



IRISH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION



- Domestic Club Licensing Manual
- Championship Club Licensing Manual
- Salary Cost Protocol & Financial Monitoring

For Award of Licences for Season 2012/13

Version 1.4



TIMETABLE AND DEADLINES FOR CORE PROCESS

BY

18 October 2011

Document Packs (including manual, application form and templates/annexes etc) issued to clubs.

30 November 2011

Initial Compliance & Stadium Infrastructure Inspection Visits.

31 January 2012

Submission deadline for Sporting, Personnel and Legal Documents.

1 February - 28 February 2012

Review Period for Sporting, Personnel and Legal Documents.

23 March 2012

Submission deadline for Safety/Infrastructure and Financial Documents.

24 March - 13 April 2012

Review Period for Safety/Infrastructure and Financial Documents.

23 April 2012

Submission of Management Representation letter
Preparation of First Instance Report

30 April 2012

FIB Decision

17 May 2012

AB Decision

31 May 2012

Notification of decisions to IFA Executive Board and UEFA.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In March 2006 the Irish Football Association Executive Committee, upon the recommendation of UEFA, asked the Club Licensing Committee to consider implementing its own Domestic Club Licensing scheme.

In June 2010 the extension of the club licensing scheme to Championship clubs was endorsed by both the Premier League Committee and the Championship Committee. The requirements of a Championship Licence were approved by the IFA Executive Board in October 2010 and apply to and for clubs seeking promotion to the top division of domestic competition in Northern Ireland

The requirements in this "*Club Licensing Manual*"¹ have therefore been set by the IFA as applicable to football in Northern Ireland; however it incorporates the principles of the UEFA Club Licensing Manual. This manual was approved by the IFA Executive Board in October 2011 and applies to and for clubs wishing to attain a Domestic or Championship Club Licence for participation in season 2012/13.

This Manual is divided into three main sections.

The first section addresses the *licensor*, explaining its tasks, defining the *licence applicant*, the licensing bodies as well as the *core process* to be applied.

The second section is directed at the clubs and describes, in five chapters, the five criteria that need to be met in order to be granted a licence to play in domestic competition(s). The five categories (*criteria*) described in the five chapters are as follows: sporting criteria, infrastructure criteria, personnel and administrative criteria, legal criteria and financial criteria. The criteria are divided into three different grades ("A", "B" and "C").

The third section sets out the monitoring process in relation to the maximum allowable expenditure on player salary costs for clubs participating in the top division competition in Northern Ireland where a club must not incur expenditure on player salary costs greater than a given percentage of their allowable income.

1.1 SCOPE OF APPLICATION

These regulations apply whenever expressly referred to by specific regulations governing a club competition to be played under the auspices of the Irish Football Association.

These regulations govern the rights, duties and responsibilities of all parties involved in the Domestic and Championship Club Licensing system and define in particular:

- a)** the minimum requirements to be fulfilled by the IFA in order to act as a licensor for its clubs, as well as the minimum procedures to be followed by the licensor in the assessment of the licensing criteria.
- b)** the licence applicant and the licence to participate in the top division of domestic competition in Northern Ireland.
- c)** the minimum sporting, infrastructure, personnel and administrative, legal and financial criteria to be fulfilled by a club in order to be granted a Domestic or Championship Club Licence.

¹ Terms in italics are defined in the Glossary. Representation in italics occurs however only the first time these are mentioned in the text.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

Each chapter also includes the objectives and the benefits for the clubs. The clubs should carefully read through the objectives of each criterion. Each requirement is explicitly applicable to Northern Ireland football but follows the core principles of the UEFA scheme to ensure a unified standard throughout Northern Ireland and Europe.

The Domestic and Championship *Club Licensing Systems* have the following objectives:

- a)** to further promote and continuously improve the standard of all aspects of football in Northern Ireland and to give continued priority to the training and care of young players in every club;
- b)** to ensure that a club has an adequate level of management and organisation;
- c)** to adapt clubs' sporting infrastructure to provide players, spectators and media representatives with suitable, well-equipped and safe facilities;
- d)** to protect the integrity and smooth running of the Domestic club competitions'
- e)** to allow the development of benchmarking for clubs in financial, sporting, legal, personnel, administrative and infrastructure-related criteria throughout Northern Ireland;
- f)** To implement the UEFA 10 Point Plan - Anti Racism / Anti – Sectarian Policy as an integral part of the development of Domestic club football;

Furthermore, they aim to achieve financial fair play in club competitions and in particular:

- a)** to improve the economic and financial capability of the clubs, increasing their transparency and credibility;
- b)** to place the necessary importance on the protection of creditors by ensuring that clubs settle their liabilities with players, social/tax authorities and other clubs punctually;
- c)** to introduce more discipline and rationality in club football finances;
- d)** to encourage clubs to operate on the basis of their own revenues;
- e)** to encourage responsible spending for the long-term benefit of football;
- f)** to protect the long-term viability and sustainability of Domestic club football.

1.3 LEGAL BASIS

The Licensor has jurisdiction to govern the Licensing System by virtue of Article 2(2) of the IFA Articles of Association.

2. PROCEDURE

2.1. CRITERIA GRADUATION

2.1.1. PRINCIPLE

2.1.1.1. The criteria described in this Club Licensing Manual are graded into three separate categories.

2.1.1.2. The different grades have been defined as follows:

- a) **“A”- criteria – “ESSENTIAL”**: If the licence applicant does not fulfil any A-criteria, then it cannot be granted a *licence* to enter the domestic club competitions.
- b) **“B” – criteria – “MUST”**: If the licence applicant does not fulfil any B-criteria then it is sanctioned as specified by the licensor but can still receive a licence to enter domestic club competitions.
- c) **“C”- criteria – “BEST PRACTICE”**: C-criteria are best practice recommendations. Non-fulfilment of any C-criteria does not lead to any sanction or to the refusal of a licence. Certain C-criteria *may* become an “A” or “B” criteria at a later stage.

2.1.1.3. The IFA (licensor) is free to increase the minimum requirements or to upgrade the criteria established in this manual (see chapters 6 to 10) for the purposes of entering into domestic club competitions.

2.1.1.4. Sanctions for the non-fulfilment of criteria shall be determined by the Club Licensing Committee and communicated as appropriate. These sanctions may include but not be limited to a caution, a fine, the obligation to submit evidence or fulfil certain conditions by a certain deadline, etc.

2.1.1.5. The Club Licensing Committee reserves the right to refer any possible breach of IFA Articles, Competition Rules or Regulations to the appropriate body of the IFA for consideration. Confidentiality in this respect is governed by 3.2.1.3.

2.1.2. APPLICATION OF THE SYSTEM TO LICENCE APPLICANTS

2.1.2.1. The club licensing system is implemented only for clubs affiliated to the IFA as defined by the IFA Articles of Association.

2.1.2.2. The club licensing system applies only for those clubs who wish to participate in the top division of domestic competitions in Northern Ireland.

2.2. SPOT-CHECKS BY THE IFA

2.2.1. PRINCIPLE

2.2.1.1. The IFA and/or its nominated bodies/agencies reserve, at any time, the right to conduct spot-checks with the applicant club in order to ensure that its licence was correctly awarded at the time of the final and binding decision of the licensor. The non-observance of the minimum mandatory requirements, as defined in this Domestic and Championship Club Licensing Manual approved by the IFA Executive Board, may result in the withdrawal of any licence awarded and/or sanctions determined by the Club Licensing Committee according to the nature and the gravity of the violations.

Such spot checks will apply to all requirements of this manual, including, but not limited to, any and all documentary evidence or facts presented, any nominations of teams, resources or personnel, any safety inspection reports, any financial or legal submissions made or any findings as a result of a site/stadium inspection.

3. LICENSOR

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter defines the licensor and the decision-making bodies.

3.2. LICENSOR DEFINITION

3.2.1. WHO IS THE LICENSOR?

- 3.2.1.1. The Irish Football Association is the licensor.
- 3.2.1.2. The licensor governs the licensing system, appoints the appropriate licensing bodies and controls the necessary processes and requirements.
- 3.2.1.3. The licensor guarantees the licensee confidentiality with regard to all non-public information given by the licence applicant during the licensing process. Notwithstanding this principle, the licensor is permitted to communicate and disclose information submitted by a licence applicant to all relevant statutory bodies, panels or commissions of the IFA as it deems appropriate. A confidentiality agreement shall be concluded between the licensor and licence applicant in this respect.
- 3.2.1.4. Anyone involved in the licensing process or appointed by the licensor must sign a confidentiality clause and an independence declaration.

3.2.2. DECISION-MAKING BODIES

- 3.2.2.1. The licensor shall establish an appropriate administration and appoint qualified staff members.
- 3.2.2.2. The licensor shall establish a Club Licensing Committee and sub-divide this into two decision-making bodies:
 - a) First Instance Body (FIB)
 - b) Appeals Body (AB)
- 3.2.2.3. The decision-making bodies shall be independent from each other. They shall receive administrative support from the IFA.

3.2.3. LICENSING ADMINISTRATION

- 3.2.3.1. The tasks of the Licensing Administration (LA) will include:
 - a) Preparing, implementing and further developing the club licensing system;
 - b) Providing administrative support to the decision-making bodies;
 - c) Assisting, advising and monitoring the licence applicants during the season;
 - d) Serving as the contact point for the relevant clubs;
 - e) All other tasks in respect of the management and administration of the Club Licensing scheme.
- 3.2.3.2. The LA shall be equipped with suitably qualified staff and have the necessary resources available.
- 3.2.3.3. The LA will be led by a Licensing Manager and the department will engage a number of experts with experience of, and responsibility for, specific types of criteria.
- 3.2.3.4. At least one staff member or an external financial adviser must have a financial background and a diploma in accountancy/auditing recognised by the appropriate national body (e.g. national trade association), or must have several years' experience in the above matters (a "recognition of competence").

3.2.3.5 All persons involved in the licensing process must comply with confidentiality and independence rules regarding information received during the licensing procedure. The IFA shall set up the necessary confidentiality clauses and independence declarations in this respect.

3.2.4. FIRST INSTANCE BODY (FIB)

- 3.2.4.1. The FIB decides on whether a licence should be granted or refused to an applicant on the basis of the documents provided and in accordance with the provisions of this Domestic and Championship Club Licensing Manual at the deadlines set by the licensor as per the Core Process. It shall also decide on the withdrawal of any licence awarded, in line with 2.2.1.1 and 4.4.1.5.
- 3.2.4.2. The Executive Board of the Irish Football Association decides on the composition of this body and shall appoint up to seven members to make up the FIB.
- 3.2.4.3. The quorum of the FIB shall be three members. The Chairman has both a deliberate vote and a further casting vote in the case of the FIB being unable to reach a majority decision.
- 3.2.4.4. The decision must be put in writing and include the reasoning in the case of a licence refusal as well as the conditions for lodging an appeal.
- 3.2.4.5. As members of the FIB, the licensor may nominate administrative staff, with the exception of the Licensing Manager and other members of the licensing administration who cannot be members of the FIB.
- 3.2.4.6. The FIB has the authority to review licensing criteria and to recommend amendments to the IFA Executive Board.

3.2.5. APPEALS BODY (AB)

- 3.2.5.1. The AB will only review decisions made by the FIB and will not rehear the case or review fresh evidence.
- 3.2.5.2. The AB decides on all appeals lodged by the licence applicant in respect of FIB decisions to refuse the award of a licence or withdrawal of a licence.
- 3.2.5.3. For the avoidance of doubt, the decision of the AB is final and binding on all parties (insofar as a final appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport may be lodged); no further appeal may be lodged under the IFA Articles.
- 3.2.5.4. Appeals may only be lodged by:
 - a) The licence applicant, who received the refusal of the FIB;
 - b) The licensee whose licence was withdrawn by the FIB; or
 - c) The Licensing Manager
- 3.2.5.5. The decision must be put in writing and include the reasoning in the case of a licence refusal or licence withdrawal.
- 3.2.5.6. The Executive Board of the Irish Football Association decides on the composition of the AB and shall appoint up to seven members to make up this body.
- 3.2.5.7. The quorum of the AB is three members. The Chairman has both a deliberate vote and a further casting vote in the case of the AB being unable to reach a majority decision.
- 3.2.5.8. Members of the AB must not belong simultaneously either to the administrative staff or to any statutory decision-making body or committee of the IFA or its affiliated league.

3.2.6. REQUIREMENTS OF MEMBERS OF THE DECISION MAKING BODIES.

- 3.2.6.1. The decision making bodies must have at least one qualified solicitor/barrister and a financial auditor/accountant holding a qualification recognised by the appropriate national professional body among their members.
- 3.2.6.2. Members of the decision making bodies must not belong simultaneously to any body which may compromise their integrity and cause them to not act impartially in the discharge of their duties.
- 3.2.6.3. Members are appointed and may be re-appointed for additional periods of two years.
- 3.2.6.4. All members of the decision making bodies must comply with confidentiality and independence rules regarding information received during the licensing procedure. The IFA shall set up the necessary confidentiality clauses and independence declarations in this respect.
- 3.2.6.5. In addition to the requirements set out above, the licensor may establish further conditions to be satisfied by members of the licensing bodies (academic, professional training, experience, etc.) to ensure that they perform their functions to high professional standards.
- 3.2.6.6. A member must in all cases automatically abstain if there is any doubt as to his/her independence towards the licence applicant or if there is a conflict of interest.
- 3.2.6.7. The independence of a member may not be guaranteed if he/she or any member of his/her family (spouse, children, parents and siblings) is a:
 - a) member
 - b) shareholder
 - c) business partner
 - d) sponsor or
 - e) consultant, etc.of the licence applicant. The foregoing list is illustrative but not exhaustive.
- 3.2.6.8. The licensor may establish further criteria regarding the independence of members.

3.2.7. PROCEDURE OF DECISION MAKING

- 3.2.7.1. The following procedural rules apply to the decision making process.

a) Deadlines

Deadlines are those as defined in the Core Process outlined in this manual and must be respected. The Club Licensing Committee may alter the deadlines during a cycle and communicate such changes, in a timely manner, to all those involved in the Club Licensing process.

b) Equal Treatment

Fundamental procedural rights shall be guaranteed to any party, particularly the right to equal treatment and the right to a fair hearing. These shall include the right to speak, the right to consult the case file and the right to have a reasoned decision.

c) Representation

Clubs shall have the right to representation (legal or otherwise) at the Appeals Body ONLY, except as directed by the FIB in line with step 12 of the Core Process.

d) Right to be heard

In accordance with (c) above, all clubs shall have the right to be heard. The identities of the parties representing the club shall be verified and they shall be instructed to tell the truth and shall be informed that they shall be sanctioned by the Appeals Body, or referred to the Executive Board of the IFA, should they present false information or represent a false or misleading position (whether positively or by omission).

e) Time Limit to Appeal

The time limit to appeal is 7 (seven) days after the date of the meeting at which the decision appealed against was taken unless for any reason it was not made known to the appellant at such meeting in which case it must be within 7 (seven) days after the date on which the decision was intimated in writing to the club.

Time limits are triggered when notified, as above, and shall begin on the day following notification. Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays shall be included in the calculation.

f) Form of Appeal

The appeal must be submitted in writing.

The statement of the appeal must mention:

- The decision appealed against
- The grounds for the appeal
- The pleadings (including applicable procedural complaints)

g) Submission of Appeal

The submission of the appeal must be made by Royal Mail Special Delivery Letter. Such letters must be addressed to the Chief Executive of the Irish Football Association, 20 Windsor Avenue, Belfast BT9 6EG.

