in a match between sides of more than the stated number of players, according to their age group:

	Eligible Age Groups	Maximum Permitted Format	Minimum Pitch Sizes		Maximum Pitch Sizes		Recommended Goal Sizes in feet	Ball Size
			Yards	Metres	Yards	Metres		
6	Under 7	5v5	30 x 20	27.45 x 18.3	40 x 30	36.3 x 27.45	12 x 6	3
	Under 8		30 x 20	27.45 x 18.3	40 x 30	36.3 x 27.45	12 x 6	3
7	Under 8	5v5	30 x 20	27.45 x 18.3	40 x 30	36.3 x 27.45	12 x 6	3
	Under 9	7v7	50 x 30	45.75 x 27.45	60 x 40	54.9 x 36.6	12 x 6	3
8	Under 9	7v7	50 x 30	45.75 x 27.45	60 x 40	54.9 x 36.6	12 x 6	3
	Under 10		50 x 30	45.75 x 27.45	60 x 40	54.9 x 36.6	12 x 6	3
9	Under 10	7v7	50 x 30	45.75 x 27.45	60 x 40	54.9 x 36.6	12 x 6	3
	Under 11	9v9	70 x 40	64 x 36.6	80 x 50	73.15 x 45.75	16 x 7	4
10	Under 11	9v9	70 x 40	64 x 36.6	80 x 50	73.15 x 45.75	16 x 7	4
	Under 12		70 x 40	64 x 36.6	80 x 50	73.15 x 45.75	16 x 7	4
11	Under 12	9v9	70 x 40	64 x 36.6	80 x 50	73.15 x 45.75	16 x 7	4
	Under 13	11v11	90 x 50	82.3 x 45.75	100 x 60	91.44 x 54.9	21 x 7	4
12	Under 13	11v11	90 x 50	82.3 x 45.75	100 x 60	91.44 x 54.9	21 x 7	4
	Under 14		90 x 50	82.3 x 45.75	100 x 60	91.44 x 54.9	21 x 7	4
13	Under 14	11v11	90 x 50	82.3 x 45.75	100 x 60	91.44 x 54.9	21 x 7	4
	Under 15		90 x 50	82.3 x 45.75	110 x 70	100.58 x 64	24 x 8	5
14	Under 15	11v11	90 x 50	82.3 x 45.75	110 x 70	100.58 x 64	24 x 8	5
	Under 16		90 x 50	82.3 x 45.75	110 x 70	100.58 x 64	24 x 8	5
15	Under 16	11v11	90 x 50	82.3 x 45.75	110 x 70	100.58 x 64	24 x 8	5
	Under 17		100 x 50	91.44 x 45.75	130 x 100	118.87 x 91.44	24 x 8	5
	Under 18		100 x 50	91.44 x 45.75	130 x 100	118.87 x 91.44	24 x 8	5
16	Under 17	11v11	100 x 50	91.44 x 45.75	130 x 100	118.87 x 91.44	24 x 8	5
	Under 18	11v11	100 x 50	91.44 x 45.75	130 x 100	118.87 x 91.44	24 x 8	5
	Open Age	11v11	100 x 50	91.44 x 45.75	130 x 100	118.87 x 91.44	24 x 8	5

- (D) A fee as set out in the Fees Tariff shall be paid by each Club/Team for each Player registered, if applicable.
- (E) The Management Committee shall decide all registration disputes taking into account the following.
- (i) A Player shall not be permitted to register for more than one Club subject to the exceptions set out in Rule 18(E)(iii) below.
 - (ii) 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 Secretary shall notify the Club last applying to register the Player of the fact of the previous registration subject to the exceptions set out in Rule 18(E)(iii) below.
 - (iii) A Player is only permitted to register for more than one Club provided that:
 - (a) The Team(s) in which the Player plays in are not in the same age group; or
 - (b) Except for the purpose of a transfer.

And the Player meets the requirements in Rule 18(C).
- (F) It shall be a breach of these Rules for a Player to:-
- Play for more than one Team in the same age group in the Competition in the same Playing Season without first being transferred.
- Having registered for one Club in the Competition, register for another Club in the Competition in that Playing Season, except if the provisions set out in Rule 18 E)(iii) apply.
- Submit a signed registration form or submit a registration through Player Registration System for registration that the Player had willfully neglected to accurately or fully complete.
- Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff
- (G)
- (i) The Management Committee shall have the power to accept the registration of any Player subject to the provisions of Rule 18(G)(ii) and (iii) below
 - (ii) The Management Committee shall have power to refuse, cancel or suspend the registration of any Player, the exercise of such power being without prejudice to the Management Committee's ability to fine a Club at its discretion (in accordance with the Fines Tariff) that has been charged and found guilty of registration irregularities (subject to Rule 7).
 - (iii) The Management Committee shall have the power to refuse or cancel the registration of any Player charged and found guilty of undesirable conduct (subject to Rule 7) subject to the right of appeal to the Sanctioning Authority or The FA. Where the Management Committee does not have enough information to enable it to make a decision pursuant to the above power, it may apply, in its absolute discretion, to the Sanctioning Authority or The FA for further information.

Undesirable conduct shall mean an incident of repeated proven misconduct, which may deter a Participant from being involved in this Competition
 - (iv) For a Player who has previously had a registration removed in accordance with Rule 18(G)(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 Rule 18(G)(iii) shall only be taken against a Player in cases of the Player bringing the Competition into disrepute and will in any event be subject to an appeal to the Sanctioning Authority or The FA. 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 any competition (and is not restricted to the Competition) in a period of two years or less from the date of the first offence.)
- (H) Subject to compliance with FA Rule C 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 3 days of receipt of the notification. Upon receipt of the Club's consent, or upon its failure to give written objection within 3 days, the 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 1 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.
- (I) A Player may not be registered for a Club nor transferred to another Club in the Competition after **31st March** except by special permission of the Management Committee.

- (J) A Club shall keep a list of the Players it registers and a record of all matches in which those Players have played for the Club, and shall produce such records upon demand by the Management Committee.
- In the event a Club has more than one Team in an age group, each Team must be clearly identifiable but not designated 'A' or 'B' or 1st or 2nd. In such cases, Players will be registered for one Team only. A Player so registered will be allowed to play for his Club in a younger or older age group within the provisions of Rule 18€.
- (K) A register containing the names of all Players registered for each Club, with the date of registration, shall be kept by the Registration Secretary and shall be open to the inspection of an Officer of the Club at all Management Committee meetings or at other times mutually arranged. Registrations are valid for one Playing Season only.
- In the event of a Non Contract Player 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 Non Contract Player will automatically be cancelled and declared void unless the Club conforms to the exception detailed in Rule 18(B)(i).
- (L) A Player shall not be eligible to play for a Team in any special championship, promotion or relegation deciding Competition Match (as specified in Rule 22(A)) unless the Player has played 3 Competition Matches for that Team in the current Playing Season
- (M) Not applicable to this competition.
- (N) (i) Subject to Rule 18(N)(ii), any Club found to have played an ineligible Player in a Competition Match or Matches where points are awarded shall have the points gained from that Competition Match deducted from its record, up to a maximum of 12 points, and have levied upon it a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff
- (ii) The Management Committee may vary the sanction as relates to the deduction of points set out at Rule 18(N)(i) 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.
- (iii) Where a Club is found to have played an ineligible Player in accordance with Rule 18(N)(i) above, the Management Committee may also, at its discretion:
- (a) Award the points available in the Competition Match in question to the opponents, subject to the Competition Match not being ordered to be replayed;
- (b) Levy penalty points against the Club in default; and/or
- (c) Order that such Competition Match or Matches be replayed (on such terms as are decided by the Management Committee).

(The following clause applies to Competitions involving Players in full-time secondary education):-

- (O) (i) Priority must be given at all times to the activities of schools and school organisations.
- Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (ii) The availability of children must be cleared with their head teacher (except for Sunday league competitions).
- (iii) A child under the age of 15 as at midnight on **31st August** in the relevant Playing Season, shall not be permitted to play in a Competition Match during that Playing Season where any other Player is older or younger than that child by two years or more.
- (P) Not applicable to this competition

19. CLUB COLOURS

Every Team must register the colour and design of its shirts and shorts with the Secretary by **1st June** who shall decide as to their suitability.

Any Team wishing to change the colour(s) and/or design(s) of its shirt(s) and short(s) during the Playing Season must obtain permission from the Management Committee in advance of making that change.

Goalkeepers must wear colours which distinguish them from all other Players and the Match Officials. No Player, including the goalkeeper, shall be permitted to wear black or very dark shirts.

Any Team not being able to play in its normal colours as registered with the Competition shall notify its opponents the colours in which they will play (including the colours of the goalkeeper jersey) at least 5] days before the Competition Match.

If, in the opinion of the referee, two Teams have the same or similar colours, the away Team shall make the change. Should a Team delay the scheduled time of kick-off for a Competition Match by not having a change of colours they will be fined in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

Shirts must be numbered, failing which a fine will be levied in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

Names of Youth Players shall not appear on the shirts, failing which a fine will be levied in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

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

- (A) All Competition Matches shall be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game as determined by the International Football Association Board or, for Mini-Soccer, The Mini-Soccer and Youth Futsal Handbook, or, for 9v9 football The FA’s Guide to 9v9 Football.

Clubs must take all reasonable precautions to keep their Grounds in a playable condition. All Competition Matches shall be played on pitches deemed suitable by the Management Committee. If through any fault of the home Team a Competition Match has to be replayed, the Management Committee shall have power to order the venue to be changed.

The Management Committee shall have power to decide whether a pitch and/or facilities are suitable for Competition Matches and to order the Club concerned to play its Competition Matches on another ground.

Artificial Football Turf Pitches (3G) are allowed in this Competition provided they meet the required performance standards and are listed on the FA’s Register of Football Turf Pitches – <https://footballfoundation.org.uk/3g-pitch-register>. All Football Turf Pitches used 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 20(C).

Overhead netting is allowed for 5v5 and 7v7 mini soccer if the overhead netting height is at a minimum of 6m. No overhead netting is allowed for 9v9 and 11v11 affiliated matches.

Overhead wires used to support pitch divider netting are ideally removed for affiliated matches but if they cannot be removed then discretion is given to the match official to restart the match in accordance of the laws of the game.

All Competition Matches shall have a duration as set out below unless a shorter time is mutually arranged by the two Clubs in consultation with the referee prior to the commencement of the Competition Match, and in any event shall be of equal halves.

Competition Matches should be played in accordance with the Laws appropriate to the relevant age group, as laid down by The FA, as detailed below.

Age Group	Minimum Duration of play per quarter (minutes) (Mini-Soccer)	Maximum Duration of play per quarter (minutes) (Mini-Soccer only)	Minimum duration of play per half (minutes)	Maximum duration of play per half (minutes)	Maximum playing time in one day in all organised development fixtures (minutes)	Maximum playing time in one day in all tournaments and trophy events/festival (minutes)	Competition structure
Under 7 and Under 8	5	10	10	20	40	60	Development focused with a maximum of 3 trophy events per season over 2 week periods (6 weeks)
Under 9 and Under 10	10	12.5	20	25	60	90	Development focused with a maximum of 3 trophy events per season over 4 week periods (12 weeks)
Under 11	N/A	N/A	20	30	80	120	Development focused with a maximum of 3 trophy events per season over 6 week periods (18 weeks)

Under 12	N/A	N/A	20	30	80 (if applicable)	120	Any varieties including one season long league table
Under 13 and Under 14	N/A	N/A	25	35	100	150	Any varieties including one season long league table
Under 15 and Under 16	N/A	N/A	25	40	100	150	Any varieties including one season long league table
Under 17 and Under 18	N/A	N/A	25	45	120	180	Any varieties including one season long league table

For round robin/trophy events, the maximum duration of play per half cannot be exceeded, but the minimum duration of play per half may be adjusted.

For trophy events, the Competition may award mementos.

The times of kick-off shall be fixed at the AGM and can only be altered by the mutual consent of the two competing Clubs prior to the scheduled date of the Competition Match with written notification given to the Competition at least 5 days prior.

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

The home Team must provide goal nets, corner flags and at least two footballs fit for play and the referee shall make a report to the Competition if the footballs are unsuitable.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

- (B) Except by permission of the Management Committee all Competition Matches must be played on the dates originally fixed but priority shall be given to The FA and parent County Association Cup Competitions. All other matches must be considered secondary. Clubs may mutually agree to bring forward a Competition Match with the consent of the Fixtures Secretary.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

Competition Matches can be moved backwards by no more than 7 days where both Clubs are in agreement and with the consent of the Fixture Secretary. Once date is agreed both Clubs to inform the Secretary immediately.

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

Each Club may nominate 1 date during the current Playing Season not to receive a Competition Match, This request must be received by the Fixture Secretary at least 28 days in advance of the date set for fixture.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

- (C) An Officer of the home Club must give notice of full particulars of the location of, and access to, the Ground, time of kick-off and kit colours (including the goalkeeper to the Match Officials and an Officer of the opposing Club at least 5 clear days prior to the playing of the Competition Match. The opposing Club must confirm receipt and give notice of its kit colours (including goalkeeper) at least 3 days prior to the playing of the Competition Match. If either is not provided, the relevant Club shall seek such details and report the circumstances to the Competition.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

- (D) The minimum number of Players that will constitute a Team for a Competition Match is as follows:

FORMAT	MINIMUM NUMBER
5v5	4
7v7	5
9v9	6
11v11	7

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

- (E) (i) In competitions where points are awarded, home and away matches shall be played. In the event of a Club failing to keep its engagement the Management Committee shall decide whether it should either:
- (a) Award the points from the Competition Match in question to the Club's Opponents (without the awarding of goals)
 - OR
 - (b) Order the Competition Match to be rescheduled. The Management Committee shall have the power to order the rescheduled Competition Match to be played on a neutral ground or on the opposing Club's Ground if they are satisfied that such action is warranted by the circumstances.
- In addition, the Management Committee may at its discretion order one or more of the following (if appropriate):
- (a) Impose a fine (in accordance with the Fines Tariff),
 - (b) Deduct points from the defaulting Club,
 - (c) Order the defaulting Club to pay any reasonable expenses incurred by their opponents.
- (ii) Any Club unable to fulfil a fixture or where a Competition Match has been postponed for any reason must, without delay, give notice to the Fixtures Secretary, the Competition Referees Appointments Secretary, the Secretary of the opposing Club and the Match Officials
- (iii) In the event of a Competition Match not being played or abandoned owing to causes over which neither Club has control, it should be played in its entirety on a date to be mutually agreed by the two Clubs and approved by the Management Committee. Failing such agreement and notification to the Fixtures Secretary within 7 days the Management Committee shall have the power to order the Competition 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.
- Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (iv) The Management Committee shall review all Competition 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 Management Committee shall be empowered to order the score at the time of the abandonment to stand. In all cases where the Management Committee are satisfied that a Competition Match was abandoned owing to the conduct of one Team or its Club member(s) they shall be empowered to award the points for the Competition Match to the opponent. In cases where a Competition Match has been abandoned owing to the conduct of both Teams or their Club member(s), the Management Committee shall rule that neither Team will be awarded any points for that Competition Match and it shall not be replayed. No fine(s) can be applied by the Management Committee for an abandoned Competition Match.
- (v) The Management Committee shall review any Competition Match that has taken place where either or both Teams were under a suspension imposed upon them by The FA 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 18(N)(i) above. Where both Teams were under suspension the Competition Match must be declared null and void and shall not be replayed.
- (G) The half time interval shall be of 10 minutes' duration, but it shall not exceed 15 minutes. The half time interval may only be altered with the consent of the referee.
- (H) The Teams taking part in Under 7s to Under 11 or Youth Football shall identify a Team captain who shall wear an armband and shall have a responsibility to offer support in the management of the on-field discipline of their teammates.
- Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (I) Where a suspension imposed in relation to a Football Debt (as defined under the Football Debt Recovery Regulations) upon a Club by The FA or Affiliated Association is not lifted, and/or the Club does not provide confirmation from The FA or Affiliated Association that such suspension is lifted to the Competition Secretary by [Time] [1 or 2] days before a fixture, that fixture will be treated as an unfulfilled fixture and dealt with in accordance with Rule 20€.
- (J) For match day refreshments, refer to Southern Combination Football League Code of Conduct (5. Provision of tea or similar refreshments on arrival and at half time in their dressing rooms for Match Officials and Visiting Teams and similar liquid refreshment at full time).
- Failure to comply to this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

21. REPORTING RESULTS

- (A) The Fixtures Secretary must receive within 3 days of the date played, 1pm Wednesday for a Sunday match or by midnight Thursday for a Monday evening match the result of each Competition Match in the prescribed manner. This must include the forename(s) and surname of the Team Players (in block letters) and also the referee markings required by Rule 23, or any other information required by the Competition.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff

The Home Club/both Clubs shall telephone/SMS/email/notify the result of each Competition Match to the Secretary within 2 hours of the conclusion of the match.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

- (B) The match result notification, correctly completed, shall be signed by an Officer of the Club, or as prescribed by the Competition.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff

- (C) The Competition and Clubs are permitted to collect but NOT publish results or any grading tables for fixtures involving Under 7s, Under 8s, Under 9s, Under 10s, and Under 11s. Any Competition failing to abide by this Rule will be dealt with by the Sanctioning Authority, and any Club failing to abide by this Rule will be fined in accordance with the Fines Tariff. The Competition and Clubs are permitted to collect and publish results for trophy events

22. DETERMINING CHAMPIONSHIP

- (A) In Competitions where points are awarded, 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 Competition Match. The Teams gaining the highest number of points in their respective divisions at the end of the Playing Season shall be adjudged the winners. Competition Matches must not be played for double points.

In the event of two or more Teams being equal on points at the end of the Playing Season, rankings may be determined by a deciding match or matches played under conditions determined by the Management Committee, or the position shared.