Such letter must be dispatched (confirmation of which should be retained by the club should evidence be needed) in accordance with (e) above.

h) Cost of Appeal

An appeal deposit fee of £250 must be submitted in accordance with (e) and (g) above and made payable to the Irish Football Association, returnable to the club should the appeal be upheld.

i) Effects of an Appeal

An appeal submitted in compliance with (e–g) above (as verified by the Chair of the Appeals Body) shall have a delaying effect on any direct or consequential effect of the original decision.

j) Evidence

Any evidence or facts, which are to be used by the appellant to support their case must be referred to in the appeal statement (as per (f) above) and where appropriate, supporting documentation must be provided and lodged in accordance with (e) and (g) above.

Evidence, or facts, not presented in line with the Core Process and placed before the FIB will not be considered by the Appeals Body when reaching their decision.

k) Burden of Proof

The appellant has the burden of proof.

l) Hearings / Deliberations

Any evidence, facts, documents, contentions or allegations must be made in advance of an appeal hearing (in line with (j) above) and must also be presented in the presence of both the appellant and the original decision making body.

After all parties are satisfied with their representations the Appeals Body shall deliberate in camera and, in general, immediately after the hearing.

m) Decision

The Appeals body shall issue a written statement to all parties, and subsequent to this notification, any third party it deems appropriate (including media) which shall mention:

- The place and date it was issued
- The names of the Appeal Body
- The parties concerned
- The pleadings of the parties
- The reasons for the decisions in fact and in law
- The judgement (including where applicable the distribution of costs)

4. LICENCE APPLICANT AND LICENCE

4.1. INTRODUCTION

- 4.1.1. This chapter defines the legal entity that can apply for a licence and the licence required to enter domestic club competitions.
- 4.1.2. The legal entity applying for a licence is called the licence applicant. Once the licence applicant has been granted with a licence by the licensor it becomes a licensee. For the purpose of this chapter only the term licence applicant is used.

4.2. CIRCLE OF LICENCE APPLICANTS

4.2.1. AUTHORITY TO DEFINE LICENCE APPLICANTS

- 4.2.1.1. The IFA defines the licence applicants according to its statutes and regulations and the following provisions in accordance with the national law. This may be ruled within the licensing manual and/or in the Articles of the IFA and/or in the applicable Competition Rules & Regulations. In addition, the FIFA and UEFA statutes as well as relevant regulations must also be taken into account (e.g. FIFA Regulations for the Status and Transfer of Players).

4.2.2. STATUS OF FOOTBALL CLUBS

- 4.2.2.1 The status of a football club (professional, semi-professional or amateur) is not relevant to the issuance of a licence.

4.2.3 LEGAL FORM OF FOOTBALL CLUBS

- 4.2.3.1. The legal form of a football club is not relevant to the issuance of the licence according to IFA Articles and applicable national law.

4.3. DEFINITION OF LICENCE APPLICANTS

4.3.1 PRINCIPLE

- 4.3.1.1. The licence applicant may only be a football club, defined as being the legal entity fully responsible for the football team participating in domestic competitions and which is either:
 - a) Any legal company, limited liability company or private members club (Registration of clubs order 1996) or an unincorporated association, which is a member of the Irish Football Association provided such membership has lasted at least one year, or;
 - b) Any above mentioned entity, which has a contractual relationship to a registered member (hereafter, *company*) provided such membership has lasted at least one year.
 - c) Any above mentioned entity which has not been a member of the Irish Football Association for at least one year, providing that its membership is as a result of a transfer of membership from the entity which was previously a member, and such transfer of membership has been formally approved by the Football Committee of the Irish Football Association.
- 4.3.1.2. Only a registered member or a company, in line with 4.2 and 4.3.1.1 above, can apply for / receive a licence. Individuals may not apply for / receive a licence.
- 4.3.1.3. The licence applicant is fully responsible for the participation in domestic and international football competitions as well as for the fulfilment of the club licensing criteria.

The licence applicant is, in particular, responsible for ensuring the following:

- a)** that all players are registered with the IFA and if they are professional players, have a written labour contract with either the registered member or the company (see FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players);
- b)** that all the compensation paid to the players arising from contractual or legal obligations and all the revenues arising from gate receipts are accounted for in the books of either the registered member or the company;
- c)** that the licence applicant is fully responsible for the football team composed of registered players participating in domestic, national and international competitions;
- d)** that the licensor is provided with all necessary information and/or documents relevant to proving that the licensing obligations are fulfilled, as these obligations relate to the sporting, infrastructure, personnel and administrative, legal and financial criteria set out under Chapters 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 respectively;
- e)** that the licensor is provided with information on the *reporting entity/entities* in respect of which sporting, infrastructure, personnel and administrative, legal and financial information are required to be provided. In turn, the licensor must assess whether, in respect of each licence applicant, the selected reporting entity/entities is appropriate for club licensing purposes.

In this respect the licence applicant shall provide the overall legal group structure (presented in a chart) duly approved by management. This chart must include information on: any subsidiary; any controlling entity up to the ultimate controlling parent company, any associated company and subsidiary of such parent.

The legal group structure shall clearly identify the entity which is the member of the licensor and also mention for each licence applicant's subsidiary: name of the legal entity; type of the legal entity; information on main activity and any football activity; % of ownership interest (if different, % of voting power held); share capital; total assets; total revenues; total equity.

It is best practice that the above key information is provided for each entity of the group and that any change to this legal group structure is promptly communicated to the licensor.

4.3.1.4. If the licence applicant is a company, it must provide a written contract of assignment with a registered member that must be approved by the national association and/or its affiliated league and must include the following minimum content:

- a)** The company shall comply with the applicable statutes, regulations and decisions of the IFA, FIFA, UEFA, and applicable leagues as amended from time to time. This system of rules shall constitute an integral part of the contract of assignment. This company shall also comply with decisions made by the said football bodies.
- b)** The company must not further assign the rights to participate in the competition on a domestic or international level.
- c)** The right of this company to participate in the competition operations shall cease to apply if the assigning club's membership of the association ceases.
- d)** If the company is put into bankruptcy or enters into liquidation the right to apply for a licence for domestic competition shall revert to the registered member. For the sake of clarity should the licence already be granted to the company, then it cannot be transferred from the company to the registered member; only the right to apply for a licence shall revert to the registered member in line with 4.3.1.1.
- e)** The IFA reserves the right to approve the name under which the company participates in the domestic competitions.

- f) The company shall, on request of the competent national or international arbitration tribunal, provide views and information, as well as documents on matters regarding the company's participation in the national and/or international competition.
 - g) Confirmation (e.g. share register) of the fact that the registered member has the majority of the voting rights of the company. The company may not be owned directly or indirectly by anyone who also has a decisive influence over another registered member or company entitled to participate at the same level in the association leagues system.
 - h) The contract of assignment and any amendment to it shall be approved by the appropriate body of the national association to become valid.
- 4.3.1.5. If the licence applicant is a company it must provide the licensor with the financial information of the company and the registered member (e.g. consolidated financial statements as if they were a single company).
- 4.3.1.6. If the licence applicant has control on any subsidiary, then consolidated financial statements shall be prepared and submitted to the licensor as if the entities included in the consolidation ("the group") were a single company.
- 4.3.1.7. If the licence applicant is controlled by a parent, which may be controlled by another parent or which may have control over any other subsidiary or may exercise significant influence over any other associate, any transaction with the parent of the licence applicant or any parent or subsidiary or associate of such parent must be disclosed in the notes to the financial statements to draw attention to the possibility that its financial position and profit or loss may have been affected by the existence of related parties and by transactions and outstanding balances with such parties.
- 4.3.1.8. In addition to the above-mentioned mandatory provisions, the IFA recommends the following guidelines for the Licensing Committee to define the licence applicant. In accordance with these guidelines, the licence applicant should:
- a) be based legally in the territory and authority of the IFA and play its home matches only in that territory. The IFA may define exceptions, subject to the approval of the international federations (UEFA and FIFA);
 - b) have the right to use the name and the brands of the club and not change the name of the club for advertising/promotional purposes;
 - c) Accept no clauses in contracts with television, sponsors or other commercial partners which could restrict the club in its freedom of decision or affect its management.

4.4. LICENCE

4.4.1. PRINCIPLE

- 4.4.1.1. Licences must be issued according to the provisions of this Domestic and Championship Club Licensing Manual.
- 4.4.1.2. The IFA (Licensor) will issue an invitation to the football clubs concerned to apply for a licence punctually and in writing. The club applying for a licence (i.e. licence applicant) must submit a written application to the IFA. In this application, the club must, in particular, declare that it will fulfil the obligations of the licensing system and accept and respect the Core Process and its applicable deadlines.
- 4.4.1.3. Only clubs which fulfil the criteria set out in this Club Licensing Manual, at the deadlines defined by the IFA, may be granted a licence to enter the domestic club competitions of the coming season.
- 4.4.1.4. A licence expires without prior notice:
- a) at the end of the season for which it was issued for, or
 - b) on the dissolution of the division in question.

4.4.1.5. A licence may be withdrawn if:

- a) for any reason a licensee becomes insolvent and enters into liquidation, as determined by the applicable national law (where a licensee becomes insolvent but enters administration, the CLC will immediately review the case to determine if the licence should be withdrawn);
 - b) any of the conditions for the issuing of a licence are no longer satisfied; or
 - c) the licensee violates any of its obligations under the IFA Domestic and Championship Club Licensing Manual.
- 4.4.1.6. As soon as a licence withdrawal is envisaged the licensor will inform all concerned parties.
- 4.4.1.7. If a club has its licence withdrawn, a decision concerning the elimination of the club from the current domestic competition in question must be made by the relevant IFA body.
- 4.4.1.8. A licence cannot be transferred unless the new legal entity fully responsible for the football team participating in domestic competitions is in place as a result of a transfer of membership from the entity which was previously a member of the IFA, and such transfer of membership has been formally approved by the Football Committee of the IFA.

4.5. *ADMISSION TO DOMESTIC CLUB COMPETITIONS*

4.5.1. PRINCIPLE

- 4.5.1.1. The licence applicant must further fulfil all the requirements according to the applicable competition rules and regulations to be admitted to such competition.
- 4.5.1.2. The admission process falls under the sole jurisdiction of the IFA and its competent bodies (Executive Board, Club Licensing Committee, Irish FA Premiership Board/Management Committee, etc.).
- 4.5.1.3. The competent bodies of the IFA make the final decision regarding the admission of a club to participate in any domestic club competition.
- 4.5.1.4. Such decisions are subject to the IFA Articles of Association including the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne as ordinary court of arbitration.

5. CORE PROCESS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter defines the assessment process (hereafter core process) of the club licensing system.

5.1.1. PRINCIPLE

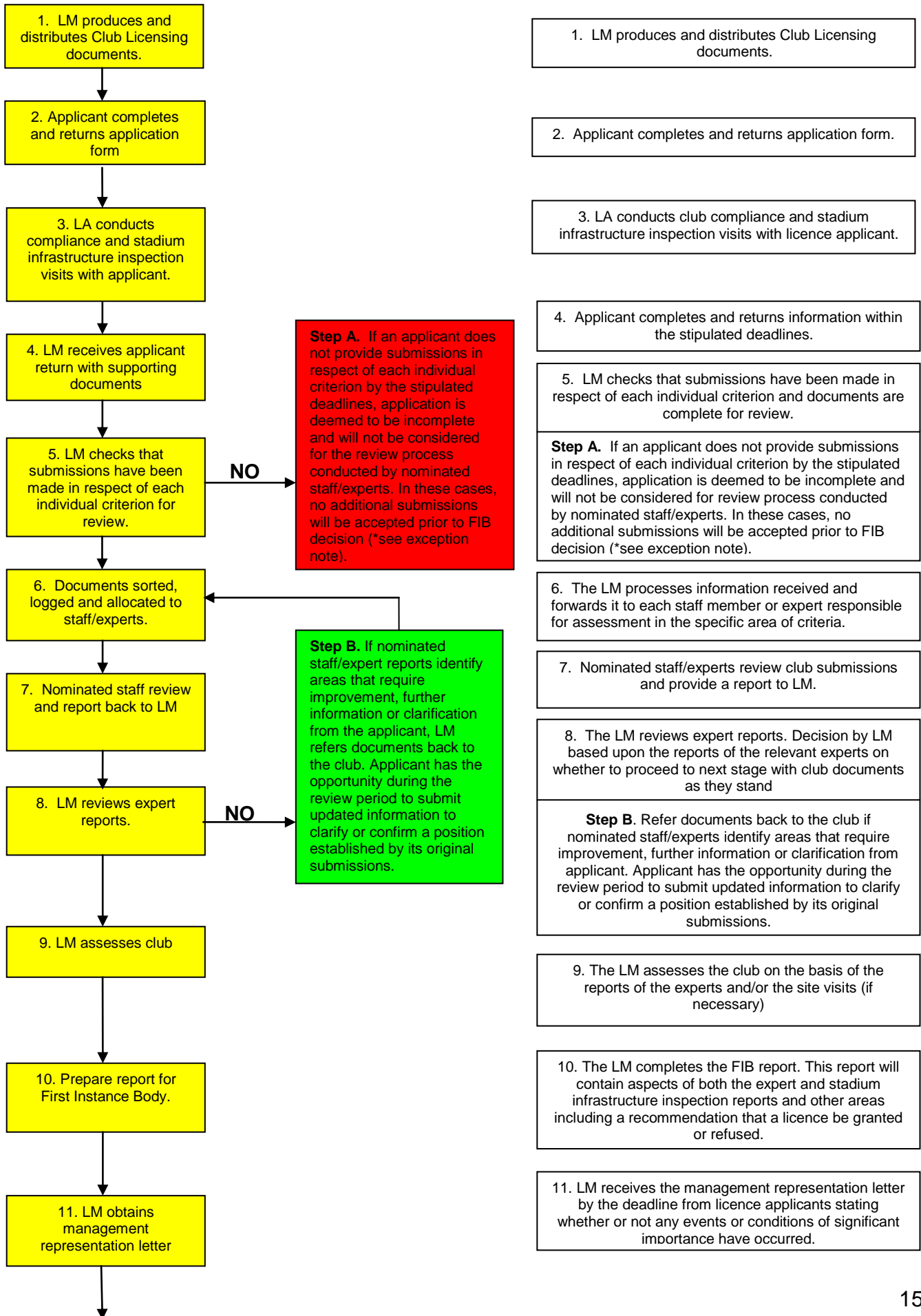
5.1.1.1. In this club licensing manual, the licensor defines the core process for the verification of the criteria described in this manual (sporting criteria, infrastructure criteria, personnel and administrative criteria, legal criteria and financial criteria) and thus to control the issuance of a licence to a licence applicant.