- (B) Not applicable in this competition

- (C) Not applicable in this competition

- (D) In the event of a Team withdrawing from the Competition before completing 75% of its fixtures for the current Playing Season all points obtained by or recorded against such defaulting Team shall be expunged from the Competition table. For the purposes of this Rule 22(D) a completed fixture shall include any Competition Match(es) which has been awarded by the Management Committee

23. MATCH OFFICIALS

- (A) Registered referees (and assistant referees where approved by The FA or County FA) for all Competition Matches shall be appointed in a manner approved by the Management Committee and by the Sanctioning Authority

- (B) In cases where there are no officially appointed Match Officials in attendance, the Clubs shall agree upon a referee. An individual thus agreed upon shall, for that Competition Match, 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 and individuals under the age of 14 must not participate either as a referee or assistant referee in any Competition Match. Referees between the ages of 14 and 16 are only eligible to officiate in competitions where the Players' age band is at least one year younger than the age of the referee, for example a 15 year old referee may only officiate in competitions where the age banding is 14 or younger

- (C) Where assistant referees are not appointed each Team shall provide a Club assistant referee.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine (in accordance with the Fines Tariff) being imposed on the defaulting Club.

- (D) The appointed referee shall have power to decide as to the fitness of the Ground in all Competition Matches and that decision shall be final, subject to the determination of the Local Authority or the owners of a Ground, which must be accepted

- (E) Subject to any limits/provisions laid down by the Sanctioning Authority, Match Officials appointed under this Rule shall be paid a match fee in accordance with the Fees Tariff.
- Match Officials will be paid their fees by the home Club immediately after the Competition Match, unless otherwise ordered by the Management Committee.
- Payments to Match Official by Bank Transfer must be made within 24 hours of the conclusion of the match.**
- Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (F) In the event of a Competition 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 only. Where a Competition Match is not played owing to one Club being in default, that Club shall be ordered to pay the Match Officials, if they attend the Ground, their full fee.
- Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.
- (G) A referee not keeping their engagement, and failing to give a satisfactory explanation as to their non-appearance, may be reported to the Affiliated Association with which they are registered.
- (H) Each Club shall, in a manner prescribed from time to time by The FA, award marks to the referee for each Competition 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 (in accordance with the Fines Tariff) or dealt with as the Management Committee shall determine.
- (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 FA/County FA.
- (J) The referee shall submit a report form, supplied by the Competition, giving the result of the Competition Match, the number of Players in each Team and the time of kick-off to the Registration Secretary within two days of the Competition Match.
- (K) Match Officials shall be supplied, each season, with a copy of the Competition Rules free of charge.
- (L) Match Officials shall have undertaken a RESPECT briefing offered by The FA/County FA or the Competition.

SCHEDULE A

FEES TARIFF		
RULE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	MAXIMUM FEE
4(A)	CLUB ENTRY FEE	£50.00
4(B)	CLUB/TEAM ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION	£150.00
4€	DEPOSIT (Not used in this Competition)	£00.00
7(C), 7(F)	PROTEST/APPEAL FEES	£25.00
18(D)	PLAYERS REGISTRATION FEE	£10.00 (per player)
18(H)	TRANSFER FEE	£10.00
23(E)	REFEREES FEE	£47.00 (inclusive of mileage)
23(E)	ASSISTANT REFEREES FEE	£32.00 (inclusive of mileage)

FINES TARIFF		
RULE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	MAXIMUM FINE
2(G)	FAILURE TO AFFILIATE £100.00	£100.00
2(I)	FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH FA INITIATIVES	£100.00
2(K)	UNAUTHORISED ENTRY OF TEAMS INTO COMPETITIONS	£100.00
3	FAILURE TO OBTAIN CONSENT FOR A CHANGE OF CLUB NAME	£30.00
4(C)	FAILURE TO PAY A DEPOSIT	£100.00
4(E)	FAILURE TO TEAMS ARE RECORDED AS AFFILIATED IN THE CLUB PORTAL	£100.00
5(E)	COMMUNICATIONS CONDUCTED BY PERSONS OTHER THAN NOMINATED OFFICERS	£25.00
6(H)	FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH AN INSTRUCTION OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	£100.00
6(I)	FAILURE TO PAY A FINE WITHIN REQUIRED TIMEFRAME	Double the original fine up to £100.00
8(H)	FAILURE TO BE REPRESENTED AT AGM	£100.00
9	FAILURE TO BE REPRESENTED AT SGM	£100.00
10	FAILURE TO SUBMIT THE REQUIRED WRITTEN AGREEMENT OR TO NOTIFY CHANGES TO SIGNATORIES	£25.00
11(A)	FAILURE TO PROVIDE NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL BEFORE DEADLINE	£100.00
11(B)	FAILURE TO COMENCE/COMPLETE FIXTURES	£100.00
13(A)	FAILURE TO SUBMIT THE REQUIRED WRITTEN AGREEMENT REGARDING THE TROPHY	£25.00
16(A)	FAILURE TO HAVE THE REQUIRED INSURANCE	£100.00
16(B)	FAILURE TO HAVE THE REQUIRED INSURANCE	£100.00
18(A)	FAILURE TO CORRECTLY REGISTER A PLAYER	£40.00
18(B)(iii)	FAILURE TO HAVE THEV REQUIRED NUMBER OF REGISTERED PLAYERS PRIOR TO THE PLAYING SEASON COMMENCING	£25.00
18(F)	REGISTERING OR PLAYIMNG FOR MULTIPLE CLUBS OR INACCURATE COMPLETION OF A REGISTRATION FORM	£25.00
18(G)(ii)	REGISTRATION IRREGULARITIES	£100.00
18(M)	FIELDING MORE THAN THE PERMITTED NUMBER OF PLAYERS WHO HAVE PARTICIPATED IN SENIOR COMPETITION MATCHES	£100.00
18(N)(i)	PLAYING AN INELIGIBLE PLAYER	£100.00
18(O)(i)	FAILURE TO GIVE PRIORITY TO SCHOOL ACTIVITIES	£50.00
19	FAILURE TO NUMBERS SHIRTS	£10.00 (per shirt, up to an aggregate maximum of £30.00)
19	DELAYING KICK OFF DUE TO NO CHANGE OF COLOURS	£30.00

19	HAVING NAMES ON SHIRTS	£10.00 (per shirt, up to an aggregate maximum of £30.00)
20(A)	DELAYING KICK OFF DUE TO FAILURE TO PROVIDE REQUIRED EQUIPMENT	£30.00
20(B)	FAILURE TO PLAY MATCHES ON THE FIXED DATE	£100.00
20(B)	FAILURE TO NOTIFY SECRETARY OF NO FIXTURE DATE	£20.00
20(C)	FAILURE TO PROVIDE DETAILS OF FIXTURE	£50.00
20(D)	PLAYING MATCH WITH LESS THAN THE REQUIRED NUMBER OF PLAYERS	£100.00
20(E)(i) & (iii)	FAILURE TO PLAY FIXTURE	£100.00
20(H)	NO CAPTAIN'S ARMBAND	£10.00
20(J)	FAILURE TO PROVIDE REFRESHMENTS	1st offence: £10.00 2nd offence: £20.00 3rd offence: £30.00 4th offence: £40.00 subsequent offences: £50.00
21(A) & (C)	LATE RESULT NOTIFICATION	£20.00
21(B)	FAILURE TO PROVIDE RESULT	£20.00
21(D)	PUBLISHING RESULTS/GRADING TABLES FOR FIXTURES INVOLVING U7s, U8s, U9s, U10s AND U11s	£50.00
23(C)	FAILURE TO PROVIDE CLUB ASSISTANT REFEREE	£25.00
23(E)	FAILURE TO PAY MATCH OFFICIALS' FEES AND EXPENSES	£25.00
23(F)	FAILURE TO PAY MATCH OFFICIALS WHERE A MATCH IS NOT PLAYED	£25.00
23(H)	FAILURE TO PROVIDE REFEREE'S MARK	£25.00

SCHEDULE B – INDEX

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MATCH RELATED RULES

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Rule 22	Determining Championship
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NATIONAL LEAGUE SYSTEM REGULATIONS

1. DEFINITIONS

In the interpretation of these Regulations: any words and expressions, unless otherwise defined herein, shall be words and expressions as defined as follows:-

“The Association” means The Football Association Limited.

“Club” means a football club for the time being in a League in membership of the NLS or Feeder Leagues (as applicable)

“Committee” in these Regulations means the relevant Committee appointed by the Association.

“Competition” in these Regulations means a League in the NLS.

“Conditional Licence” means a Licence with conditions attached to be met by a Club within a period determined by the Competition in which the Club holding the Licence is allocated by the Committee. Such period is not to exceed 1 March in the Membership Year to which the Licence relates. Save in exceptional circumstances a Conditional Licence cannot be granted to a Club for successive Membership Years in respect of the same Criterion.

“Criteria” means the Criteria for participation in Play Off Matches and Inter-Step Play Off Matches as set out in regulation 9 of these Regulations.

“Feeder Leagues” means Regional NLS Feeder Leagues from where a Club can enter the NLS.

“League” means any competition sanctioned by The Association and/or an Affiliated Association in membership of the NLS or Feeder Leagues (as applicable).

“Licence” means an annual licence required to be held by a Club to be a member of a Competition that may be either an Unconditional Licence or Conditional Licence.

“NLS” means the National League System of competitions controlled by The Association where promotion and relegation links exist between participating Leagues.

“Playing Season” means the period between the date on which the first competitive fixture in the League is played each year until the date on which the last competitive fixture in the League is played. For Clubs participating in Play Off Matches this does include the period when Play Off Matches are played.

“Play Off Match(es)” means matches played between Clubs in a Play Off Position on a format to be determined by each League provided that the format is the same across each Step.

“Play Off Position” means the position of a Club at the end of each Playing Season which is provided for in Standardised Rule 12 as qualifying the Club to take part in a Play Off Match to qualify for promotion to the next Step for the next Playing Season.

“Regular Season” means the period between the date on which the first competitive fixture in the League is played each year and the date on which the last competitive fixture in the League is played, excluding Play Off Matches.

“Regulations” means these regulations.

“Rules” means The Association’s Standardised Rules or The Association’s Standard Code of Rules under which a League is administered.

“Step” means the level at which a Club participates in the NLS or Feeder League (as applicable).

“Unconditional Licence” means a Licence without any conditions attached.

1.1 Due to the impact of COVID-19, a number of regulations were temporarily amended or disapplied for the 2020/2021 season. It is intended that any temporarily amended or disapplied regulations will be reinstated for the commencement of the 2021/2022 season, save where any further amendments have been approved by FA Council. A number of existing regulations have also been amended.

2. THE NLS SHALL BE OPERATED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REGULATIONS.

The aims and objectives of the NLS are to provide:

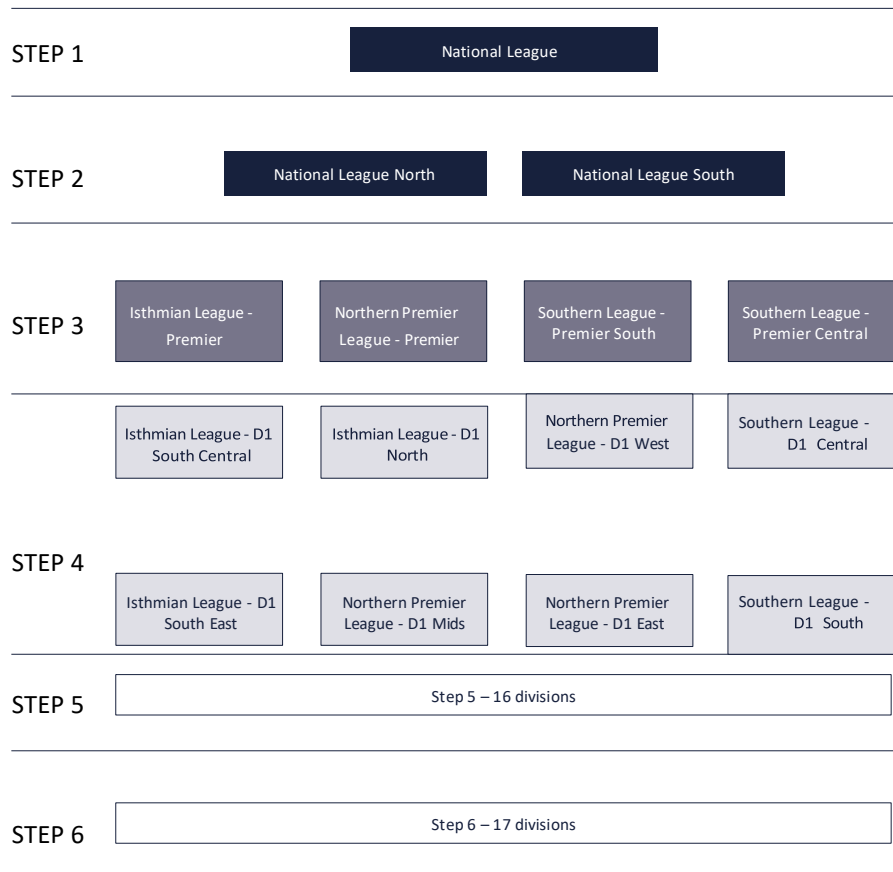
2.1 Clubs with a level of competitive football appropriate to their playing ability, stadium/ ground facilities and geographical location.

- 2.2 A framework for discussion on matters of policy and common interest to Leagues and Clubs.
- 2.3 The seasonal movement of Clubs.
- 2.4 A co-ordinated approach between Leagues regarding the final date of the Playing Season.

All Leagues are bound by the Regulations. A Club is bound by the Regulations from the date it has qualified for placement into the NLS until such time as it leaves the NLS for whatever reason.

3. NLS LEAGUE STRUCTURE

3.1 The current structure of the NLS is set out below:



The Leagues currently at Steps 5 and 6 are set out at the end of the Regulations.

Each Step shall have the following maximum number of Clubs: Step 1-24, Step 2-48, Step 3-88, Step 4- 160, Step 5 - 320, Step 6- 340. Clubs will be placed in the most geographically appropriate division.

- 3.2 Any league wishing to become part of the NLS must apply to the Committee by 31st December in the relevant year in such form and/or providing such information as shall be required by the Committee from time to time. The decision as to whether or not a league should be admitted to the NLS shall be made by the Committee which will then decide on the Step at which the League will compete.
- 3.3 Any League wishing to propose an adjustment to its position within the NLS must apply in writing to the Committee by 31st December in any year for such proposal to be determined by the Committee in order, if approved, to have effect in the following Playing Season.

4. RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR PROMOTION AND RELEGATION

The Committee shall provide for the seasonal promotion, relegation or the movement of Clubs.

5. DETAILED PROMOTION AND RELEGATION ISSUES

- 5.1 The criteria for entry to the NLS and the criteria for ground/stadium facilities and the Criteria for participation in Play Off Matches shall be determined by the Committee. All criteria so determined shall be published by The Association from time to time.
- 5.2 Subject to 5.5, at the conclusion of each Playing Season, the following procedures will apply to promotion / relegation subject to the application of the Rules:

Step 1 and Step 2

These regulations do not deal with promotion from Step 1

The Clubs finishing in the bottom four places at Step 1 at the end of the Playing Season will be relegated and placed in a feeder pool and placed in the most geographically appropriate division at Step 2 for the following Playing Season.

They will be replaced by the Clubs finishing in 1st position in each of the divisions at Step 2 together with a further two Clubs determined by a series of Play Off Matches. Where a Club finishes in 1st position but does not meet the criteria for promotion to the next Step, the Club finishing in 2nd position shall be promoted. The Clubs finishing in 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th positions shall be eligible to take part in the Play Off Matches. The Play Off Matches shall be played so that in each Step 2 division there is a qualifying round, semi-finals and a promotion final with all ties being played over a single leg at the ground of the higher placed Club. The winner of the promotion final in each Step 2 division will be promoted. If a Club is not eligible to enter Step 1 then it shall not take part in any Play Off Matches. In that event, such Club shall not be replaced and the Play Off Matches structure and draw shall be adjusted as necessary by the Competition on the basis of the remaining Clubs' final league positions.

Step 2 and Step 3

The Clubs in the bottom four places in each of the two divisions at Step 2 at the end of the Regular Season will be relegated and placed in a feeder pool and placed in the most geographically appropriate division at Step 3 for the following Playing Season.

They will be replaced by the Clubs finishing in 1st position in each of the four divisions at Step 3 together with a further four Clubs determined by a series of Play Off Matches. Where a Club finishes in 1st position but does not meet the criteria for promotion to the next Step, the Club finishing in 2nd position shall be promoted and the Club finishing in 3rd position (and so on) shall be the Club in the next eligible position to take part in the Play Off Matches. Where a Club finishes in a Play Off Position but does not meet the Criteria for participation in Play Off Matches the Club finishing in the next eligible position shall take part in the Play Off Matches. In each division at Step 3, the Play Off Matches shall be played so that the highest placed of the eligible Clubs plays against the lowest placed and the other two Clubs play each other. The ties will be played on a single match basis with the home Club being the Club with the best points per match ratio in the Regular Season. If there are only three eligible Clubs then the highest placed shall receive a bye to a second match where it will play the winner of the other Play Off Match and the winner of that match will play in the further Play Off Match described above. Clubs finishing below position 7 will not be eligible to take part in Play Off Matches.

The promoted Clubs will be placed in a feeder pool and placed in the most geographically appropriate division at Step 2 for the following Playing Season.

Step 3 and Step 4

The Clubs finishing in the bottom four places in each of the four divisions at Step 3 at the end of the Regular Season will be relegated and placed in a feeder pool and placed in the most geographically appropriate division at Step 4 for the following Playing Season.

They will be replaced by the Clubs finishing in 1st position in each of the eight divisions at Step 4 together with a further eight Clubs determined by a series of Play Off Matches. Where a Club finishes in 1st position but does not meet the criteria for promotion to the next Step, the Club finishing in 2nd position shall be promoted and the Club finishing in 3rd position (and so on) shall be the Club in the next eligible position to take part in the Play Off Matches. Where a Club finishes in a Play Off Position but does not meet the Criteria for participation in Play Off Matches, the Club finishing in the next eligible position shall take part in the Play Off Matches. In each division at Step 4 the Play Off Matches shall be played so that the highest placed of the eligible Clubs plays against the lowest placed and the other two Clubs play each other. The ties will be played on a single match basis with the home Club being the Club with the best points per game ratio in the Regular Season. If there are only three eligible Clubs then the highest placed shall receive a bye to the second match where it will play the winner of the other Play Off Match and the winner of that match will be promoted. Clubs finishing below 7th position will not be eligible to take part in Play Off Matches.