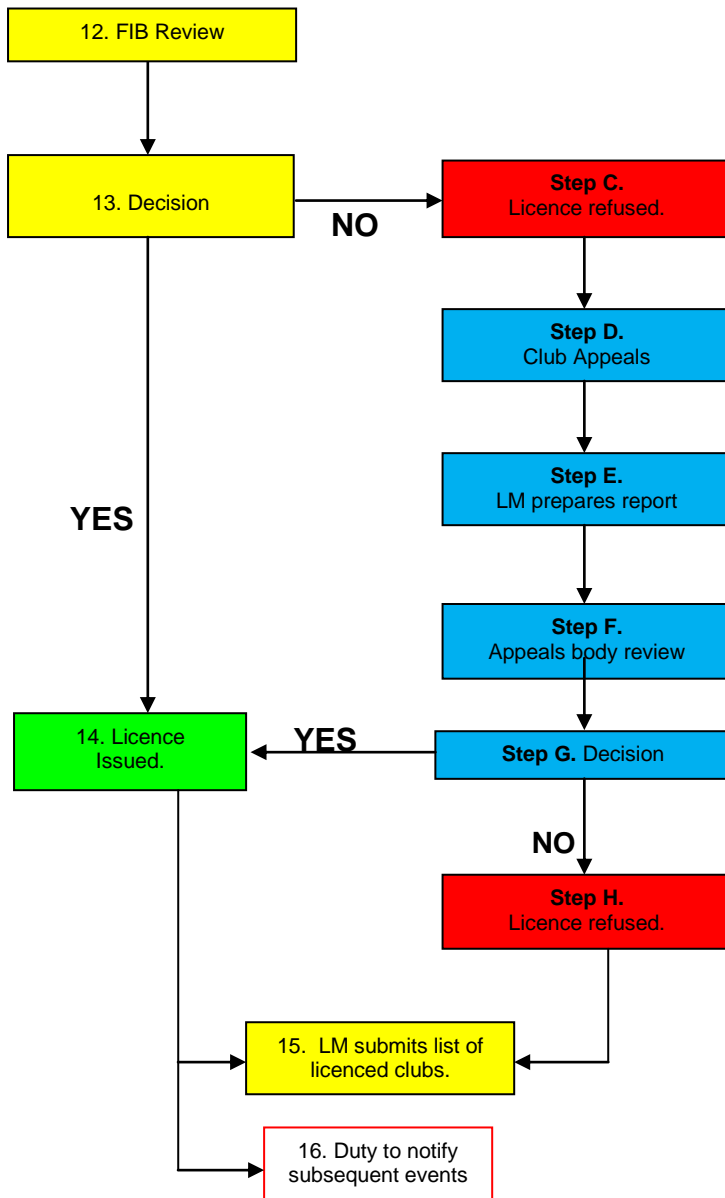
5.1.1.2. The core process is described below and is aimed at:

- a)** helping the licensor in establishing an appropriate and efficient licensing process according to its needs and organisation;
- b)** agreeing on the main requirements that the licensor has to comply with to issue the licence, necessary for entering domestic club competitions;
- c)** ensuring that the decision on the granting of a club licence is made by an independent body (FIB and/or AB);
- d)** ensuring that the decision-making bodies receive adequate support from the licensing administration of the licensor;
- e)** ensuring that licence applicants understand and respect the process and deadlines that must be followed to be issued with a licence.

5.1.1.3. The Club Licensing Committee must submit to the IFA Executive Board the list of licensed clubs by not later than 31 May 2012.

DOMESTIC CLUB LICENSING CORE PROCESS





12. The FIB shall sit to consider in full club submissions. The FIB may request a hearing with the licence applicant, this in particular in the case of the existence of a major economic event.

13. FIB takes a decision whether to issue the club with a license or not.	Step C. The license is refused, applicant is advised with reasons outlined and given the option of going through the appeals process.
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Step D. Applicant lodges an appeal. Evidence, or facts, not presented in line with the Core Process and placed before the FIB will not be considered by the Appeals Body when reaching their decision. Appeals Body notified and meeting date agreed

Step E. LM produces a report and dispatches this to the Appeals body.

Step F. Appeals Body meet and consider club appeal.

Step G. Appeals Body takes a decision whether to issue the club with a license or not on or before 31 May.

14. License granted which may or may not detail areas for future attention.	Step H. License refusal. Club notified of decision
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15. LM communicates to (i) IFA Executive Board and (ii) UEFA list of licenced clubs.

16. The licensee promptly notifies the licensor in writing about any subsequent event that may have an adverse impact upon the licensee's ability to continue as a going-concern until the end of the season to be licensed.

The LM will provide clubs with the relevant documents needed to apply for a Domestic or Championship Club Licence to participate in domestic competition several months before the submission deadline. These documents will include but not be limited to the Domestic and Championship Club Licensing Manual, its annexes, guidance notes and templates.

1. The licensing manager produces and distributes Club Licensing documents.
2. Applicant completes and returns application form.
3. The Club Licensing Administration carry out individual club compliance and stadium infrastructure inspection visits with each licence applicant to clarify criteria and submissions required.
4. The licence applicant completes the documents (annexes, templates, etc.) and returns them to the licensing manager within the stipulated deadlines (See timetable). Supporting documents must be enclosed if required.
5. The licensing manager checks that the documents returned by the licence applicant are complete for review and that they are returned within the stipulated deadlines.

Decision
Two alternatives: step (A) or step 6

A. If an applicant does not provide submissions in respect of each individual criterion by the stipulated deadlines, then application is deemed to be incomplete and will not be considered for review process conducted by nominated staff/experts. In these cases, no additional submissions will be accepted prior to FIB decision.

**Exception Note: Clubs will be permitted to seek an extension to the submission deadlines in exceptional circumstances only (circumstances to be assessed and a determination made by the FIB) and provided such an extension request is lodged in writing to the licensor in advance of the applicable deadline.*

Extension requests not lodged in this manner will not be considered.

The duration of any extension request granted by the FIB will not exceed the last day of the applicable review period.

6. If the documents are complete and sent within the stipulated deadlines the licensing manager sorts the information received, records it and forwards it to the appointed experts with responsibilities for that particular area for review (e.g. legal documents will be forwarded to the legal expert, financial information to the financial expert etc.).
7. The nominated experts receive the licence applicants' documents from the licensing manager, review the documents, check the fulfilment of the criteria and then submit report back to the licensing manager.
8. The licensing manager verifies that the reports of the experts are complete and reviews the reports and the opinion of the experts.

Decision
Two alternatives: step (B) or step 9

B. If nominated staff/expert reports identify areas that require improvement, further information or clarification from the applicant, the licensing manager refers documents back to the club. The licence applicant then has the opportunity during the review period to submit updated information to clarify or confirm a position established by its original submissions.

9. The licensing manager assesses the club on the basis of the reports of the expert and/or stadium infrastructure inspection visits if necessary.
10. The licensing manager prepares the report for consideration of the FIB. This report will contain aspects of the expert and site inspection reports and other areas including a recommendation that a licence be granted or refused.
11. LM receives management representation letter from licence applicant stating whether or not any events or conditions of significant importance have occurred; this is to be included in a report to the FIB.
12. The FIB receives the report of the licensing manager within the agreed deadline, reviews it, asks the licensing manager for further explanations and documents if necessary and makes the decision whether to grant the licence or not. The FIB may request a hearing with the licence applicant; this in particular is in the case of the existence of a major economic event.

13. Decision of FIB.

Two alternatives: step C or step 14.

- C. After careful review of the licence applicant's documents and of the report of the licensing manager the FIB refuses to grant the licence. The refusal details the areas of non-compliance and the licence applicant is given the possibility of lodging an appeal with the AB.
- D. The licence applicant lodges an appeal in accordance with 3.2.7. Evidence, or facts, not presented in line with the Core Process and placed before the FIB will not be considered by the Appeals Body when reaching their decision.
The AB is notified and the meeting date is set by agreement.
- E. The licensing manager produces a report and delivers it to the AB. The report details areas of concern and the reasons for the refusal.
- F. The AB meets and considers the licence applicant's appeal.
- G. **Decision of AB.**

Two alternatives: step H or step 14.

- H. After careful review of the licence applicant's documents and of the report of the licensing manager, the AB refuses to grant the licence.

14. After careful review of the licence applicant's documents and of the report of the licensing manager, the decision-making body issues the licence. The issuance of the licence is subject to the condition that the licence applicant fulfils all 'A' criteria defined in the domestic club licensing manual. The issued licence may or may not detail areas for future attention of the licence applicant.
15. The licensing manager receives the report of the decision-making body. On the basis of the decision made by the decision-making body, he prepares the list of the licence applicants authorised to enter the top division of domestic club competition.
16. After it has been issued a licence, up until the end of the season to be licensed, the licensee must promptly notify the licensor in writing of any subsequent event that it is aware of may have an adverse impact upon licensee's ability to continue as a going-concern until the end of the season to be licensed.

Fulfilment of step 16 shall be assessed by the licensor on an ongoing basis.

TIMETABLE AND DEADLINES FOR CORE PROCESS

BY

18 October 2011

Document Packs (including manual, application form and templates/annexes etc) issued to clubs.

30 November 2011

Initial Compliance & Stadium Infrastructure Inspection Visits.

31 January 2012

Submission deadline for Sporting, Personnel and Legal Documents.

1 February - 28 February 2012

Review Period for Sporting, Personnel and Legal Documents.

23 March 2012

Submission deadline for Safety/Infrastructure and Financial Documents.

24 March - 13 April 2012

Review Period for Safety/Infrastructure and Financial Documents.

23 April 2012

Submission of Management Representation letter
Preparation of First Instance Report

30 April 2012

FIB Decision

17 May 2012

AB Decision

31 May 2012

Notification of decisions to IFA Executive Board and UEFA.

6. SPORTING CRITERIA

6.1. INTRODUCTION

This Club Licensing Manual stresses the importance of a Club's Development Programme / Policy; this is in line with the objective of the "sports rule to encourage the local training of players" that aims to promote the training of new local talent in order to safeguard the future of football.

The key importance of a Club Development Programme is that it can attract into football more and better-educated boys and girls who not only play the game but are supporters of the game. Therefore, the future of football in Northern Ireland depends largely on clubs investing in programmes that will help identify, motivate and develop footballers across the community that can eventually become professional players.

Most club personnel will in one capacity or another have to interact with young players in the development programme during their tenure at a football club. In the interest of both the club and the young players it safeguards, it has become imperative that all personnel attend a child protection course and complete an appropriate vetting check. This course will instil in club personnel the proper codes of conduct when interacting with young players and therefore minimise the chances of being legally challenged on matters of child welfare.

In further efforts to develop a "healthy" football/sporting culture in Northern Ireland, it has become imperative that all football clubs take on a more proactive stance against racism and anti/sectarianism and declare themselves as equal opportunity clubs that will not tolerate any form of racist, sectarian, offensive behaviour or chanting.

Clubs who may be entitled to UEFA Solidarity payments (Youth Development) are likely to be required to provide financial information regarding the resources made available (financial, medical, technical, development etc.) for each team in the development programme to the IFAP or its nominees.

6.2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the sporting criteria are that:

- licence applicants invest in quality-driven development programmes;
- licence applicants affiliate themselves with development teams that will cater towards developing young Northern Ireland talent that will participate in IFA recognised competition;
- licence applicants affiliate themselves with a girls and women's team that they actively support through the provision of facilities, training, equipment etc;
- licence applicants support football education and encourage non-football education of their players;
- licence applicants embrace the core values of good relations within their club structures and adhere to principles that encourage and welcome diversity and equality;
- licence applicants must ensure that all Club personnel that interact with young players attend a Child Protection Course and complete an appropriate vetting check;
- licence applicants foster medical care for their players;
- licence applicants apply fair play on and off the pitch (including a common understanding of refereeing matters among all those involved in a match such as referees, players, coaches and officials).

6.3. BENEFITS FOR CLUBS

The sporting criteria have been implemented to guide football clubs towards achieving a higher quality all round performance both on and off the field. A well structured and effective Development Programme means that Clubs can produce football talents for their first squad every year, assist in helping to develop and promote women's and community football in Northern Ireland, foster good relations among footballers and supporters alike and safeguard the young players in their care from abuse therefore minimising their chances of being legally challenged.

In-house development of players makes it easier for future integration into the first team as the player would already have been accustomed to teammate's techniques and tactics and will be familiar with club philosophy and policies. Several top clubs in Europe already boast young talents who were developed by the Club's Development Programme and now play regularly for the first team. These players are a source of pride in their communities and are crucial in respect to how the local community and/or fans identify with the players and club.

In light of the FIFA transfer system, which was agreed upon with the European Commission, clubs which have trained players 23 and under who transfer internationally receive financial compensation and thus Clubs can receive a return on their investment in their development programme.

6.4. DOMESTIC CRITERIA

6.4.1. "A" CRITERIA

No.	Grade	Description
S.01	A	<p>DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME</p> <p>The licence applicant must have a development programme approved by the licensor. At a minimum the following must be satisfied by the Clubs:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A minimum of three development teams within the age range 12 – 21 affiliated with the football club; A minimum of one development team must participate in the IFA Small-sided Games Centres Programme. <i>This criterion will come into effect for the award of licences for season 2013-14 onwards.</i> Confirmation that players affiliated with the club are registered with the IFA and/or affiliated league in line with the <i>FIFA Regulations for the Status and Transfer of Players</i> (including names, date of birth and team) and will participate in official leagues / competitions which are recognised by the IFA and which are played over the course of a season at national, regional or local level. The licence applicant must ensure that every player involved in its development programme has the opportunity to follow the mandatory school education according to national law and is not prevented from continuing his/her non-football formal education. <p>The above are minimum requirements only. Licence applicants are required to detail ALL development activity / teams and provide confirmations for same. Assessment of this criterion will be carried out by the IFA Technical Department.</p>
S.02	A	<p>APPROVED WRITTEN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME</p> <p>The licence applicant must have a written development programme approved by the licensor. This education programme must include at a minimum the following (REFER TO ANNEXE A):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives and the philosophy of the development programme; Organisation of development sector (organisational chart; bodies involved, relation to licence applicant, development teams etc.); Personnel (technical, medical and administrative etc.) and required minimum qualifications; Infrastructure available for the development sector (training and match facilities,

No.	Grade	Description
		<p>others);</p> <p>e) Football education programme for the different age groups (playing skills, technical, tactical and physical);</p> <p>f) Education programme on the “Laws of the game”;</p> <p>g) Education programme on anti-doping;</p> <p>h) Medical support for the development players (incl. medical checks);</p> <p>i) Review and feedback process to evaluate the results and the achievements of the set objectives;</p> <p>j) Validity of the programme (at least 3 years but maximum 7 years).</p> <p>The development programme must further show the commitment and support of the licence applicant for mandatory and complementary school education of development players through the introduction of the following mandatory provisions:</p> <p>a) the licence applicant ensures that every development player involved in the club’s development programme has the possibility to follow the mandatory school education according to national law;</p> <p>b) the licence applicant ensures that every development player involved in the club’s development programme is not prevented from continuing his non-football education (complimentary school education or profession).</p> <p>The IFA Technical Department will be responsible for assessing the criteria and reporting to the Club Licensing Committee.</p>
S.03	A	<p>ANTI RACISM / ANTI – SECTARIANISM POLICY</p> <p>An “Anti-Racism / Anti-Sectarianism Policy” must be developed by each club and must include but not be limited to the elements in the UEFA 10 Point Plan. (REFER TO ANNEXE B)</p> <p>All football clubs must declare themselves as an equal opportunity club that will not tolerate any form of sectarianism, racially offensive behaviour or chanting; anyone caught making racist or sectarian comments, may be arrested, prosecuted and banned from the club.</p> <p>A dedicated Community Relations Liaison must be appointed by each Club to liaise with the IFA Community Relations Department. The Community Relations Liaison must have the opportunity to report to the Board/Management Committee of the club at least twice per year.</p> <p>Clubs must provide evidence of a completed Community Relations audit and strategy (support provided by the IFA Community Relations Department to help facilitate this until Dec 2011).</p> <p>The club CRLO or another member of the club’s Board must attend at least one IFA Football For All Community Relations clinic or seminar throughout the course of the season.</p> <p>The IFA Community Relations Department will be responsible for assessing the criteria and reporting to the Club Licensing Committee.</p>
S.04	A	<p>CHILD PROTECTION AND PLAYER WELFARE POLICY</p> <p>Clubs must demonstrate and show evidence of compliance with child/player welfare criteria which includes (REFER TO ANNEXE C):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The appointment of a club Child Welfare Officer (and Deputy where possible) who will liaise with other clubs and the IFA’s Child/Player Welfare department. • The development and implementation of a child protection policy. • The vetting of all staff, coaches and volunteers involved in regulated activity¹ through an Enhanced Disclosure AccessNI² vetting check. • The attendance and completion of the IFA NSPCC endorsed “Safeguarding

No.	Grade	Description
		<p>Children and Young People in Football” child protection awareness course.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The prominent display of a Child Welfare Mission Statement within the club. <p>1. Regulated Activity - Instructing or coaching children, young people or vulnerable adults will be viewed as a ‘regulated activity.’</p> <p>2. AccessNI will act as the gateway for the Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS) positions in Northern Ireland. Therefore all applications for registration will come through AccessNI.</p> <p>The IFA Child Welfare Department will be responsible for assessing the criteria and reporting to the Club Licensing Committee.</p>

6.4.2 “B” CRITERIA

No.	Grade	Description
S.06	B	<p>REFEREEING MATTERS AND LAWS OF THE GAME</p> <p>The licence applicant must prove that at least the captain or his replacement, the head coach or the assistant coach of the first squad have attended a session or an event for refereeing matters provided by the national association or with its collaboration during the year prior to the season to be licensed. The criterion is fulfilled if those persons have attended the session or event.</p>

6.4.3. “C” CRITERIA

No.	Grade	Description
S.07	C	<p>COMMUNITY FOOTBALL</p> <p>Clubs must demonstrate a commitment to community football which may involve but not be limited to mini soccer, midnight soccer and futsal.</p>
S.08	C	<p>WOMEN’S FOOTBALL</p> <p>Clubs must demonstrate a commitment to developing and promoting women’s football and must show the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Affiliation with an adult women’s team participating in a recognised IFA / NIWFA programme and/or competition; Affiliation with a girl’s youth team participating in a recognised IFA / NIWFA programme and/or competition.