The promoted Clubs will be placed in a feeder pool and placed in the most geographically appropriate division at Step 3 for the following Playing Season.

Step 4 and Step 5

The Clubs finishing in the bottom four places in each of the eight divisions at Step 4 at the end of the Regular Season will be relegated and placed in a feeder pool and placed in the most geographically appropriate division at Step 5 for the following Playing Season.

Clubs relegated for finishing in the bottom four places in each of the eight divisions at Step 4 will be replaced by the Clubs finishing in 1st position in each of the sixteen divisions at Step 5 together with a further 16 Clubs (one Club from each of the sixteen divisions at Step 5) determined by a series of Play Off Matches. Where a Club finishes in 1st position but does not meet the minimum criteria for promotion to the next Step (which shall include being awarded a Grade 5 following an independent ground grading inspection), the Club finishing in 2nd position shall be promoted and the Club finishing in 3rd position (and so on) shall be the Club in the next eligible position to take part in the Play Off Matches. Where a Club finishes in a Play Off Position but does not meet the Criteria for participation in Play Off Matches, the Club finishing in the next eligible position shall take part in the Play Off Matches. In each division at Step 5, the Play Off Matches shall be played so that the highest placed of the eligible Clubs plays against the lowest placed of the eligible Clubs and the other two eligible Clubs play each other. The ties will be played on a single match basis with the home Club being the Club with the best points per match ratio in the Regular Season. If there are only three eligible Clubs, then the highest placed eligible Club shall receive a bye and play the winner of the other Play Off Match, and the winner of that match will be promoted. Clubs finishing below 7th position will not be eligible to take part in Play Off Matches.

Step 5 and Step 6

The Clubs in the bottom two places in each of the sixteen divisions at Step 5 at the end of the Regular Season will be relegated and placed in a feeder pool and placed in the most geographically appropriate division at Step 6 for the following Playing Season.

These Clubs will be replaced by (i) the Clubs finishing in 1st position at the end of the Regular Season in each of the two divisions operated by the South West Peninsula League; (ii) the Clubs finishing in 1st position at the end of the Regular Season in each of the remaining fifteen divisions at Step 6; and (iii) a further fifteen Clubs determined by a series of Play Off Matches within those remaining fifteen divisions (i.e. not including the two divisions operated by the South West Peninsula League). Where a Club finishes in 1st position but does not meet the criteria for promotion to the next Step, the Club finishing in 2nd position shall be promoted and the Club finishing in 3rd position (and so on) shall be the Club in the next eligible position to take part in the Play Off Matches. Where a Club finishes in a Play Off Position but does not meet the Criteria for participation in Play Off Matches, the Club finishing in the next eligible position shall take part in the Play Off Matches. In each division at Step 6, the Play Off Matches shall be played so that the highest placed of the eligible Clubs plays against the lowest placed and the other two Clubs play each other. The ties will be played on a single match basis with the home Club being the Club with the best points per game ratio in the Regular Season. If there are only three eligible Clubs then the highest placed shall receive a bye to the second match where it will play the winner of the other Play Off Match and the winner of that match will be promoted. Clubs finishing below 7th position will not be eligible to take part in Play Off Matches.

The promoted Clubs will be placed in a feeder pool and placed in the most geographically appropriate division

Step 6 and relegation

At the end of the Regular Season the Clubs in the bottom three positions of each of the seventeen Step 6 divisions will be liable to relegation. The final number of Clubs to be relegated will be confirmed once promotion candidates from Feeder Leagues and any vacancies are known. If reprieves are required the Clubs third from bottom will be ranked on a points per match basis (then goal difference, then goals scored if required) - the Club(s) with the best points per match will be reprieved. If all third from bottom Clubs are reprieved, and a further reprieve(s) is required, the same process will apply for Clubs in second from bottom (and so on).

- 5.3 At Steps 2-5 the Club finishing in last place in the table at the end of the Regular Season will be relegated and not reprieved.
- 5.4 At Steps 1 to 6, if a Club becomes eligible to take part in a Play Off Match and refuses to take part in that match or if a Club qualifies for promotion and refuses to be promoted then that Club shall be relegated from the division it last played in and shall play the following Playing Season in the division at the next Step level below. If the refusal/ineligibility applies to a Club currently operating at Step 6, the Club will be removed from the NLS and placed in the appropriate Regional NLS Feeder League, provided there is an eligible Club at Feeder League level to replace them.

5.5 Where a vacancy occurs within the NLS the following procedures will apply:

End of the Playing Season

- 5.5.1 (a) Where a Club notifies its decision to resign from its League at the end of the Playing Season, then a vacancy is created on the date the notification of that decision is formally recorded by that League. Such resignation can only be withdrawn by the end of that Playing Season with the consent of the Board of that League.
- (b) In all cases, that Club is treated as a relegated Club. The final table of that division is not affected.
- (c) In cases where the vacancy is created after the end of the Playing Season but before the League's AGM, the vacancy will be filled in accordance with Regulation 5.5.2 below.
- 5.5.2 (a) Where a vacancy occurs at Step 1 and Step 2 following the completion of a Playing Season the best ranked Club in a relegation position is reprieved.
- (b) Where a vacancy arises at Step 3 to 6 following the completion of a Playing Season it shall be dealt with at the sole discretion of the Committee.
- (c) Where a vacancy occurs at Step 3 and 4 after the allocations for the following season have been published and prior to the holding of the League's AGM. The vacancy created shall be dealt with at the sole discretion of the Committee in order to minimise disruption.
- (d) Where a vacancy occurs after the date of a League AGM then a League is not able to replace the Club(s) concerned for the following Playing Season.

Prior to the end of a Playing Season

- 5.5.3 (a) In cases where the vacancy is created prior to the end of the Playing Season, at Steps 1 and 2 the vacancy will be filled by the best ranked Club in a relegation position at the end of the Regular Season, eligible of being reprieved in that same division. In the event of there being more vacancies than Clubs eligible to be reprieved, such vacancy or vacancies will be filled by Clubs eligible to be reprieved in the Competition's other division(s) on a points per match ratio. At Steps 3 to 6, the vacancies shall be filled at the sole discretion of the Committee.
- (b) Where, prior to the end of the Playing Season, a Club notifies its decision to resign from its League with immediate effect or where a Club is removed from the League for any reason, then the playing record of that Club will be expunged and a vacancy is created on the date the resignation or removal is formally recorded by that League.
- (c) In all such cases that Club is treated as a relegated Club and the vacancy will be filled in accordance with 5.5.3(a) above.
- 5.6 Only internal changes to the constitution of a League are allowed following the holding of a League's Annual General Meeting.
- 5.7 Clubs are not allowed to enter into a ground share agreement in order to gain promotion or to retain membership at a particular Step where the Club has failed to attain or maintain the relevant Grade.
- 5.8 Ground grading requirements will be in accordance with the Rules.

Each Playing Season, a Club participating at Step 1 to Step 6 must attain the following ground grading by 31 March:

STEP	GRADE
Step 1	Grade 1
Step 2	Grade 2
Step 3	Grade 3
Step 4	Grade 4
Step 5	Grade 5
Step 6	Grade 6

Where a Club fails to attain the relevant grade by 31 March in a Playing Season, it will not be eligible for promotion or to participate in any Play Off Match in that Playing Season and will be relegated to the Step immediately below at the end of the Playing Season (save for where that Club also fails to meet the ground grading criteria applicable for the Step immediately below, in which case the Committee shall

decide (at its sole discretion) where to place the Club for the following Playing Season).

Clubs promoted from Feeder Leagues must install floodlights in working order by 30th September following promotion. Failure to do this will result in a sanction being imposed at the discretion of the League of which the Club is a member. If by 31st March in the year following promotion the floodlights are still not installed then the Club will be a relegated Club and be dealt with accordingly.

- 5.9 If a Club is relegated for not achieving the required Grade for the Step at which it is playing (regardless of whether the Club finishes in a relegation position or not), it will not be eligible for promotion again until it has attained the required Grade for the Step to which it wishes to be promoted. The Club must have that Grade at 31st March in the year in which it seeks promotion.
- 5.10 Where a Club resigns from a League that Club will not be eligible for promotion for at least one Playing Season following the Season in which it resigned. Regulation 5.9 shall also apply if, in the Playing Season during which the Club resigns, that Club failed to attain the required Grade for the Step at which it was playing.
- 5.11 In the event of any question arising regarding the interpretation of these Regulations it will be decided by The Association in its sole discretion.

6. THE MOVEMENT OF CLUBS WITHIN THE NLS OTHER THAN BY PROMOTION OR RELEGATION

- 6.1 Movement of a Club from participation in one League to another is not permitted other than by promotion and relegation or otherwise as set out in these Regulations or League Rules save with the approval of the Committee.

It may be necessary from time to time to move Clubs laterally at the same Step. Each year the Committee (or sub-committee thereof) will consider whether any lateral movements may be necessary at each Step and the final decision shall rest with the Committee / sub-committee. Only a Club subject to lateral movement from one League to another may appeal that decision pursuant to Regulation 8.2(b).

- 6.2 If a Club wishes to move either: (a) another division at the Step of the NLS at which its current division operates, or (b) another division at a Step of the NLS below that at which its current division operates. that Club must make an application in writing to the Committee on or before 31st March in each year to be effective for the following Playing Season. In the event of such application being successful the League from which the Club is moving shall not levy a financial penalty on that Club.

- 6.3 (i) If a Club (whether a Members' Club or a Company) is wound up, liquidated, or is removed from its League or withdraws from football competition ('the Former Club'), and a new Club ('the New Club') is established which wishes to be placed within the NLS, it will be allowed to make an application only to join a League/ division at Step 5 of the NLS unless the Former Club was in either Step 4 or Step 5 when the event which caused it to cease its membership occurred in which case it must re-join the NLS at a minimum of two Steps below the level at which it was at the time the event occurred, or withdrew from football competition, whichever is lower. Where the Former Club was a member of Premier League or EFL then the Committee shall at its absolute discretion determine in which League the New Club shall be placed for the following Playing Season and will set out at its complete discretion the requirements to be met by the New Club.

In order for consideration to be given to the placement in the NLS of the New Club in the following Playing Season, an initial application must be received by the Committee by 1st March or within twenty-one days of the Former Club being wound up, liquidated, resigning or being removed from its League or withdrawing from football competition, if such date is later than 1st March.

The full application accompanied by all necessary documents including evidence of security of tenure having been granted to the New Club and affiliation to a County Football Association must be received by 31st March or within twenty-one days of the Former Club being wound up, liquidated, resigning or being removed from its League or withdrawing from football competition, if such date is later than 1st March. The application shall be copied to the League of which membership is being requested. The application will be determined by the Committee.

In considering any application, the Committee will set out at its sole discretion the requirements to be met by the New Club.

In the event of more than one application being received within twenty-one days of the Former Club being wound up, liquidated, resigning or being removed from its League or withdrawing from football competition, the Committee will consider at its discretion which application will be considered in accordance with this Regulation.

- (ii) If a Club is removed from its League and wishes to remain in the NLS it shall apply to the Committee

within five working days of it receiving written notification of its removal from its League. The Committee will consider such application and will place the Club in what it considers at its sole discretion to be the most appropriate League/division for the following Playing Season.

- 6.4 If a Club (whether a Members' Club or a Company) ceases to be a member of its league and that Club (that is not a New Club as defined at 6.3 above) wishes to be placed within the NLS for the immediately following Playing Season, then unless otherwise determined by the Committee, it may be allowed to make an application to join a League/division below the most recent League/division of which the Club was a member.

In order for consideration to be given to the placement in the NLS by the Club in the immediately following Playing Season, an initial application must be received by the Committee in accordance with the procedures set out at 6.3 above. The application shall be copied to the League of which membership is being requested. The application will be determined by the Committee at its absolute discretion.

In considering any application, the Committee will set out at its sole discretion the requirements to be met by the Club in determining whether to approve the application.

- 6.5 If two or more Clubs ("the Merging Clubs") are proposing a transaction or series of transactions that result in the merging or consolidation ("the Proposed Merger") of those Clubs into one Club ("the Merged Club") then a formal application to do so must be received by the Committee and the league(s) of which the Merging Clubs are members by 31st December to be valid for the following Playing Season.

A Deed of Agreement, which shall be legally binding on all parties must be submitted to The Association by 31st March in the year immediately following receipt of the application. The Committee shall determine at its absolute discretion where the Merged Club is to be included in the NLS for the following Playing Season subject to the provisions of item 6.5.5 below.

A Deed of Agreement, which shall be legally binding on all parties must be submitted to The Association by 31st March in the year immediately following receipt of the application. The Committee shall determine at its absolute discretion where the Merged Club is to be included in the NLS for the following Playing Season subject to the provisions of item 6.5.5 below.

In arriving at its decision the Committee may apply the following minimum criteria:

- 6.5.1 The requirements of Standardised Rule 2.9 for the current Playing Season must be met by each of the Merging Clubs. If one or more of the Merging Clubs is subject to an insolvency event then Standardised Rule 2.9.2 shall be applied to such club(s), otherwise Standardised Rule 2.9.1 shall be applied;
- 6.5.2 The proposed playing name of the Merged Club must be acceptable to the Committee; and
- 6.5.3 The Merged Club must have security of tenure to a ground that meets the relevant ground grading requirements;
- 6.5.4 Any other criteria that the Committee may from time to time deem to be appropriate;
- 6.5.5 The Merged Club will ordinarily be placed at the lower of the Steps at which the Merging Clubs ended the Playing Season in which the application is made. For the purposes of this Regulation, if one of the Merging Clubs has finished that Playing Season in a relegation place, then they will be deemed to have ended the Playing Season at the Step to which they would have been relegated without the Proposed Merger proceeding.

Any decision regarding whether a proposed transaction or series of transactions falls to be considered under this Regulation shall be determined by the Committee at its absolute discretion.

7. **PLACEMENT OF A CLUB INTO A LEAGUE**

- 7.1 Usually a club can only enter the NLS at Step 6 via a Feeder League. However a League may seek approval from the Committee to receive a club or team not currently in membership of a League within the NLS provided that there is: (a) exceptional circumstances, (b) a vacancy within its constitution, (c) the club meets the entry criteria and (d) promotion and relegation issues have been satisfied. Such request must be received from the league by no later than 1st February. Any decision shall only be capable of Appeal to The Association by the affected League.
- 7.2 Reserve teams, including a team from a club or Club which is not considered by the Committee to be sufficiently separate from another club or Club, will not be permitted to compete above Step 6 in the NLS. There must be a minimum of two Steps between a first and reserve team. This does not apply at Steps 6 and Feeder League level. No two teams from the same Club can play at the same Step.
- 7.3 Teams from Higher Education or Further Education establishments are not permitted to compete

above Step 5. This does not prevent any such establishment forming a Club which complies with all entry criteria and which is separate from the establishment itself.

- 7.4 Where a Club moves from one League to another, for whatever reason, the League from which it is being moved must provide the League to which the Club is being moved with a certificate confirming that the Club being moved does not owe any money or other property of any nature to the League from which it is being moved. The Club being moved cannot compete in its new League until such certification has been provided and the onus will be on the Club being moved to ensure that it has cleared all indebtedness to its previous League.

8. **PROCEDURES FOR THE DETERMINATION OF ANY MATTER, DISPUTE OR DIFFERENCE BY THE COMMITTEE**

- 8.1 The Committee may adopt such procedures for the determination of any matter, dispute or difference as it considers appropriate and expedient, having regard to the aims and objectives set out at Regulation 2. The Committee may require the attendance at a meeting or the written observations of any League or Club, as it considers appropriate to assist its determination.

- 8.2 (a) Any dispute or difference between a League and a Club relating to promotion and relegation issues, lateral movement and/or other eligibility criteria must be referred for determination to the Committee; such determination shall be final and binding subject only to Arbitration in accordance with Rule K.

- (b) Subject to Regulation 6.1 above, any decision of the Committee shall be subject to a right of appeal to an Appeal Board. The decision of that Appeal Board shall be final and binding on all parties.

All referrals of appeals shall be conducted in accordance with the Appeal Regulations save for (i) appeals in relation to Ground Grading decisions where the procedures are outlined in Regulation 8.2(c) below and (ii) appeals in relation to decisions made pursuant to Regulations 6.1 and 6.2 above where the procedures are outlined in Regulation 8.2(d) below.

- (c) Procedures for Ground Grading Appeals

- (i) The ratification of the Ground Grading decision must be sent in writing within 14 days of the final decision date, currently 31st March.
- (ii) Appeals in relation to Ground Grading Appeals must be submitted to The Association's Judicial Services Department within seven days from the date of the written decision outlining the Grounds of Appeal, with a copy to The Association's National League System Department.
- (iii) Unless both parties agree that a hearing should be conducted on the papers, the Committee will appear before an Appeal Board with the Appellant to respond to the application and there is no requirement to make a formal response in writing.
- (iv) In all cases the Committee will submit any documentation including the Ground Grading report that was considered by the Committee in relation to the Ground Grading decision, (which the appellant would already have received).
- (v) Dates would be set annually in advance by the Judicial Services Department for the hearing of Ground Grading appeals and details of the dates would be notified to all Clubs in the correspondence from the Committee notifying the decision of the Ground Grading assessment.

- (d) Procedures for appeals against decisions made pursuant to Regulation 6.1 and 6.2.