6. SPORTING CRITERIA

'A' Criteria

No.	Grade	Description
S.03	A	<p>ANTI RACISM / ANTI – SECTARIANISM POLICY</p> <p>An “Anti-Racism / Anti-Sectarianism Policy” must be developed by each club and must include but not be limited to the elements in the UEFA 10 Point Plan (REFER TO ANNEXE B).</p> <p>All football clubs must declare themselves as an equal opportunity club that will not tolerate any form of sectarianism, racially offensive behaviour or chanting; anyone caught making racist or sectarian comments, may be arrested, prosecuted and banned from the club.</p> <p>A dedicated Community Relations Liaison must be appointed by each Club to liaise with the IFA Community Relations Department. The Community Relations Liaison must have the opportunity to report to the Board/Management Committee of the club at least twice per year.</p> <p>Clubs must provide evidence of a completed Community Relations audit and strategy (support provided by the IFA Community Relations Department to help facilitate this until Dec 2011).</p> <p>The club CRLO or another member of the club’s Board must attend at least one IFA Football For All Community Relations clinic or seminar throughout the course of the season.</p> <p>The IFA Community Relations Department will be responsible for assessing the criteria and reporting to the Club Licensing Committee.</p>
S.04	A	<p>CHILD PROTECTION AND PLAYER WELFARE POLICY</p> <p>Clubs must demonstrate and show evidence of compliance with child/player welfare criteria which includes (REFER TO ANNEXE C):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The appointment of a club Child Welfare Officer (and Deputy where possible) who will liaise with other clubs and the IFA’s Child/Player Welfare department. • The development and implementation of a child protection policy. • The vetting of all staff, coaches and volunteers involved in regulated activity¹ through an Enhanced Disclosure AccessNI² vetting check. • The attendance and completion of the IFA NSPCC endorsed “Safeguarding Children and Young People in Football” child protection awareness course. • The prominent display of a Child Welfare Mission Statement within the club. <p>1. Regulated Activity - Instructing or coaching children, young people or vulnerable adults will be viewed as a ‘regulated activity.’</p> <p>2. AccessNI will act as the gateway for the Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS) positions in Northern Ireland. Therefore all applications for registration will come through AccessNI.</p> <p>The IFA Child Welfare Department will be responsible for assessing the criteria and reporting to the Club Licensing Committee.</p>

'B' Criteria
None

'C' Criteria
S.01 Development Programme
S.02 Written Development Programme
S.06 Refereeing Matters and Laws of the Game
S.07 Community Football
S.08 Women’s Football

7. INFRASTRUCTURE CRITERIA

7.1. INTRODUCTION

The Irish Football Association and the Irish FA Premiership have laid down their own infrastructure requirements that include certain safety elements that must be adopted. It must be noted that several basic regulations, guidelines and directives as determined by the IFA (Laws of the Game, UEFA Infrastructure Regulations, Guidelines and Recommendations for Stadium Lighting for all UEFA Competitions and the Northern Ireland Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds) must be adhered to. Due to the large number of documents involved in the fulfilment of these criteria, care must be taken to review and apply all rules and regulations.

In an effort to standardise the quality of stadiums being used for domestic competition each stadium needs to be approved against the IFA minimum criteria which is part of the yearly licensing process. The IFA Club Licensing and Facilities Department will provide assistance, monitor any improvements and organise spot-checks where appropriate.

It is also essential that clubs provide an appropriate safety management system in cases of emergency and evacuation.

7.2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the following infrastructure criteria are that:

- Licence applicants should either have an “approved” stadium available for playing in domestic competition or have made arrangements to use another stadium that fulfils the requirements. This stadium should be able to provide spectators, media and press representatives with a well equipped, well appointed, safe and comfortable stadium;
- Licence applicants have suitable training facilities for their players to help them improve their technical skills.

7.3. BENEFITS FOR CLUBS

Clubs should to aspire to having the best facilities possible, as accomplishing this will mean better training facilities for players and coaches, better working environment for club and stadium administrators and greater comfort for fans and spectators. Improvements to stadium infrastructure and conditions will no doubt help increase the number of supporters to include women and children that go to watch domestic games.

Clubs need to have stadiums that meet the highest of standards if they are to fully capitalise on the benefits of being both a recreational and commercial enterprise. A quality stadium will attract a bigger crowd therefore create greater investment opportunities for sponsors who will then provide the much needed revenue that can facilitate the continual improvement and development of the sport.

Clubs that are unable to meet the minimum standard set for stadium quality reserve the right to secure the use of another stadium that meets the required standards.

The Club Licensing Committee/Administration reserves the right to investigate and make spot checks on the infrastructure facilities and/or supporting documentation to ensure compliance.

7.4. DOMESTIC CRITERIA

7.4.1. "A" CRITERIA

No.	Grade	Description
I.01	A	<p>APPROVED STADIUM FOR DOMESTIC CLUB COMPETITIONS</p> <p>The licence applicant must have a stadium available to utilise for domestic club competitions. The licence applicant either:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> owns the stadium, or can provide a written contract with the owner(s) of the stadium or with owners of different stadia it will use. This contract must guarantee the use of the stadium for domestic matches for the coming season, and must be based in Northern Ireland. <p>This requirement must be read, and satisfied, in parallel with the requirements of I.02 (below). Particular emphasis must be given to ensure that the required spectator facilities (as detailed in ANNEXE D) are still satisfied as a result of assessment against the principles and requirements of the <i>Safety of Sports Grounds (Northern Ireland) Order 2006</i>.</p> <p>The stadium must fulfil all minimum stadium infrastructure requirements defined in ANNEXE D and must be based within Northern Ireland.</p> <p>This criterion MUST be satisfied on or before 23 March 2012 in line with the Core Process, by facilities actually being in place.</p> <p>Assessment of this criterion will be conducted as an official site inspection(s).</p>
I.02	A	<p>GENERAL SAFETY CERTIFICATE / STADIUM SAFETY CERTIFICATIONS</p> <p>a) Any stadium which is designated under the Safety of Sports Grounds (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 MUST be issued with a General <u>Safety Certificate</u> by the relevant local authority in line with local and national legislation.</p> <p>A General Safety Certificate is issued for an indefinite period but may be reviewed by the local authority annually or more frequently if required.</p> <p>If there is no need to amend a certificate the date of certificate will remain date of issue.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>OR</u></p> <p>b) Stadiums which are not subject to designation under the Safety of Sports Grounds (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 must provide appropriate safety confirmations for the stadium. These confirmations must be on the approved documentation ONLY and must be obtained from, and approved by, suitably qualified persons and must not be more than 2 years old.</p> <p>The local authority must also affirm in writing, the suitability of the stadium for domestic competition.</p>
I.03	A	<p>STADIUM EVACUATION PLAN</p> <p>The licence applicant must have in place an evacuation plan which ensures that the whole stadium can be evacuated in the case of an emergency. The plan must be developed specific to the stadium of use (to include any ground share arrangement) and should be formulated in co-operation with the local authority and Police, Fire and Health Services.</p> <p><u>The Stadium Evacuation Plan for a:</u></p> <p>a) Designated ground must be incorporated within the club's contingency plans and</p>

		<p>comply with the terms and conditions of General Safety Certificates.</p> <p>b) Non-designated ground must be submitted directly to the IFA with a letter from the local authority confirming that the district council has reviewed the evacuation plan and any comments made by the council (REFER TO ANNEXE E).</p>
I.04	A	<p>MATCH PLANNING AND ORGANISATION</p> <p>Clubs must adhere to strict organisation principles:</p> <p>a) For designated grounds match planning and organisation arrangements must comply with the terms and conditions of the General Safety Certificate issued by the local authority. Written confirmation that the club is continuing to operate within the requirements of the legislation without any significant breaches of the terms and conditions that would result in prosecution, must be obtained from the local authority.</p> <p>b) For non-designated grounds match planning and organisation arrangements must comply with the policies and principles contained in the procedure for organising and planning football matches. The assessment of this criterion for non-designated grounds will be by means of a report from the IFA National Security Officer.</p>
I.05	A	<p>TRAINING FACILITIES – AVAILABILITY / APPROVED INFRASTRUCTURE</p> <p>The licence applicant must have training facilities available throughout the year. The licence applicant either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) owns the training facilities, or b) can provide a written contract with the owner(s) of the training facilities. This contract must guarantee the use of the training facilities for the season to be licensed. <p>The licence applicant must have available training facilities which comply with the requirements set by the licensor taking into account their commitment to provide a quality training facility for their development programme.</p> <p>Training facilities must include as a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) one full size grass or synthetic pitch with floodlighting b) one dressing room of a size for 18 persons with 4 showers

7.4.2. “B” CRITERIA

No.	Grade	Description
I.06	B	<p>STADIUM – GROUND RULES</p> <p>Each stadium must issue stadium ground rules and affix them to the stadium in such a way that the spectators can read them.</p> <p>These rules must provide as a minimum (REFER TO ANNEXE F):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Admission rights. b) Abandonment or postponement of events. c) Description of prohibitions and penalties, such as entering the field of play, throwing objects, use of foul or abusive language, racist behaviour, etc. d) Restrictions with regard to alcohol, fireworks, banners, etc. e) Seating rules. f) Causes for ejection from the ground. <p>Ground rules must be placed in an area visible to supporters accessing the stadium. This requirement will be assessed as part of an official site inspection.</p>

7. INFRASTRUCTURE CRITERIA

'A' Criteria

No.	Grade	Description
I.01	A	<p>APPROVED STADIUM FOR DOMESTIC CLUB COMPETITIONS</p> <p>The licence applicant must have a stadium available to utilise for domestic club competitions. The licence applicant either:</p> <p>a) owns the stadium, or</p> <p>b) can provide a written contract with the owner(s) of the stadium or with owners of different stadia it will use. This contract must guarantee the use of the stadium for domestic matches for the coming season, and must be based in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>This requirement must be read, and satisfied, in parallel with the requirements of I.02 (below). Particular emphasis must be given to ensure that the required spectator facilities (as detailed in ANNEXE D) are still satisfied as a result of assessment against the principles and requirements of the <i>Safety of Sports Grounds (Northern Ireland) Order 2006.</i></p> <p>The stadium must fulfil all minimum stadium infrastructure requirements defined in ANNEXE D and must be based within Northern Ireland.</p> <p>This criterion MUST be satisfied on or before 23 March 2012 in line with the Core Process, by facilities actually being in place.</p> <p>Assessment of this criterion will be conducted as an official site inspection(s).</p>
I.02	A	<p>GENERAL SAFETY CERTIFICATE / STADIUM QUESTIONNAIRE</p> <p>a) Any stadium which is designated under the Safety of Sports Grounds (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 MUST be issued with a General <u>Safety Certificate</u> by the relevant local authority in line with local and national legislation.</p> <p>A General Safety Certificate is issued for an indefinite period but may be reviewed by the local authority annually or more frequently if required.</p> <p>If there is no need to amend a certificate the date of certificate will remain date of issue.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>OR</u></p> <p>b) Stadiums which are not subject to designation under the Safety of Sports Grounds (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 must have the relevant local authority complete a stadium questionnaire with affirmation in writing confirming the suitability of the stadium for domestic competition.</p>

'B' Criteria

- I.03 Stadium Evacuation Plan**
- I.06 Stadium Ground Rules**

'C' Criteria

- I.05 Training Facilities**

If a club secures promotion to the IFA Premiership, then prior to the commencement of the season the licence applicant must satisfy the licensor that suitable arrangements are in place to meet the requirements of I.03 and I.06 of the Domestic License criteria.

8. PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CRITERIA

8.1. INTRODUCTION

The media, commercial partners, local community and shareholders are becoming more and more involved in all affairs of football clubs. It is no longer the case that club officials are left to make decisions that are not in some way or form influenced by public opinion. It is therefore imperative that professionals are employed from various specialised fields and industries (e.g. marketing, finance, entertainment, media, etc.) to manage club affairs.

Football today is highly commercial and success on and off the pitch is becoming increasingly linked with the acquisition of highly qualified personnel. The successful clubs are the ones that have been able to identify new and different sources of revenue and are not solely dependent on traditional income from TV, gate receipts, sponsors etc.

Clubs should find their own strategy, according to their strengths, demands and marketing opportunities. They must do their utmost to achieve their sporting and commercial objectives and this can only be achieved with the introduction of qualified and competent personnel to manage football affairs.

8.2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the personnel and administrative criteria are that:

- licence applicants are managed in a professional way;
- licence applicants have available well-educated, qualified, proactive and skilled specialists with a certain know-how and experience;
- the players are trained by qualified coaches and supported by the necessary medical staff.

8.3. BENEFITS FOR CLUBS

A professional, well-educated and experienced staff is of key importance if a club is to operate efficiently and effectively. Being professional at all levels and in all functions does not mean that licence applicants have to recruit only full-time staff but rather the focus is on staff conducting themselves in a professional manner and being able to perform the functions they are appointed for. Professionalism will also be improved if clubs can define clearly the functions, activities, responsibilities and the requirements for the job (education, working experience, technical know-how, IT-skills, human competences, language skills and others incl. football know-how).

It is up to the decision-making body of the licence applicant to look for people, who meet the set requirements and to engage those candidates that fit with the defined profile (e.g. full-time, part-time and volunteer).

Qualified coaches are the basis for a successful sporting outcome; the IFA conducts coaching courses for different levels all through the year from which a corresponding diploma is awarded upon successful completion of the course.

Additional administrative support from specialists in safety and security matters also then ensure that matches are organised as safe events.