- (i) Such appeals must be submitted to The Association's Judicial Services Department within seven days from the date of the written decision outlining the Grounds of Appeal, with a copy to The Association's National League System Department.
- (ii) The Committee's response to the appeal shall be submitted to The Association's Judicial Services Department within seven days of the date the Club's appeal was submitted, with a copy to The Association's National League System Department.
- (iii) In all cases the Committee will submit any documentation considered by the Committee in relation to the relevant decision (which the appellant would already have received) with its response.
- (iv) The Committee will appear before an Appeal Board with the Appellant for determination of the appeal.
- (v) Dates would be set annually in advance by the Judicial Services Department for the hearing of such appeals and details of the dates would be notified to the Club in the correspondence from the Committee notifying them of the relevant decision.

8.3 The Committee may, at its discretion, delegate the resolution of any matter, dispute or difference arising under these Regulations to anybody it considers to be appropriate (including a sub-committee or commission which may include members of council not on the Committee or a body constituted by a County Football Association).

9. **CRITERIA FOR THE PARTICIPATION IN PLAY-OFF MATCHES**

In order to qualify for Play Off Matches, a Club must comply with:

- Security of Tenure – see Standardised Rule 2.3.2
- Solvency – see Standardised Rule 13.B.2
- Ground Share requirements, i.e. not ground share in order to gain promotion – see 5.7 of these Regulations
- Ground Grading – see 5.8 of these regulations and the relevant criteria document

10. **ARBITRATION**

The fact of participation in the NLS and signifying agreement to be bound by the Regulations shall constitute an agreement between each League and Club to refer to Arbitration any challenge in law arising out of, or in relation to, the Regulations in accordance with the provisions of FA Rule K.

11. **LICENSING SYSTEM**

A Club shall be required to hold a Licence to be a member of a Competition at Steps 1 to 4 of the NLS.

- (a) The Association shall through the appropriate Committee operate a Licensing System to apply to all Clubs competing at Steps 1 to 4 of the National League System (“NLS”). A Club is required to hold a Licence to be a member of a Competition at Steps 1 to 4 of the NLS. The Licensing System to be applied is as shown at an Appendix to the Standardised Rules.
- (b) Each Competition at Steps 1 to 4 of the NLS shall be responsible for the operation, assessment and granting of the Licence in respect of its Clubs through the Standardised Rules as approved by a Committee of The Association. A Competition at Steps 1 to 4 shall take all reasonable and practical steps to co-operate with The Association in the application of the Licence.
- (c) In the event that a Competition fails to apply the Licensing System set out in the Standardised Rules to the satisfaction of The Association, then The Association shall have the powers of the Board of that Competition as set out in the Standardised Rules to apply such Licensing System. In addition, The Association may, if necessary, bring an action against the Competition for Misconduct under the Rules of The Association.

12. **PRECEDENCE**

In the case of conflict between the Regulations for the Operation of the NLS and the Rules, the Regulations take precedence:

LEAGUES/DIVISIONS AT STEPS 5 AND 6 OF THE NLS (SEASON 2023-24)

STEP 5	STEP 6
Combined Counties League Premier Div North	Combined Counties League Div 1
Combined Counties League Premier Div South	Eastern Counties League Div 1
Eastern Counties League Premier Div	North Eastern Counties League Div 1
Essex Senior League	South Hellenic League Div 1
Hellenic League Premier Div	Midland League Div 1
Midland League Premier Div	Northern Counties East Div 1
North West Counties League Premier Div	North West Counties League Div 1 North
Northern League Div 1	North West Counties League Div 1 South
Northern Counties East League Premier Div	Northern League Div 2
Southern Counties East League Premier Div	South West Peninsula League Premier Div East
Spartan South Midlands League Premier Div	South West Peninsula League Premier Div West
Southern Combination Football League Premier Div	Spartan South Midlands League Div 1
United Counties League Premier Div North	Southern Combination Football League Div 1
United Counties League Premier Div South	Southern Counties East League Div 1
Wessex League Premier Div	United Counties League Div 1
Western League Premier Div	Wessex League Div 1
	Western League Div 1

Regional NLS Feeder League Regulations.....

1. League Structure

- 1.1 The Leagues currently operating as Feeder Leagues are set out at the end of the Appendix.
- 1.2 At Feeder League level the maximum number of Clubs in each division shall be determined by the Sanctioning Authority taking into account all relevant factors. In any case, this shall not be more than 18 Clubs. The minimum amount of Clubs should be 14.
- 1.3 Any league wishing to become a Feeder League must apply to the FA Leagues Committee by 31st December in the relevant year in such form and /or providing such information as shall be required by the Committee from time to time. The decision as to whether or not a league should be admitted as a Feeder League shall be made by the Committee.

2. **Rules and Regulations for Promotion and Relegation**

- 2.1 All Feeder League Clubs seeking promotion to Step 6 must make an application using the prescribed form direct to The Association, copied to their existing League, by 31st December in the relevant year. In order to be considered for promotion Clubs must finish in 1st position in their Feeder League. If the Club finishing in 1st position does not wish to be promoted or fails to meet the entry criteria then the Club finishing in 2nd position will be eligible for promotion. If the Club in 2nd position does not seek promotion or fails to meet the entry criteria then Clubs down to 5th position may be considered for promotion provided that they meet the appropriate entry criteria. Clubs finishing below 5th position may not be considered for promotion and only one Club may be considered for promotion from each League. Each application must be accompanied by the agreed application fee, as determined by the Committee, which is non-refundable.
- 2.2 Clubs competing in a Feeder League must comply fully with the minimum requirements of Grade 8. To be considered for promotion to Step 6, Clubs must meet the requirements of Grade 7 and attain Grade 6 by 31st March in the year following promotion. Clubs can be promoted from Feeder Leagues to Step 6 without floodlights, provided that that all other requirements of Grade 7 are met by 31st March in the Playing Season in which the Club wishes to gain promotion and that the Club has the following in place:-
 - Planning permission granted for floodlights.
 - That by 30th September following promotion that floodlights are installed and in working order.
 - A development / business plan
 - Quotations / estimates for the work to be carried out.
 - Funding applications submitted, if required.

Failure to install floodlights in working order by 30th September following promotion will result in a sanction being imposed at the discretion of the League of which the Club is a member. If by 31st March in the year following promotion the floodlights are still not installed then the Club will be a relegated Club and be dealt with accordingly.

3. **Placement of a Club in a League**

- 3.1 The matter of draft placements for Clubs in Feeder Leagues is for the League in conjunction with its Sanctioning Authority. Once drafted, proposed placements are to be submitted to the Committee for ratification by an appropriate date as prescribed by the Committee from time to time. This is save for Clubs being allocated to Feeder Leagues having been relegated from Step 6, which is a matter for the Committee.
- 3.2 Reserve and 'A' teams may participate in Feeder Leagues. Clubs should note the provision concerning Reserve teams at Step 6 under Regulation 7.2 in the 'National League System Regulations'.

4. **Movement of a Club between Leagues**

- 4.1 Movement of a Club from participation in one League to another is not permitted other than by promotion and relegation or otherwise as set out in League Rules save with the approval of the Committee.

It may be necessary from time to time to move Clubs laterally at the same Step. Each year the Committee (or sub-committee thereof) will consider whether any lateral movements may be necessary at each Step and the final decision shall rest with the Committee/sub-committee. Only a Club subject to lateral movement from one League to another may appeal that decision pursuant to Regulation 5.2(b).
- 4.2 Any Club wishing to move from one League to another must make an application in writing to the Committee on or before 31st March in each year to be effective for the following Playing Season. In the event of such application being successful, the League from which the Club is moving shall not levy a financial penalty on that Club.

5. **Procedures for the determination of any matter, dispute or difference by the Committee**

- 5.1 The Committee may adopt such procedures for the determination of any matter, dispute or difference as it considers appropriate and expedient, having regard to the aims and objectives set out in Regulation 2. The Committee may require the attendance at a meeting or the written observations of any League or Club, as it considers appropriate to assist its determination.
- 5.2 (a) Any dispute or difference between a League and a Club relating to promotion and relegation issues, lateral movement and/or other eligibility criteria must be referred for determination to the Committee; such determination shall be final and binding subject only to Arbitration in accordance with Rule K.
- (b) Subject to Regulation 4.1 above, any decision of the Committee shall be subject to a right of appeal to an Appeal Board. The decision of that Appeal Board shall be final and binding on all parties.
- All referrals of appeals shall be conducted in accordance with the Appeal Regulations save for (i) appeals in relation to Ground Grading decisions where the procedures are outlined in Regulation 5.2(c) below and (ii) appeals in relation to decisions made pursuant to Regulations 4.1 and 4.2 above where the procedures are outlined in Regulation 5.2(d) below.
- (c) **Procedures for Ground Grading Appeals**
- (i) The ratification of the Ground Grading decision must be sent in writing within 14 days of the final decision date, currently 31st March.
- (ii) Appeals in relation to Ground Grading Appeals must be submitted to The Association's Judicial Services Department within seven days from the date of the written decision outlining the Grounds of Appeal, with a copy to The Association's National League System Department.
- (iii) The Committee will appear before an Appeal Board with the Appellant to respond to the application and there is no requirement to make a formal response in writing.
- (iv) In all cases the Committee will submit any documentation including the Ground Grading report that was considered by the Committee in relation to the Ground Grading decision, (which the appellant would already have received).
- (v) Dates would be set annually in advance by the Judicial Services Department for the hearing of Ground Grading appeals and details of the dates would be notified to all Clubs in the correspondence from the Committee notifying the decision of the Ground Grading assessment.
- (d) **Procedures for appeals against decisions made pursuant to Regulation 4.1 and 4.2**
- (i) Such appeals must be submitted to The Association's Judicial Services Department within seven days from the date of the written decision outlining the Grounds of Appeal, with a copy to The Association's National League System Department.
- (ii) The Committee's response to the appeal shall be submitted to The Association's Judicial Services Department within seven days of the date the Club's appeal was submitted, with a copy to The Association's National League System Department.
- (iii) In all cases the Committee will submit any documentation considered by the Committee in relation to the relevant decision (which the appellant would already have received) with its response.
- (iv) The Committee will appear before an Appeal Board with the Appellant for determination of the appeal.
- (v) Dates would be set annually in advance by the Judicial Services Department for the hearing of such appeals and details of the dates would be notified to the Club in the correspondence from the Committee notifying them of the relevant decision.
- 5.3 The Committee may, at its discretion, delegate the resolution of any matter, dispute or difference arising under these Regulations to anybody it considers to be appropriate (including a sub-committee or commission which may include members of council not on the Committee or a body constituted by a County Football Association).

Leagues with Regional NLS Feeder League status - 2023-24 season:

Anglian Combination Premier Div
Bedfordshire County League Premier Div
Cambridgeshire County League premier
Div Central Midlands League Div North
Central Midlands League Div South
Cheshire League Premier Div
Devon League Premier Div East
Devon League Premier Div West
Dorset Premier League
Essex & Suffolk Border League Premier
Div Essex Olympian League Premier Div
Gloucestershire County League Premier
Div Hampshire Premier League Senior Div
Herts Senior County League Premier Div
Humber Premier League Premier Div
Kent County League Premier Div
Leicestershire Senior League Premier Div
Lincolnshire Football League Premier Div
Liverpool County Premier League Premier
Div Manchester Football League Premier
Div Mid Sussex Football League Premier
Div Middlesex County League Premier Div
Midland League Div 2
Northamptonshire Combination Premier Div
Northern Football Alliance Premier Div
North Riding Football League Premier Div

Nottinghamshire Senior League Senior Div
Oxfordshire Senior League Premier Div
Peterborough & District League Premier Div
Salop Leisure Football League Premier Div
Sheffield & Hallamshire County Senior
League Premier Div
Somerset County League Premier Div
Southern Combination Div Two
Spartan South Midlands League Div 2 St
Piran Football League Premier East St
Piran Football League Premier West
Staffordshire County Senior League
Premier Div
Suffolk & Ipswich League Senior Div
Surrey Elite Intermediate League
Intermediate Div
Thames Valley Premier League Premier Div
Wearside League
West Cheshire League Div 1
West Lancashire League Premier Div
West Midlands (Regional) League Div 1
West Yorkshire League Premier Div
Wiltshire Football League Premier Div
York Football League Premier Div
Yorkshire Football League

RULES FOR SOUTHERN COMBINATION FOOTBALL LEAGUE CUP COMPETITIONS

1. ALL RULES FOR THE LEAGUE COMPETITION WILL APPLY EXCEPT WHERE STATED.

2. NAMES OF COMPETITIONS

The Competition shall be called:

- (a) The Peter Bentley Challenge Cup
- (b) The Southern Combination Football League Division One Challenge Cup
- (c) The Southern Combination Football League Division Two Challenge Cup
- (d) The Southern Combination Football League U23 Cup
- (e) The Southern Combination Football League Youth Section Cup

3. ELIGIBLE CLUBS

Each Competition will be restricted to those teams participating in the section of the League named in the title of the Competition except the Peter Bentley Challenge Cup which shall be for teams competing in Premier Division and Division One of the League.

4. ENTRIES

All Clubs participating in the Southern Combination Football League will be automatically entered into the appropriate competitions.

5. ORGANISATION OF THE COMPETITION

- (a) A Southern Combination FL Challenge Cup shall normally be played on a knock-out basis unless in exceptional circumstances the Management Committee otherwise determine.
- (b) All other competitions may be played on a knock-out basis or as the Management Committee determine.
- (c) In all competitions, the Management Committee shall have the power to divide the competing Clubs if thought necessary into geographically convenient districts or otherwise, and to exempt any number of Clubs to the second round. No exemptions will be made beyond this round.
- (d) When the draw is made for any knock-out competition, the game shall be played on the ground of the Club first drawn unless otherwise mutually offered or paid in connection with the negotiations for a change of venue. In the case of replayed matches, the Club which had not the choice of ground for the first match shall have the choice of ground for the second match. The Fixtures Secretary may order that Semi-Final and Final ties will be played on neutral grounds. Semi Finals and Finals in each game will be played to a finish by the taking of penalties as determined by League Cup Rule 5(i)1.
- (e) Members of each respective team may be changed during the series of matches in any competition, but a player shall not play for more than one Club in a particular competition covered by these rules. Any Club found guilty of playing an ineligible player shall be removed from the competition, and shall be fined in accordance with the Fines Tariff. In addition any Club which intentionally plays an ineligible player and attempts to conceal the fact by making a false entry on the Official Match Return Card shall be fined in accordance with the Fines Tariff. When an offending Club is removed from a competition the Management Committee shall have the power to take such action as it deems fit in regard to any particular match.
- (f) All matches will be played to a finish in the first match. In the event that the scores are level at the end of normal time, a result shall be obtained by the taking of penalty kicks from the penalty mark as determined by League Cup rule 5 (i).
- (g) Any match abandoned before the end of normal time shall be replayed on the ground of the home Club, but if the abandonment takes place at the end of normal time, then the replay shall be on the ground of the away Club.
- (h) In the event of the score of the second match being a draw at the end of normal time, a result shall be obtained by the taking of penalty kicks in the following manner:
 - (i)
 - (1) The referee shall choose the goal at which all of the kicks shall be taken.
 - (2) He shall toss a coin, and the team whose captain wins the toss shall decide whether to take the first or second kick.

- (3) (a) Subject to the terms of the following paragraphs (c) and (d) both teams shall take five kicks.
- (b) The kicks shall be taken alternately.
- (c) If, before both teams have taken five kicks, one has scored more goals than the other could, even if it were to complete its five kicks, the taking of kicks shall cease.
- (d) If, after both teams have taken five kicks, both have scored the same number of goals, or have not scored any goals, the taking of kicks shall continue in the same order, until such times as both have taken an equal number of kicks (not necessarily five more kicks) and one has scored more goals than the other.
- (4) The team which scores the greater number of goals, whether the number of kicks is in accordance with the terms of the foregoing paragraphs (3a), (3c) or (3d) shall qualify for the next round of the Competition, or shall be declared winner of the competition, as the case may be.
- (5) (a) With the exception referred to in the following paragraph (b) only the players who are on the field of play at the end of the match, which shall mean at the end of extra time in so far as a match in which extra time is authorised, is concerned, and any who, having left the field temporarily, with or without the referee's permission, are not on the field of play at that time, shall take part in the taking of kicks
- (b) Provided that his team has not already made use of the maximum number of substitutions permitted by the rules of the competition under which the match was played, a goalkeeper who sustains an injury during the taking of kicks, and who, because of injury, is unable to continue as goalkeeper, may be replaced by a substitute.
- (6) Each kick shall be taken by a different player, and not until all eligible players of any team, including the goalkeeper or the named substitute by whom he had been replaced in terms of paragraph (5) as the case may be, have each taken a kick, may a player of the same team take a second kick.
- (7) Subject to the terms of paragraph (5) any player who is eligible may change places with his goalkeeper at any time during the taking of the kicks.
- (8) (a) Other than the player taking the kick from the penalty mark, and the two goalkeepers, all players shall remain within the centre circle whilst the taking of kicks is in progress.
- (b) The goalkeeper who is a colleague of the kicker, shall take up position within the field of play, outside the penalty area at which the kicks are being taken, behind the line which runs parallel with the goal line, and at least 10 yards from the penalty mark.
- (9) Unless stated to the contrary in the foregoing paragraphs 1 to 8, the Laws of the Game, and the International Board Decisions relating thereto, shall, in so far as they can, apply at the taking of the kicks.

NB. In the event of the light failing before the end of the taking of kicks from the penalty mark, the result shall be decided by the toss of a coin or the drawing of lots

- (a) In the Final and Semi Final ties the Management Committee may order both clubs to change any of their colours
- (b) For the Final and Semi Final ties, the Management Committee shall fix the ground, date and time of kick-off and shall have direct control of the arrangements connected with the match.
- (c) For the Final tie, Match Officials will receive a suitable memento in addition to their expenses. Players of both Clubs shall be presented with 20 suitable mementoes, to include the Manager. Clubs may apply for additional awards for players engaged in the Competition, giving details of players and number of matches played, such application to be received by the Competition Secretary before 31st May.
6. The Management Committee shall have the power to order any Cup match to be played on the ground of the side drawn as the away team, or on a ground of the Management Committee's choice, if a tie is postponed twice.
7. **CONTINGENCY**
The Management Committee shall have the power to deal with any contingency not provided for in the foregoing rules.