8.4. DOMESTIC CRITERIA

8.4.1. "A" CRITERIA

No.	Grade	Description
P.01	A	<p>GENERAL MANAGER</p> <p>The licence applicant must have appointed a General Manager who is responsible for running the daily business of the club within the framework of policies set by the Board / Committee.</p> <p>The rights and duties of the general manager must be detailed in a job description. The licence applicant may incorporate the duties of the general manager into the role of secretary, chief executive, managing director or any other similar title.</p> <p>The appropriate body of the licence applicant (Board / Committee) must have made the appointment.</p>
P.02	A	<p>CLUB SECRETARY</p> <p>Every club must have a secretary to support the other bodies of the club, the players and all other personnel in administrative matters. The club secretary must be equipped with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A telephone / fax facility • A personal computer with email <p>The Secretary must be contactable and have access to various methods of communication. The appropriate body of the licence applicant (Board / Committee) must have made the appointment.</p>
P.03	A	<p>FINANCE OFFICER</p> <p>The licence applicant must have appointed a Finance Officer being responsible for its financial matters who can be either a person working in the club's administration or an external partner mandated by the club through a written contract.</p> <p>The Finance Officer must as a minimum satisfy one of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) hold a recognised accounting qualification as defined by the CCAB (Consultative Committee of Accountancy Bodies) i.e. ICAEW, ICAS, ICAI, ACCA, CIMA or CIPFA; b) hold membership of the IATI or AAT (Institute of Accounting Technician Ireland or Association of Accounting Technicians) and be able to demonstrate practical experience in financial matters of at least 3 years; c) be part qualified via a recognised accounting qualification as defined by the CCAB (Consultative Committee of Accountancy Bodies) i.e. ICAEW, ICAS, ICAI, ACCA, CIMA or CIPFA and be able to demonstrate practical experience in financial matters of at least 3 years; <p>Licence applicants seeking to satisfy this criterion through b) or c) above must submit a written request for approval from the Club Licensing Committee.</p> <p>One of the core functions within the role P.03, Finance Officer is the preparation of the club's accounting records or financial statements for audit. To ensure that the objectivity and independence of the auditor is maintained, the Club Licensing Committee wishes to reinforce that a club Finance Officer <u>cannot</u> be either a partner or employee of the audit firm.</p> <p>Clubs and their auditors must be mindful at all times of the principal threats to the auditor's objectivity and independence.</p> <p>Clubs are also reminded that their nominated finance officer must be the primary club contact in respect of communication of financial matters and submission of required financial documentation.</p> <p>The appropriate body of the licence applicant (Board / Committee) must have made the appointment.</p>

No.	Grade	Description
P.04	A	<p>SECURITY/SAFETY OFFICER</p> <p>The licence applicant must have appointed a Security Officer being responsible for safety, security and stewarding matters. The Security Officer must confirm availability for matches and hold the appropriate certification for the position from Sport NI (or equivalent).</p> <p>The appropriate body of the licence applicant (Board / Committee) must have made the appointment.</p>
P.05	A	<p>HEAD COACH / MANAGER OF FIRST TEAM SQUAD</p> <p>The licence applicant must have appointed a Head Coach/Manager being responsible for football matters of the first team squad.</p> <p>The Head Coach must as a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) hold a UEFA Pro Diploma or; b) hold a UEFA 'A' Licence coaching award or any valid foreign coaching diploma which is equivalent to this one and recognised by the IFA as such or; c) have already started and attended the first part of the UEFA 'A' Licence course and be working towards completion in a reasonable timeframe. The simple inscription to such an education course is not deemed to be in compliance with the criteria. <p>For the avoidance of doubt the Licensing Committee/Administration considers the Head Coach/Manager to be the person responsible for first team selection, tactics and management.</p> <p>Where joint Head Coach/Managers are appointed, both persons must satisfy the above and must be registered with the IFA.</p> <p>The appropriate body of the licence applicant (Board / Committee) must have made the appointment.</p>
P.06	A	<p>HEAD OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME</p> <p>The licence applicant must have appointed a Head of the Development Programme being responsible for running the daily business and the technical aspects of the development sector.</p> <p>The Head of the Development Programme must as a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) hold a UEFA Pro Diploma or; b) hold a UEFA 'A' Licence coaching award or any valid foreign coaching diploma which is equivalent to this one and recognised by the IFA as such or; c) have already started and attended the first part of the UEFA 'A' Licence course and be working towards completion in a reasonable timeframe. d) hold a UEFA Elite Youth A-Diploma; e) have already started and attended the first part of the UEFA Elite Youth A-Diploma and be working towards completion in a reasonable timeframe. <p>The simple inscription to such an education course is not deemed to be in compliance with the criteria.</p> <p>The appropriate body of the licence applicant (Board / Committee) must have made the appointment and the Head of the Development Programme must be registered with the IFA.</p>
P.07	A	<p>DEVELOPMENT COACHES</p> <p>The licence applicant must have appointed for each development team at least one coach being responsible for that development team in all football matters.</p> <p>A development coach must as a <u>minimum</u> hold the qualifications listed below for the relevant age group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <u>Development Teams U-21 to U-15</u>

		<p>UEFA 'B' Licence coaching award or any valid foreign coaching diploma which is equivalent to this one and recognised by the IFA as such or; Have already started and attended the first part of the UEFA 'B' Licence course and be working towards completion in a reasonable timeframe. The simple inscription to such an education course is not deemed to be in compliance with the criteria.</p> <p>b) <u>Development Teams U-14 and younger</u> IFA Level 1 Coaching Award. The simple inscription to such an education course is not deemed to be in compliance with the criteria.</p> <p>Any Development coach nominated by an applicant club must actually be the coach responsible for all football matters in respect of that development team <u>i.e. must be involved in the training sessions of the team and be coaching the team on the touchline during matches.</u> Clubs are reminded of the applicability of 2.2.1.1 and the principle of spot checks in this regard.</p> <p>The appropriate body of the licence applicant (Board / Committee) must have made the appointment.</p> <p><i>Note: The IFA may not hold records of all licensed coaches and therefore it is entirely the responsibility of the applicant club to satisfy the licensor that any nominated development coach is appropriately qualified to hold the position.</i></p>
P.08	A	<p>MEDICAL PROVISION</p> <p>The licence applicant for home matches must appoint / provide one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A doctor certified and recognised by the National Health Service or; b) An ambulance with qualified first aid staff. <p>If a doctor is nominated to satisfy this criteria, he/she must provide:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. copy of registration with the General Medical Council (GMC); 2. copy of medical insurance coverage from the Medical Protection Societies, Medical Defence Association or equivalent. <p>If the nominated medical provision is an ambulance with qualified first aid staff, a written agreement, signed by both parties, must be provided.</p> <p><u>The above must be in the stadium at all times during the match.</u></p> <p>The appropriate body of the licence applicant (Board / Committee) must have made the appointment.</p>
P.09	A	<p>PHYSIOTHERAPIST/SPORTS THERAPIST</p> <p>The licence applicant must have appointed at least one physiotherapist / sports-therapist being responsible for medical treatment and massages for the first team squad.</p> <p>The physiotherapist / sports-therapist must be recognised, registered and certified by the appropriate national health authorities and must also provide a copy of their medical insurance coverage.</p> <p>The appropriate body of the licence applicant (Board / Committee) must have made the appointment.</p> <p>*The Club Licensing Committee continues to monitor the ongoing application for the regulation of Sports Therapists and required standards of proficiency and education may be subject to change in future licensing cycles.</p>

No.	Grade	Description
P.10	A	<p>MEDIA OFFICER</p> <p>The licence applicant must have appointed a Media Officer being responsible for media matters.</p> <p>He or she must be available for the media at all home matches of the club.</p> <p>The appropriate body of the licence applicant (Board / Committee) must have made the appointment.</p>
P.11	A	<p>SAFETY AND SECURITY ORGANISATION - STEWARDING</p> <p>The licence applicant must have engaged qualified stewards to ensure safety and security at home matches.</p> <p><i>This criterion will be assessed via I.04, report from local authority or IFA National Security Officer.</i></p>
P.13	A	<p>RIGHTS AND DUTIES</p> <p>The appointment of staff members defined in P.01 to P.11 must have been made by the appropriate body of the licence applicant and the post holder must have his/her role and responsibilities defined in writing and be duly registered with the IFA.</p>
P.14	A	<p>DUTY OF REPLACEMENT DURING THE LICENSING SEASON</p> <p>If a function defined in criteria P.01 - P.11 becomes vacant during the licence season, the licensee must ensure that, within a period of 60 days, the function is taken over by someone who holds the required qualification. Clubs must be mindful of the applicability of 4.4.1.5 in this regard.</p> <p>In the event that a function becomes vacant due to illness or accident, the licensor may grant an extension to the 60-day period only if reasonably satisfied that the person concerned is still medically unfit to resume his duties. Any extension request must be submitted to the Club Licensing Committee.</p> <p>Should a function defined in criteria P.01 – P.11 become vacant in the 60 day period prior to 31 May 2012 (that being the deadline for submission of UEFA & Domestic Licensing decisions to the UEFA administration), a licence may still be granted provided that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The function was previously held by a person fulfilling the relative qualification requirements stipulated in P.01 – P.11; • The function must not remain vacant but an interim replacement must be appointed at the moment of the licensing decision; <p>A qualified replacement must be appointed within 60 days of the function becoming vacant.</p>

8.4.2 “B” CRITERIA

No.	Grade	Description
P.15	B	<p>GROUNDS-MAN</p> <p>The club or stadia owners must ensure that their grounds man has completed the Football Groundsmanship Course Level One (Annual Preparation Maintenance) or equivalent.</p>
P.16	B	<p>SUPPORTER LIAISON OFFICER</p> <p>The licence applicant must have appointed a supporter liaison officer (SLO) to act as the key contact point for supporters.</p> <p>The SLO informs supporters about relevant decisions made by the Board / Management Committee of the club whilst in the other direction communicating the needs of the fans to the Board / Management Committee.</p> <p>The supporter liaison officer must regularly attend meetings with the club’s management and must collaborate with the security officer on safety and security-related matters.</p> <p>This appointment must be proposed by the recognised supporters’ organisations and accepted and endorsed by the management of the club.</p>
P.17	B	<p>DUTY TO NOTIFY SIGNIFICANT CHANGES</p> <p>Any event occurring after the submission of the licensing documentation to the licensor representing a significant change related to any sporting, infrastructure, personnel and administrative and legal criteria must be notified to the IFA within 10 working days after it has occurred (see criterion F.12 in respect of the financial criteria).</p> <p><i>Compliance with this criterion shall be assessed by the licensor on an ongoing basis.</i></p>

8. PERSONNEL CRITERIA
'A' Criteria

No.	Grade	Description
P.02	A	<p>CLUB SECRETARY</p> <p>Every club must have a secretary to support the other bodies of the club, the players and all other personnel in administrative matters. The club secretary must be equipped with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A telephone / fax facility • A personal computer with email <p>The Secretary must be contactable and have access to various methods of communication.</p> <p>The appropriate body of the licence applicant (Board / Committee) must have made the appointment.</p>
P.05	A	<p>HEAD COACH / MANAGER OF FIRST TEAM SQUAD</p> <p>The licence applicant must have appointed a Head Coach/Manager being responsible for football matters of the first team squad.</p> <p>The Head Coach must as a minimum hold a UEFA 'B' Licence coaching award.</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt the Licensing Committee/Administration considers the Head Coach/Manager to be the person responsible for first team selection, tactics and management.</p> <p>Where joint Head Coach/Managers are appointed, both persons must satisfy the above and must be registered with the IFA.</p> <p>The appropriate body of the licence applicant (Board / Committee) must have made the appointment.</p>
P.08	A	<p>MEDICAL PROVISION</p> <p>The licence applicant for home matches must appoint / provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained First Aider <p><u>The above must be in the stadium at all times during the match.</u></p> <p>The appropriate body of the licence applicant (Board / Committee) must have made the appointment.</p>
P.13	A	<p>RIGHTS AND DUTIES</p> <p>The appointment of staff members defined in P.02, P.05 and P.08 must have been made by the appropriate body of the licence applicant and the post holder must have his/her role and responsibilities defined in writing and be duly registered with the IFA.</p>
P.14	A	<p>DUTY OF REPLACEMENT DURING THE LICENSING SEASON</p> <p>If a function defined in criteria P.01 - P.11 becomes vacant during the licence season, the licensee must ensure that, within a period of 60 days, the function is taken over by someone who holds the required qualification. Clubs must be mindful of the applicability of 4.4.1.5 in this regard.</p> <p>In the event that a function becomes vacant due to illness or accident, the licensor may grant an extension to the 60-day period only if reasonably satisfied that the person concerned is still medically unfit to resume his duties. Any extension request must be submitted to the Club Licensing Committee.</p> <p>Should a function defined in criteria P.01-P.11 become vacant in the 60 day period prior</p>

	<p>to the 31 May 2012 (Licensing decisions to UEFA administration), a licence may still be granted provided that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The function was previously held by a person fulfilling the relative qualification requirements stipulated in P.01-0.11; • The functions must not remain vacant but an interim replacement must be appointed at the moment of the licensing decision. <p>A qualified replacement must be appointed within 60 days of the function becoming vacant.</p>
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'B' Criteria

P.04 Security / Safety Officer

P.10 Media Officer

P.17 Duty to notify Significant Changes

'C' Criteria

P.01 General Manager

P.03 Finance Officer

P.06 Head of Development Programme

P.07 Development Coaches

P.09 Physiotherapist/ Sports Therapist

P.11 Safety and Security-Stewarding

P.15 Grounds-man

P.15 Supporter Liaison Officer

9. LEGAL CRITERIA

9.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter defines the minimum legal criteria for licence applicants. Many of these requirements are satisfied by written declarations or can be found in the club statutes, articles of organisation, insurance policy statement etc.

9.2. DOMESTIC CRITERIA

9.2.1 "A" CRITERIA

No.	Grade	Description
L.01	A	<p>LEGAL CONTRACT</p> <p>The licence applicant must submit a legally valid declaration confirming the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) The Club have read and fully understand the current IFA Club Licensing Manual(s), Annexes, Templates, Application Form, Confidentiality Agreement and Contract and agree to abide by and comply with the requirements and conditions of the Licensing System contained therein.2) The signatories have authority to enter into this agreement on behalf of the licence applicant by virtue of their own statutes, constitutions and rules and are the persons entitled hereunder to sign contract herein.3) The Club confirm that all Licensing Documents submitted by us to the IFA acting as Licensor will be complete, accurate, up to date, duly certified where necessary and submitted in a timely manner. We accept that the Licensing Bodies will base their decisions on the documentation submitted by us to the IFA Club Licensing Department as part of this application only and that previous submissions, documents or information provided by them to the IFA for any other reason or as part of any other application will not be deemed to have fulfilled any of the Licensing Requirements herein unless otherwise agreed in writing between the parties herein.4) The Club confirm that they fully authorise the Licensing Manager and the Licensing Decision Making Bodies to examine all documentation pertaining to our application for a licence and appeal (if applicable) and for the Licensing Manager and the Licensing Decision Making Bodies to seek clarification, further evidence, explanations and all other information from any relevant public authority or private body relevant to the issuance of the licence and appeal (if applicable) and in accordance with national law.5) The Club recognise that they are legally bound by the rules, statutes, articles and regulations of FIFA, UEFA, the IFA and IFAP/IFAC. The club further understands that Article 21 of the IFA Articles of Association will not apply to any licensing decisions. We agree to respect at all times the rules, statutes, articles and regulations of FIFA, UEFA, the IFA and IFAP/IFAC as well as to recognise the final jurisdiction of the CAS in Lausanne as provided for in the articles of the UEFA Statutes.6) The club confirm that it will abide by and observe the UEFA Club Licensing and Financial Fair Play Regulations.7) The Club understand that the IFA Club Licensing Committee is empowered to take a first instance decision on our licence application and that the IFA Club Licensing Appeals Body is empowered to take a final and binding decision on whether a licence is issued. The Club accept the powers of these bodies as outlined in 3.2.4, 3.2.5, 3.2.6 and 3.2.7 of the Manual(s) and agree to be bound by the decisions of these bodies that affect us as the Licence Applicant. They further recognise and agree that, in accordance with 3.2.7, evidence, or facts, not presented in line with the Core Process and placed before the FIB will not be considered by the Appeals Body when reaching their decision.

No.	Grade	Description
		<p>8) The Club confirm that they are legally based in the territory of the IFA and will play their home matches only within that territory. The Club accept that a change in our designated stadium is subject to a decision of the competent body responsible for the respective competitions (UEFA if UEFA competition).</p> <p>9) The Club confirm they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the right to use the name and brands of the club and agree not to change the name of the club for advertising/promotional purposes; and • Agree to accept no clauses in contracts with television, sponsors or other commercial partners that could restrict the club in its freedom of decision or affect its management. <p>10) The Club accept that only members of the IFA can apply for and obtain a licence and that members who are individuals cannot apply for or obtain a licence in line with 4.3.1. They further accept that licence applicants only can appeal and be a party to appeal proceedings.</p> <p>11) The Club accept that they must be fully responsible for and have the sole control over all the football activities that are related to the participation in national and international football competitions, as well as for the club licensing requirements.</p> <p>12) The Club accept that they must be the sole beneficial owner of all the club's players' contracts and have sole control of football activities. The club understands that it is responsible for ensuring that compensation paid to players arising from contractual or legal obligations and all the revenues arising from gate receipts are accounted for in the books of either the registered member or the football company.</p> <p>13) The Club accept that they are responsible for ensuring that all players of the club in the IFAP/IFAC are registered with the IFA and, if non-amateur players, have a written player's contract with the club.</p> <p>14) The Club confirm they have provided evidence (if any) with the IFA application form of any relationships (financial or otherwise) between our club and any other legal entities that are wholly owned, associated or affiliated to the licence applicant. They confirm they will inform the IFA of any such relationships which are formed during the life of our licence.</p> <p>15) The Club confirm that they will inform the licensor about any significant change, event or condition of major economic importance if subsequent event occurred after the submission of the licensing documentation in accordance with the rules fixed in the IFA Club Licensing Manual(s).</p> <p>16) The Club confirm their acceptance of the form of confidentiality agreement provided by the Club Licensing Department.</p> <p>17) The club accepts that the Club Licensing administration has the right to make public statements where a club formally applies and/or subsequently withdraws their licensing application at any time during the process.</p> <p>18) The Club confirm that they will only play in competitions recognised and endorsed by the IFA and will participate in competitions at international level only with the written approval of the football bodies (IFA, UEFA and FIFA). For the avoidance of doubt this does not relate to training matches.</p> <p>19) The Licensing Manager, the Club Licensing Committee or its nominated bodies, or UEFA, will have the power to carry out spot checks on clubs by attending at the club or grounds without prior notice and shall be entitled to examine all documentation relating to licensing requirements and to carry out checks on any aspect of Club Licensing Requirements in line with 2.2.1.1.</p> <p>20) The club accept that the Club Licensing Committee and Licensing Administration reserve the right to seek clarifications and / or assurances in relation to any and all creditors / debtors and/or assets / liabilities identified (or subsequently made known).</p>

No.	Grade	Description
		<p>This may include documentation where available.</p> <p>The club accepts that it must notify the Club Licensing Committee and Licensing Administration of any change in circumstances relating to creditors and/or debtors. Clubs who fail to comply with the above or who at the date of submissions, are involved in proceedings (legal or otherwise), may at the discretion of the Club Licensing Committee have a licence refused or any existing licence suspended or revoked.</p> <p>This declaration must be executed by the relevant signatories between January 1 – January 31, 2012.</p>
L.02	A	<p>CURRENT CONSTITUTION AND RULES</p> <p>The license applicant must provide a copy of the current Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Company or in the event that the licence applicant is a private members club or an unincorporated body/association, a copy of the current Constitution and Rules.</p>
L.03	A	<p>NAME AND LEGAL FORM</p> <p>The license applicant must provide confirmation of its full legal name and legal form (whether a legal company, limited liability company (by share), limited liability company (by guarantee), private members club or unincorporated association).</p> <p>This declaration must be executed by the relevant signatories between January 1 – January 31, 2012.</p>
L.04	A	<p>AUTHORISED SIGNATORIES</p> <p>The license applicant must provide a list of authorised signatories (last name, first name, home address) and type of required signature (individual, collective, etc.).</p> <p>This declaration must be executed by the relevant signatories between January 1 – January 31, 2012.</p>
L.05	A	<p>MEMBERSHIP / REGISTER EXTRACT</p> <p>The Club must be an affiliated member of the Irish Football Association and fulfil the conditions of membership defined in the statutes and regulations of the Irish Football Association.</p> <p>This must be demonstrated by submission of the IFA Club Return Club (this shall include the name and registered address of the club).</p>
L.06	A	<p>BOARD MEETING MINUTES</p> <p>The IFA may request relevant excerpts from Board / Committee meeting minutes in order to clarify and / or confirm statements or assertions made by the Licence Applicant regarding its domestic club licence application.</p>

9.2.2. “B” CRITERIA

No.	Grade	Description
L.07	B	<p>INSURANCE</p> <p>The licence applicant must furnish evidence of public and employers liability insurance. Registration requires confirmation that Football Clubs as a minimum have Employers’ Liability Insurance for £10 million Indemnity and Public/Product Liability Insurance for £1million Indemnity.</p> <p>The documentation from a bona fide insurer must be provided to satisfy the above.</p> <p>Failure to do so may result in sanctions to be determined by the Committee.</p>

9. LEGAL CRITERIA

‘A’ Criteria

No.	Grade	Description
L.01	A	<p>LEGAL CONTRACT The licence applicant must submit a legally valid declaration confirming the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Club have read and fully understand the current IFA Club Licensing Manual(s), Annexes, Templates, Application Form, Confidentiality Agreement and Contract and agree to abide by and comply with the requirements and conditions of the Licensing System contained therein. 2) The signatories have authority to enter into this agreement on behalf of the licence applicant by virtue of their own statutes, constitutions and rules and are the persons entitled hereunder to sign contract herein. 3) The Club confirm that all Licensing Documents submitted by us to the IFA acting as Licensor will be complete, accurate, up to date, duly certified where necessary and submitted in a timely manner. We accept that the Licensing Bodies will base their decisions on the documentation submitted by us to the IFA Club Licensing Department as part of this application only and that previous submissions, documents or information provided by them to the IFA for any other reason or as part of any other application will not be deemed to have fulfilled any of the Licensing Requirements herein unless otherwise agreed in writing between the parties herein. 4) The Club confirm that they fully authorise the Licensing Manager and the Licensing Decision Making Bodies to examine all documentation pertaining to our application for a licence and appeal (if applicable) and for the Licensing Manager and the Licensing Decision Making Bodies to seek clarification, further evidence, explanations and all other information from any relevant public authority or private body relevant to the issuance of the licence and appeal (if applicable) and in accordance with national law. 5) The Club recognise that they are legally bound by the rules, statutes, articles and regulations of FIFA, UEFA, the IFA and IFAP/IFAC. The club further understands that Article 21 of the IFA Articles of Association will not apply to any licensing decisions. We agree to respect at all times the rules, statutes, articles and regulations of FIFA, UEFA, the IFA and IFAP/IFAC as well as to recognise the final jurisdiction of the CAS in Lausanne as provided for in the articles of the UEFA Statutes. 6) The club confirm that it will abide by and observe the UEFA Club Licensing and Financial Fair Play Regulations. 7) The Club understand that the IFA Club Licensing Committee is empowered to take a first instance decision on our licence application and that the IFA Club Licensing Appeals Body is empowered to take a final and binding decision on whether a licence is issued. The Club accept the powers of these bodies as outlined in 3.2.4, 3.2.5, 3.2.6 and 3.2.7 of the Manual(s) and agree to be bound by the decisions of these bodies that affect us as the Licence Applicant. They further recognise and agree that, in accordance with 3.2.7, evidence, or facts, not presented in line with the Core Process and placed before the FIB will not be considered by the Appeals Body when reaching their decision. 8) The Club confirm that they are legally based in the territory of the IFA and will play their home matches only within that territory. The Club accept that a change in our designated stadium is subject to a decision of the competent body responsible for the respective competitions (UEFA if UEFA competition).

No.	Grade	Description
		<p>9) The Club confirm they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the right to use the name and brands of the club and agree not to change the name of the club for advertising/promotional purposes; and • Agree to accept no clauses in contracts with television, sponsors or other commercial partners that could restrict the club in its freedom of decision or affect its management. <p>10) The Club accept that only members of the IFA can apply for and obtain a licence and that members who are individuals cannot apply for or obtain a licence in line with 4.3.1. They further accept that licence applicants only can appeal and be a party to appeal proceedings.</p> <p>11) The Club accept that they must be fully responsible for and have the sole control over all the football activities that are related to the participation in national and international football competitions, as well as for the club licensing requirements.</p> <p>12) The Club accept that they must be the sole beneficial owner of all the club's players' contracts and have sole control of football activities. The club understands that it is responsible for ensuring that compensation paid to players arising from contractual or legal obligations and all the revenues arising from gate receipts are accounted for in the books of either the registered member or the football company.</p> <p>13) The Club accept that they are responsible for ensuring that all players of the club in the IFAP/IFAC are registered with the IFA and, if non-amateur players, have a written player's contract with the club.</p> <p>14) The Club confirm they have provided evidence (if any) with the IFA application form of any relationships (financial or otherwise) between our club and any other legal entities that are wholly owned, associated or affiliated to the licence applicant. They confirm they will inform the IFA of any such relationships which are formed during the life of our licence.</p> <p>15) The Club confirm that they will inform the licensor about any significant change, event or condition of major economic importance if subsequent event occurred after the submission of the licensing documentation in accordance with the rules fixed in the IFA Club Licensing Manual(s).</p> <p>16) The Club confirm their acceptance of the form of confidentiality agreement provided by the Club Licensing Department.</p> <p>17) The club accepts that the Club Licensing administration has the right to make public statements where a club formally applies and/or subsequently withdraws their licensing application at any time during the process.</p> <p>18) The Club confirm that they will only play in competitions recognised and endorsed by the IFA and will participate in competitions at international level only with the written approval of the football bodies (IFA, UEFA and FIFA). For the avoidance of doubt this does not relate to training matches.</p> <p>19) The Licensing Manager, the Club Licensing Committee or its nominated bodies, or UEFA, will have the power to carry out spot checks on clubs by attending at the club or grounds without prior notice and shall be entitled to examine all documentation relating to licensing requirements and to carry out checks on any aspect of Club Licensing Requirements in line with 2.2.1.1.</p> <p>20) The club accept that the Club Licensing Committee and Licensing Administration reserve the right to seek clarifications and / or assurances in relation to any and all creditors / debtors and/or assets / liabilities identified (or subsequently made known). This may include documentation where available.</p> <p>The club accepts that it must notify the Club Licensing Committee and Licensing</p>

No.	Grade	Description
		Administration of any change in circumstances relating to creditors and/or debtors. Clubs who fail to comply with the above or who at the date of submissions, are involved in proceedings (legal or otherwise), may at the discretion of the Club Licensing Committee have a licence refused or have any existing licence revoked. This declaration must be executed by the relevant signatories between January 1 – January 31 2012.
L.02	A	CURRENT CONSTITUTION AND RULES The license applicant must provide a copy of the current Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Company or in the event that the licence applicant is a private members club or an unincorporated body/association, a copy of the current Constitution and Rules.
L.03	A	NAME AND LEGAL FORM The license applicant must provide confirmation of its full legal name and legal form (whether a legal company, limited liability company (by share), limited liability company (by guarantee), private members club or unincorporated association). This declaration must be executed by the relevant signatories between January 1 – January 31 2012.
L.04	A	AUTHORISED SIGNATORIES The license applicant must provide a list of authorised signatories (last name, first name, home address) and type of required signature (individual, collective, etc.). This declaration must be executed by the relevant signatories between January 1 – January 31 2012.
L.05	A	MEMBERSHIP / REGISTER EXTRACT The Club must be an affiliated member of the Irish Football Association and fulfil the conditions of membership defined in the statutes and regulations of the Irish Football Association. This must be demonstrated by submission of the IFA Club Return Club (this shall include the name and registered address of the club).
L.06	A	BOARD MEETING MINUTES The IFA may request relevant excerpts from Board / Committee meeting minutes in order to clarify and / or confirm statements or assertions made by the Licence Applicant regarding its domestic club licence application.

'B' Criteria

L.07 Insurance

'C' Criteria

None

10. FINANCIAL CRITERIA

10.1. INTRODUCTION

The financial criteria, to be met for participation in the 2012/13 IFAP season, are set out in this chapter. This means that financial information in respect of the *financial year* ending in 2011 will form part of the information to be assessed by licensors for clubs to obtain a licence for the 2012/13 season.

Northern Ireland league clubs are mainly categorised as small businesses and therefore would typically be exempt from a full audit. However, the financial criteria are more stringent than the level of audit required by Companies House, for small businesses

The licensor requires that all clubs undergo a full audit to enable the IFA and IFAP to be confident that clubs are compliant with accounting and financial principles. Compliance with these financial requirements shall ensure that the football clubs are sufficiently stable (financially) to participate in the IFAP.

The improvements made in this manual provide a sensible and achievable level of requirements that can be met by clubs who wish to compete in domestic competitions.

The financial criteria relates to:

- *Historic financial information* about a club's financial performance and position;
- *Future financial information* about a club's future prospects; and
- *Subsequent information* after the licensing decision has been made.

10.2. OBJECTIVES

The financial criteria aim principally to:

- Improve the economic and financial capability of the clubs;
- Increase a club's transparency and credibility;
- Place the necessary importance on the protection of creditors;
- Safeguard the continuity of competitions for one season; and
- Monitor financial fair play in club competitions.

10.3. BENEFITS

Implementation of the financial criteria will help deliver both short and long term improvements for clubs, the licensors and for the football family in general.

For the **football family in general**, the financial criteria will help to:

- Safeguard the continuity and integrity of competitions;
- Increase the transparency and credibility of clubs' financial operations and of football in general;
- Improve confidence in the financial viability of the football industry;
- Create a more attractive market for the game's commercial partners and investors; and
- Provide the basis for fair competition, because competition is not just about the teams' on-the-pitch but off as well.

For the **licensors**, the financial criteria should help to:

- Improve their understanding of the financial position and prospects of their member clubs;
- Encourage clubs to settle liabilities to creditors on a timely basis;
- Enhance their ability to be proactive in assisting clubs with financial issues; and
- Provide a starting point for club benchmarking, at a national level, for those clubs who want to develop this aspect.

For the **clubs**, compliance with the financial criteria should help to:

- Improve standards and quality of financial management and planning activities;
- Enable better management decision-making;
- Enhance clubs' financial and business credibility with stakeholders;
- Improve financial stability; enhance revenue generating ability and cost management.

10.4. DOMESTIC CRITERIA: FINANCIAL INFORMATION

10.4.1 "A" CRITERIA

No.	Grade	Description
F.01	A	REPORTING ENTITY AND REPORTING PERIMETER The licence applicant must provide the licensor with the overall legal group structure (e.g. presented in a chart), duly approved by management.

This document must include information on any subsidiary, any associated entity and any controlling entity up to the ultimate parent company and ultimate controlling party. Any associated company or subsidiary of such parent must also be disclosed.

The legal group structure must clearly identify the entity which is the member of the Irish Football Association and also mention the following for any subsidiary of the licence applicant:

- a) Name of legal entity;
- b) Type of legal entity;
- c) Information on main activity and any football activity;
- d) Percentage of ownership interest (and, if different, percentage of voting power held);
- e) Share capital;
- f) Total assets;
- g) Total revenues;
- h) Total equity.

The licence applicant determines the reporting perimeter, i.e. the entity or combination of entities in respect of which financial information (e.g. single entity, consolidated or combined financial statements) has to be provided.

If the licence applicant has control of any subsidiary, then consolidated financial statements must be prepared and submitted to the licensor as if the entities included in the reporting perimeter were a single company.

A subsidiary may be excluded from the reporting perimeter only if:

- a) the subsidiary is immaterial compared with the overall group made by the licence applicant; or
- b) the subsidiary's activity is clearly and exclusively not related to football.

If a subsidiary is excluded from the reporting perimeter, the management of the licence applicant must justify its decision to the licensor in detail.

If the licence applicant is controlled by a parent who has been included in the reporting perimeter, consolidated financial statements must be prepared and submitted to the licensor as if the entities included in the reporting perimeter were a single company.

If the licence applicant is a football company, it must provide the licensor with the financial information of the football company and the registered member (e.g. combined or consolidated financial statements as if they were a single company).

All compensation paid to players arising from contractual or legal obligations, all costs/proceeds of acquiring/selling a player's registration and all revenues arising from gate receipts must be accounted for in the books of one of the entities included in the reporting perimeter.

No.	Grade	Description				
F.02	A	<p>AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS</p> <p>Regardless of the legal structure of the licence applicant, annual financial statements based on the local legislation for incorporated companies shall be prepared and audited by independent auditors. Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, which allows smaller UK and NI Companies to be exempt from a full audit, will not be permitted.</p> <p>The annual financial statements must consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a balance sheet; • a profit and loss account; • a cash flow statement; • notes, comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes; and • a financial review by management. <p>In addition to any other relevant information included in the financial statements, the following details must also be clearly shown on either the <u>profit and loss account</u> or as an accompanying note attached to the financial statements:</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match day receipts • Income from IFA (please specify) • Donations received • Sponsorship received • Income from player transfers • Other income (please specify) </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Player wages (including PAYE / NIC) • Player expenses • Staff wages (including PAYE / NIC) • Staff expenses • Expenditure relating to player transfers </td> </tr> </table> <p>In addition to any other relevant information included in the financial statements, the following details must also be clearly shown on either the <u>balance sheet</u> or as an accompanying note attached to the financial statements:</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land and buildings • Other fixed assets • Amounts owed by other clubs in relation to player transfers • Amounts owed to other clubs in relation to player transfers </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amounts owed re VAT • Amounts owed re PAYE/NIC • Bank loans and overdrafts • Loans from members (or directors if a limited company) • Other loans </td> </tr> </table> <p>Comparative figures in respect of the prior statutory closing date must be provided. Annual financial statements must be audited by an independent auditor as defined in ANNEXE G and prepared in line with ANNEXE I.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match day receipts • Income from IFA (please specify) • Donations received • Sponsorship received • Income from player transfers • Other income (please specify) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Player wages (including PAYE / NIC) • Player expenses • Staff wages (including PAYE / NIC) • Staff expenses • Expenditure relating to player transfers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land and buildings • Other fixed assets • Amounts owed by other clubs in relation to player transfers • Amounts owed to other clubs in relation to player transfers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amounts owed re VAT • Amounts owed re PAYE/NIC • Bank loans and overdrafts • Loans from members (or directors if a limited company) • Other loans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match day receipts • Income from IFA (please specify) • Donations received • Sponsorship received • Income from player transfers • Other income (please specify) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Player wages (including PAYE / NIC) • Player expenses • Staff wages (including PAYE / NIC) • Staff expenses • Expenditure relating to player transfers 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land and buildings • Other fixed assets • Amounts owed by other clubs in relation to player transfers • Amounts owed to other clubs in relation to player transfers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amounts owed re VAT • Amounts owed re PAYE/NIC • Bank loans and overdrafts • Loans from members (or directors if a limited company) • Other loans 					

It is the responsibility of the licensor to assess the annual financial statements (that may also include supplementary information) to form the basis for his licensing decision. As part of his assessment, the licensor shall read and consider the annual financial statements and the auditor's report therein.

The licence must be refused:

- 1) if the annual financial statements are not submitted to the licensor within the defined deadline.
- 2) if the licence applicant submits annual financial statements that do not meet the minimum requirements for the content and accounting.

The licence may be refused:

- 3) if the auditor's report has a disclaimer of opinion or an adverse opinion, unless a subsequent audit opinion without disclaimer of opinion or an adverse opinion is provided (in relation to another set of financial statements for the same financial year, that meet the minimum requirements) and the licensor is satisfied with the subsequent audit opinion.

- 4) if the auditor's report has in respect of **going concern**, either an emphasis of matter or a qualified 'except for' opinion, or if in the opinion of the licensor there is significant doubt in respect of going concern, unless either:
- i) a subsequent audit opinion without going concern emphasis of matter or qualification is provided in relation to the same financial year
and/or (as directed by the licensor)
 - ii) additional documentary evidence demonstrating the licence applicant's ability to continue as a going concern until at least the end of the season to be licensed has been provided to, and assessed by, the licensor to his satisfaction.
- 5) if the auditor's report has in respect of **a matter other than going concern** either an emphasis of matter or a qualified 'except for' opinion, or if in the opinion of the licensor there is significant doubt in respect of a matter other than going concern unless additional documentary evidence is provided and assessed to the satisfaction of the licensor. The additional evidence requested by the licensor may be dependent on the reason for the modification to the audit report.

No.	Grade	Description
F.03	A	<p>FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE INTERIM PERIOD</p> <p>If the statutory closing date of the licence applicant is prior to 31 December 2011, then additional financial statements covering the interim period up to 31 December 2011 must be prepared and submitted. These interim statements cannot exceed nine months unless under exceptional circumstances as determined by the Club Licensing Committee.</p> <p>The interim financial statements must consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a balance sheet as of the end of the interim period (i.e. 31 December) and a comparative balance sheet as of the end of the immediately preceding full financial year (i.e. the most recent audited accounts); • a profit and loss account for the interim period, with comparative profit and loss accounts for the comparable interim period of the immediately preceding financial year (e.g. if May year end then comparative figures are 1 June to 31 December of previous interim period); • a cash flow statement for the interim period, with a comparative statement for the comparable interim period of the immediately preceding financial year (e.g. if May year end then comparative figures are 1 June to 31 December of previous interim period); • same specific line items as detailed above in F.02 Annual Financial Statements • specific explanatory notes <p>The interim financial statements must follow the same accounting policies as those followed for the preparation of the annual financial statements (and this must be clearly stated in the notes to the interim accounts), except for accounting policy changes made after the date of the most recent full annual financial statements that are to be reflected in the next annual financial statements – in which case details must be disclosed in the interim financial statements.</p>

For those licence applicants required to submit interim financial statements, they must be assessed by the licensor to form the basis for his licensing decision in respect of criterion F.03. As part of its assessment, the licensor shall read and review the interim financial statements.

The licence must be refused:

- 1) If the interim financial statements are not submitted to the licensor within the defined deadline.
- 2) If the licence applicant submits interim financial statements that do not meet the minimum requirements for the content and accounting.

Having read and considered the interim financial statements, the licensor must assess it according to the points below:

- 3) If in the opinion of the licensor there is significant doubt in respect of **going concern**, then the licence may be refused, unless additional documentary evidence demonstrating the licence applicant's ability to continue as a going concern until at least the end of the season to be licensed has been provided to, and assessed by, the licensor to his satisfaction.
- 4) If in the opinion of the licensor there is significant doubt in respect of **a matter other than going concern**, then the licensor must consider the implications of the modification for club licensing purposes. The licence may be refused, unless additional documentary evidence is provided to, and assessed by, the licensor to his satisfaction.

No.	Grade	Description
F.04	A	<p>SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION</p> <p>In addition to the minimum required level of historic financial information submitted as per F.02 and F.03, supplementary financial information, not forming part of the audited annual financial statements or the interim financial statements, must be presented to provide a fuller understanding of the entity's performance and document the disclosure requirements in respect of the Salary Cost Protocol.</p> <p>The auditor must assess any supplementary financial information.</p>
F.05	A	<p>LETTER OF SUPPORT</p> <p>If the licence applicant's financial information exhibits certain warning signs in respect of going concern or a matter other than going concern, then the licensee is required to submit individual Financial Letters of Support from creditors and persons providing financial support to the club. Furthermore, the club may also have to detail in writing the premise on which it considers itself capable of continuing as a going concern for the period for which it is seeking a licence.</p> <p>In respect of the review of the financial information submitted in F.02 and F.03, the licensor shall, at its discretion, request and direct the club to submit Financial Letter(s) of Support as detailed above.</p>
F.06	A	<p>NO PAYABLES OVERDUE FROM TRANSFER/LOANS</p> <p>The licence applicant must prove that as at 31 March 2012 it has no overdue payables that refer to transfer activities that occurred prior to 31 December 2011.</p> <p>Payables are those amounts due to football clubs as a result of transfer activities, including training compensation and solidarity contributions defined in the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players, as well as any amount due on the fulfilment of certain conditions.</p> <p>Payables are not considered as overdue within the meaning of these regulations if the licence applicant is able to prove by 31 March that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they have been fully settled; • deferred by mutual agreement; • are subject to legal proceedings submitted to a competent authority; • the claim is manifestly unfounded. <p>The licence applicant must prepare and submit to the IFA a transfer table disclosing all transfer activities (incl. loans) into the club only, undertaken up to 31 December 2011 and irrespective of whether there is an amount outstanding to be paid at 31 December 2011.</p> <p>All transfer and loan activity <u>into</u> the club only must be listed.</p> <p>An auditor's report of factual findings, as per ANNEXE K, must be provided in this respect.</p>

No.	Grade	Description
F.07	A	<p>NO PAYABLES OVERDUE TO EMPLOYEES AND TAX AUTHORITIES</p> <p>The licence applicant must prove that as at 31 March 2012 it has no overdue payables towards its employees or social and tax authorities as a result of contractual and legal obligations towards its employees that arose prior to 31 December 2011.</p> <p>Payables are not considered as overdue within the meaning of these regulations if the licence applicant is able to prove by 31 March that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they have been fully settled; • deferred by mutual agreement; • are subject to legal proceedings submitted to a competent authority; • the claim is manifestly unfounded. <p>All employees that have worked in the period 1 January 2011 to 31 December 2011, including those who have left their post during this time, must be accounted for on the club's Personnel List. Signed confirmation must be obtained from each paid non playing employee at the time of leaving that the club has met all its financial obligations arising from contractual agreements to the employee. Where signed confirmation is not obtained, supporting payroll documentation must be provided to confirm all payments due have been made.</p> <p>An auditor's report of factual findings, as per ANNEXE K, must be provided in this respect.</p> <p>For Domestic Licensing purposes only, there is no requirement for an auditor to submit copies of documents (e.g. bank statements / payroll records) on which he relied when forming his opinion. For UEFA Licensing purposes the requirement to provide supporting documentation exists.</p> <p>Agreements with Tax Authorities must include both PAYE/NIC and VAT.</p> <p>If payables overdue to PAYE/NIC and/or VAT are outstanding and have been deferred by mutual agreement, then written confirmation of such deferment agreement MUST be provided.</p> <p>Such written deferment agreement(s) MUST be explicit in terms of total amounts owed and applicable deadlines/schedule for payment(s) MUST also be included.</p> <p>The IFA reserves the right, as per F.11, to seek clarification and confirmations regarding the detail contained within such deferment agreement(s).</p> <p>Clubs must detail their PAYE/NIC and VAT position on the worksheet provided for the period 1 January – 31 December 2011.</p>
F.08	A	<p>WRITTEN REPRESENTATION PRIOR TO THE LICENSING DECISION</p> <p>Within seven days prior to the licensing decision to be made by the First Instance Body (30 April 2012), the licence applicant must make a written representation to the licensor.</p> <p>This written representation must state whether or not any significant events (such events are defined on the template letter provided) have occurred that may have an adverse impact on the licence applicant's financial position since the balance sheet date of the preceding audited annual financial statements or interim financial statements where applicable.</p>
F.09	A	<p>PROJECTED CASH FLOW STATEMENT</p> <p>All clubs must complete a projected cash flow statement to cover the period 1 January 2012 to 30 June 2013 (REFER TO ANNEXE L) in order to demonstrate to the licensor its ability to continue as a going concern until the end of the season to be licensed.</p>

No.	Grade	Description
F.11	A	<p>REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL INFORMATION</p> <p>The Club Licensing Committee and Licensing Administration reserve the right to seek clarifications and / or assurances in relation to any and all creditors / debtors and/or assets / liabilities identified (or subsequently made known). This may include documentation where available.</p> <p>Each club must notify the Club Licensing Committee and Licensing Administration of any change in circumstances relating to creditors and/or debtors.</p> <p>Clubs who fail to comply with the above or who at the date of submissions, are involved in proceedings (legal or otherwise), may at the discretion of the Club Licensing Committee have a licence refused or have any existing licence revoked.</p>

10.5.2 "B" CRITERIA

No.	Grade	Description
F.10	B	<p>MONTHLY MANAGEMENT DECLARATION</p> <p>Clubs must submit a monthly management declaration which shall self certify if payments have been made, and/or are up to date for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Players • Other employees • Current HMRC payment • Historical HMRC repayment schedule • Statement in relation to creditor position since last monthly return
F.12	B	<p>DUTY TO NOTIFY SUBSEQUENT EVENTS</p> <p>Following the licensing decision by the decision-making body, the licensee must promptly notify the licensor in writing about any subsequent events that may cast significant doubt upon the licensee's ability to continue as a going concern until at least the end of the season for which the licence has been granted.</p> <p><i>Compliance with this criterion shall be assessed by the licensor on an ongoing basis.</i></p>

CLUBS SHOULD BE MINDFUL OF 4.4.1.5. WHEN SEEKING TO SATISFY THE ABOVE REQUIREMENTS.

10. FINANCIAL CRITERIA**'A' Criteria**

No.	Grade	Description
F.01	A	REPORTING ENTITY AND REPORTING PERIMETER The licence applicant must provide the licensor with the overall legal group structure (e.g. presented in a chart), duly approved by management.

This document must include information on any subsidiary, any associated entity and any controlling entity up to the ultimate parent company and ultimate controlling party. Any associated company or subsidiary of such parent must also be disclosed

The legal group structure must clearly identify the entity which is the member of the Irish Football Association and also mention the following for any subsidiary of the licence applicant:

- a) Name of legal entity;
- b) Type of legal entity;
- c) Information on main activity and any football activity;
- d) Percentage of ownership interest (and, if different, percentage of voting power held);
- e) Share capital;
- f) Total assets;
- g) Total revenues;
- h) Total equity.

The licence applicant determines the reporting perimeter, i.e. the entity or combination of entities in respect of which financial information (e.g. single entity, consolidated or combined financial statements) has to be provided.

If the licence applicant has control of any subsidiary, then consolidated financial statements must be prepared and submitted to the licensor as if the entities included in the reporting perimeter (as defined in Article 46) were a single company.

A subsidiary may be excluded from the reporting perimeter only if:

- a) the subsidiary is immaterial compared with the overall group made by the licence applicant; or
- b) the subsidiary's activity is clearly and exclusively not related to football.

If a subsidiary is excluded from the reporting perimeter, the management of the licence applicant must justify its decision to the licensor in detail.

If the licence applicant is controlled by a parent which has been included in the reporting perimeter, consolidated financial statements must be prepared and submitted to the licensor as if the entities included in the reporting perimeter were a single company.

If the licence applicant is a football company as per Article 12(1b), it must provide the licensor with the financial information of the football company and the registered member (e.g. combined or consolidated financial statements as if they were a single company).

All compensation paid to players arising from contractual or legal obligations, all costs/proceeds of acquiring/selling a player's registration and all revenues arising from gate receipts must be accounted for in the books of one of the entities included in the reporting perimeter.

No.	Grade	Description
F.02	A	<p>FINANCIAL STATEMENTS</p> <p>The licence applicant must prepare a set of annual financial statements covering a period of at least 12 months to a date in 2011 but preferably made up to 31 December 2011. If the financial statements are made up to a date other than 31 December 2011, then a set of interim accounts must be submitted covering the period from the end date of the annual financial statements to 31 December 2011.</p> <p><u>For those clubs who are not limited companies or limited by guarantee.</u></p> <p>Financial statements are to be prepared by a qualified accountant who must sign an accountants report as per ANNEXE J in respect of both annual and interim financial statements (where applicable).</p> <p>The layout of these financial statements is a matter for each club. All accounts are to include a profit and loss account (i.e. income and expenditure account) and a balance sheet.</p> <p>In addition to any other relevant information included in the financial statements, the following details must also be clearly shown on either the <u>profit and loss account</u> or as an accompanying note attached to the financial statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match day receipts • Income from IFA (please specify) • Donations received • Sponsorship received • Income from player transfers • Other income (please specify) • Player wages (including PAYE / NIC) • Player expenses • Staff wages (including PAYE / NIC) • Staff expenses • Expenditure relating to player transfers <p>In addition to any other relevant information included in the financial statements, the following details must also be clearly shown on either the <u>balance sheet</u> or as an accompanying note attached to the financial statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land and buildings • Other fixed assets • Amounts owed by other clubs in relation to player transfers • Amounts owed to other clubs in relation to player transfers • Amounts owed re VAT • Amounts owed re PAYE/NIC • Bank loans and overdrafts • Loans from members (or directors if a limited company) • Other loans <p><u>For those clubs who are limited companies or are limited by guarantee.</u></p> <p>The licence applicant will already be preparing annual accounts which are filed at Companies Registry. These accounts must now also be prepared by a qualified accountant who must sign an accountants report as per ANNEXE J in respect of both annual and interim financial statements (where applicable).</p> <p>The licence applicant must ensure that the information noted above is included on either the profit and loss account, balance sheet or by way of a note to the accounts.</p> <p>If the licence applicant already appoints an external auditor who provides an audit report then the applicant automatically satisfies this criterion. However, the licence applicant must still ensure that the information noted above is included on either the profit and loss account, balance sheet or by way of a note to the accounts and an auditor's report provided as per ANNEXE G.</p>

No.	Grade	Description
F.05	A	<p>LETTER OF SUPPORT</p> <p>If the licence applicant's financial information exhibits certain warning signs in respect of going concern or a matter other than going concern, then the licensee is required to submit individual Financial Letters of Support from key creditors and persons providing financial support to the club. Furthermore, the club may also have to detail in writing the premise on which it considers itself capable of continuing as a going concern for the period for which it is seeking a licence.</p> <p>In respect of the review of the financial information submitted in F.02, the licensor shall, at its discretion, request and direct the club to submit Financial Letter(s) of Support as detailed above.</p>
F.06	A	<p>NO PAYABLES OVERDUE FROM TRANSFER/LOANS</p> <p>The licence applicant must prove that it has no payables overdue towards football clubs as a result of transfer and loan activities, including training compensation and solidarity contributions as defined in the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players, as well as any amount due upon fulfilment if certain conditions arising from transfer/loan activities as of 31 December 2011, unless by 31 March 2012;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they have been fully settled; • deferred by mutual agreement; • are subject to legal proceedings submitted to a competent authority; • the licence applicant has demonstrated that the claim is manifestly unfounded. <p>The licence applicant must prepare and submit to the IFA a transfer table disclosing all transfer activities (incl. loans) into the club only, undertaken up to 31 December 2011 and irrespective of whether there is an amount outstanding to be paid at 31 December 2011.</p> <p>All transfer and loan activity <u>into</u> the club only must be listed.</p>
F.07	A	<p>NO PAYABLES OVERDUE TO EMPLOYEES AND TAX AUTHORITIES</p> <p>The licence applicant must prove that as at 31 March 2012 it has no overdue payables towards its employees or social and tax authorities as a result of contractual and legal obligations towards its employees that arose prior to 31 December 2011.</p> <p>Payables are not considered as overdue within the meaning of these regulations if the licence applicant is able to prove by 31 March that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they have been fully settled; • deferred by mutual agreement; • are subject to legal proceedings submitted to a competent authority; • the claim is manifestly unfounded. <p>All employees that have worked in the period 1 January 2011 to 31 December 2011, including those who have left their post during this time, must be accounted for on the club's Personnel List. Signed confirmation must be obtained from each paid non playing employee at the time of leaving that the club has met all its financial obligations arising from contractual agreements to the employee.</p> <p>Where signed confirmation is not obtained, supporting payroll documentation must be provided to confirm all payments due have been made.</p> <p>Agreements with Tax Authorities must include both PAYE/NIC and VAT.</p> <p>If payables overdue to PAYE/NIC and/or VAT are outstanding and have been deferred by mutual agreement, then written confirmation of such deferment</p>

No.	Grade	Description
		<p>agreement MUST be provided.</p> <p>Such written deferment agreement MUST be explicit in terms of total amounts owed and applicable deadlines/schedule for payment(s) MUST also be included.</p> <p>The IFA reserves the right, as per F.11 to seek clarification and confirmations regarding the detail contained within such deferment agreement(s).</p> <p>Clubs must detail their PAYE/NIC and VAT position on the worksheet provided for the period 1 January – 31 December 2011.</p>
F.08	A	<p>WRITTEN REPRESENTATION PRIOR TO THE LICENSING DECISION</p> <p>Within seven days prior to the licensing decision to be made by the First Instance Body (30 April 2012), the licence applicant must make a written representation to the licensor.</p> <p>This written representation must state whether or not any significant events (such events are defined on the template letter provided) have occurred that may have an adverse impact on the licence applicant's financial position since the balance sheet date of the preceding audited annual financial statements or financial statements where applicable.</p>
F.11	A	<p>REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL INFORMATION</p> <p>The club Licensing Committee and Licensing Administration reserve the right to seek clarifications and / or assurances in relation to any and all creditors / debtors and/or assets / liabilities identified (or subsequently made known). This may include documentation where available.</p> <p>Each club must notify the Club Licensing Committee and Licensing Administration of any change in circumstances relating to creditors and/or debtors.</p> <p>Clubs who fail to comply with the above or who at the date of submissions, are involved in proceedings (legal or otherwise), may at the discretion of the Club Licensing Committee have a licence refused or have any existing licence revoked.</p>

'B' Criteria

F.10 Monthly Management Declaration

F.12 Duty to Notify Subsequent Events

'C' Criteria

F.09 Projected Cash Flow Statement

11. SALARY COST PROTOCOL MONITORING

11.1 Introduction

On 14 June 2010 the Irish FA Premiership Management Committee agreed to introduce a Salary Cost Protocol for clubs competing in the Irish FA Premiership. Approval from the Committee followed several months' consultation regarding the principle of the salary cap and the finer details of the implementation guidelines

This measure provides some degree of cost control by imposing a spending constraint on the single largest item of expenditure for all clubs, player salary costs and is designed to safeguard the future of clubs in the medium to long term. The salary cap has been set at a maximum of 60% of total allowable income generated by each club for season 2012/13, averaged over the previous two financial years. Clubs shall face a lesser percentage cap where they have an adverse key creditors' position as defined later in this chapter.

Compliance with the Salary Cost Protocol is on an ongoing basis and this monitoring process is distinct and separate from the Sporting, Infrastructure, Personnel, Legal and Financial criteria defined in this manual which must be fulfilled for a licence to be awarded.

Monitoring of ongoing player costs will be carried out by the Irish Football Association through a live player registrations database and ongoing player payment information submissions made by each club.

11.2 Objectives

The Salary Cost protocol aims principally to:

- Bring a deflationary effect to bear on player salary costs;
- Introduce more discipline and rationality in club football finances;
- Encourage clubs to operate on the basis of their own revenues;
- Protect the integrity and smooth running of competitions;
- Protect the long term viability and sustainability of Domestic club football;
- Encourage clubs to settle liabilities on a timely basis.

11.3 Benefits for Clubs

The implementation of the Salary Cost Protocol can help to control the costs of teams and prevent situations in which a club will sign high-cost contracts in order to reap the benefits of immediate success, only to later find themselves in financial difficulty because of those high costs.

Without a Salary Cost Protocol there is a risk that teams will overspend in order to win now at the expense of long term stability. Clubs who engage in such practice may risk not just the future of their own team but the reputation and viability of the whole league.

SALARY COST PROTOCOL

No.	Grade	Description
SCP.01	A	SALARY COST PROTOCOL The club must not incur expenditure on player salary costs greater than a given percentage of their allowable income. The club shall be prohibited from registering players, at any time, whose contract value would breach this principle.

1. Allowable Income

The definition of allowable income is provided in **ANNEXE 1**. The figure to be inserted into each part of the allowable income calculation will be based on the average of the previous two full years audited financial statements of the club.

This calculation has to be carried out for each separate category of allowable income. The calculation of allowable income must be formally agreed and confirmed in writing by, the Irish Football Association prior to the commencement of the summer registration period.

2. Percentage Cap

The percentage cap applicable to any particular season will be communicated to the clubs by the Irish Football Association.

For season 2012/13 clubs will be assessed via direct linkage to the position of defined key creditors i.e. Bank Loans, Directors Loans/Accounts or any Other Loans (hereafter 'Key Creditors') as stated in the audited financial statements of the club for the financial year ending in 2011.

Clubs will be capped in line with a percentage of Key Creditors vs. Allowable Income (2 year average) as follows:

Key Creditors position representing up to 24.99% of AI	-	60%
Key Creditors position representing 25% to 49.99% of AI	-	55%
Key Creditors position representing 50% to 99.99 of AI	-	50%
Key Creditors position representing 100% and above of AI	-	45%

3. Bonuses and Expenses

Bonus and player expense payments for the applicable season must be estimated and detailed on the template provided and have to be deducted from the figure calculated under the percentage cap.

The resultant figure is the maximum amount which the club can pay its players after bonuses and player expenses.

The total cost to a club of employing any player is the total of the payments to a player as detailed in **ANNEXE 2**.

Bonuses and player expenses shall be reviewed on an annual basis by the Club Licensing Committee and any variances shall have to be justified and shall form the basis of the next calculation.

The calculation process shall be completed for every club for all pre-existing registrations prior to the commencement of the summer registration period.

New players registered after this time must be added to the above mentioned template(s) on an ongoing basis provided that, at all times, the club remains within its maximum allowable amount.

It is entirely the clubs responsibility to provide any and all information on which it wishes to rely to the Irish Football Association in good time.

Any players paid expenses must be reimbursed via a vouched expense claim form. The Club must retain all expense records in a format acceptable to HM Revenue and Customs.

4. Related Party

A party is related to a club/entity if:

- a) directly or indirectly through one or more intermediaries, the party:
 - i) controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with, the entity (this includes parents, subsidiaries and fellow subsidiaries;
 - ii) has an interest in the entity that gives it significant influence over the entity; or
 - iii) has joint control over the entity.
- b) the party is an associate of the entity;
- c) the party is a joint venture in which the entity is a venturer;
- d) the party is a member of the key management personnel of the entity or its parent;
- e) the party is a close member of the family of any individual referred to in a) or d)
- f) the party is an entity that is controlled, jointly controlled or significantly influenced by, or for which significant voting power in such entity resides with, directly or indirectly, any individual referred to in d) or e); or
- g) the party is a post-employment benefit plan for the benefit of employees of the entity, or of any entity that is a related party of the entity.

Close members of the family of an individual are those family members who may be expected to influence, or be influenced by, that individual in their dealings with the entity. They may include:

- a) The individual's domestic partners and children;
- b) Children of the individual's domestic; and
- c) Dependants of the individual or the individual's domestic partner.

Control is the power to govern the financial and operating policies of an entity so as to obtain benefits from its activities.

Key management personnel are those persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the entity, directly or indirectly, including any director (whether executive or otherwise) of that entity.

5. Related Party Transactions

A related party transaction is a transfer of resources, services or obligations between related parties, regardless of whether a price is charged.

Any related party transaction involving players must be documented by the club in writing to the Irish Football Association. These shall include, but not be limited to:

- A player in any other paid service within the club (e.g. coach, barman)
- Payments made to players by club directors, management committee or staff members
- Payments made to players by companies or organisations owned or controlled by a club directors, management committee or staff members
- Payments made to players by sponsors
- Payments made to players by supporters clubs, trusts or organisations

The above list is not exhaustive and all clubs must also adhere to the principles detailed in section 4 above.

A club may at any time submit a written request to the Irish Football Association to put all instances of doubt or uncertainty to the Club Licensing Committee for decision. Any practice or procedure which, in the opinion of the Irish Football Association, is calculated to defeat in anyway the overriding objective of these requirements will be deemed to have been deliberately concealed unless previously documented by the club in writing.

Clubs and players must declare that any other paid employment and the duration of such employment either within the club or via a related party transaction, is not dependent on the individual's engagement as a player for the club in question.

Where such paid employment is dependent on the individual's engagement as a player for the club then any such amounts shall be considered as 'salary' for the purposes of the calculation above.

6. Monthly Management Declaration

Clubs are required to submit a monthly management declaration which shall self certify if payments have been made, and/or are up to date for:

- Players
- Other employees
- Current HMRC payment
- Historical HMRC repayment schedule
- Statement in relation to creditor position since last monthly return

7. Assessment and Monitoring

Monitoring of ongoing player costs will be carried out by the Irish Football Association through live player registrations database.

In effect each player will have a finite value defined and agreed for each season of his contract, or part thereof. The club and Irish Football Association shall agree a value per player based on the contractual documentation submitted by the club.

These values shall be defined in Gross payment terms ONLY in line with **ANNEXE 2**.

Should a new player registration contract value exceed the agreed fixed cap then such player's registration with that club shall be refused* until such times as the club has reduced its cumulative total accordingly by the release of existing players.

*The only exception to this is in the event that all of a club's registered senior goalkeepers are unavailable and the Irish FA Premiership grant special dispensation to register a goalkeeper in line with Irish FA Premiership Rule 34, Registration of Players.

This process is detailed in the flow chart in **ANNEXE 3** Illustration of Process.

8. Undisclosed Payments

It is strictly forbidden to make any payment to a player, either directly or via a related party, which has not been detailed in the official players' contract, lodged with the Irish Football Association, or not documented in line with related party transactions (4) and (5) above.

Any club found, by the Club Licensing Committee, to have willingly made any undisclosed payments to players will immediately be reported to the IFA Executive Board for the application of the following sanction:

- Automatic demotion

Application: if the sanction is applied, and any subsequent appeals process concluded, prior to 5 working days before the first competitive match of the playing season, the club shall be demoted for the upcoming season.

However if the sanction, and any subsequent appeals process, is concluded after this date then the sanction shall be applied at the end of the current season.

Further club sanctions may include but not be limited to:

- Immediate points deduction for current season
- Fine
- Prize money from the season to be withheld / returned and redistributed.
- The return of prize money from any previous season(s) during the course of the player's / football staff member's contract with the club.
- Withdrawal of any future UEFA competition or Setanta Cup competition place earned
- Suspension / disqualification of individuals from involvement in the running of a football club
- Removal of any competition title wins
- Reporting to club to HMRC

Any player found to have wilfully and knowingly accepted undisclosed payments, from any party in relation to his engagement as a player, may be subject to the following sanctions:

- Suspension from playing
- Cancellation of any current contracts
- Potential for report to HMRC

9. Promoted Clubs

Clubs coming under the scope of this criterion for the first time, i.e. becoming a member of the IFA Premiership via promotion, shall have its allowable income calculated, in line with the allowable income streams detailed in **ANNEXE 1**, on a projection based approach.

This application of this principle shall include the following matters:

- Most recent sets (preferably two) of management accounts must be provided
- Projections shall be based on data within management accounts
- Any projected increases (e.g. gate receipts, sponsorship etc) will be modelled against known data from other recently promoted clubs
- Other known sources of confirmed income (e.g. IFA prize money, TV monies) shall be allowable
- All other projected sources are disallowable unless the club is actually in receipt of the monies at the time of the calculation

Should the club remain in the IFA Premiership for a second successive season then the second year projections shall be based solely on the audited financial statements from the clubs first year of membership.

10. Matters not provided for

Matters not provided for in these regulations shall be decided upon by the Club Licensing Committee.



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