



# Irish FA

## Memorandum and Articles of Association

- Football Regulations
- Standing Orders
- Competition Rules
- Player Registration Regulations
- Disciplinary Code

# SEASON 2021-2022



# IRISH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION LIMITED



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The Laws of the Game can be found on the Irish Football Association website  
[www.irishfa.com](http://www.irishfa.com)

***Published by Authority of the Irish FA Board***

# **OFFICE BEARERS**

## **President**

CONRAD KIRKWOOD

## **First Deputy President**

NEIL JARDINE

## **Second Deputy President**

COLIN McKENDRY

## **Chief Executive**

PATRICK NELSON

## **Registered Offices of the Irish Football Association**

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[twitter.com/OfficialIrishFA](https://twitter.com/OfficialIrishFA)

## **Solicitors**

King and Gowdy

A&L Goodbody

# REPRESENTATIVES OF COUNCIL

<b>President</b>	Conrad Kirkwood
<b>First Deputy President</b>	Neil Jardine
<b>Second Deputy President</b>	Colin McKendry
<b>North East FA</b>	Robert Doherty Robert Fenton Ian Frazer Alistair Gray David King Jim Jess David Lynn David Martin Michael Mezza Neil Morrow Jonathan McMullan Bobbie Reid George Reynolds Brian White
<b>North West of Ireland FA</b>	Dessie Bradley Wayne Glenn Trevor Hogg Charles Johnston William Smallwoods Jerry Stewart
<b>Mid Ulster FA</b>	Maurice Johnston Elaine Junk Brian Larkin Nigel Cooke Colin McCullough Sean O'Neill Paul Suckling <i>Vacancy</i>

<b>Fermanagh and Western FA</b>	Roy Cathcart Sam Dennison Gordon Lee Enda Love Jnr
<b>Amalgamation of Official NISC</b>	Gary McAllister
<b>Army FA</b>	Ian Beggs
<b>NI Boys FA</b>	Mark Logan
<b>NI Schools FA</b>	Bob Nesbitt
<b>NI Referees FA</b>	Paul Larkin
<b>Honorary Life President</b>	Jim Boyce
<b>Honorary Vice Presidents</b>	Raymond Kennedy Jim Shaw

# **REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND FOOTBALL LEAGUE (NIFL)**

Ards .....	Brian Adams
Ballymena United .....	John Taggart
Dungannon Swifts.....	Keith Boyd
Glentoran .....	Stephen Henderson
Linfield .....	Jack Grundie
Warrenpoint Town .....	Connaire McGreevy

# COMMITTEES OF THE ASSOCIATION

– Committee Membership is subject to change throughout the season –

## **IFA Board**

Neil Jardine  
Helen Kirkpatrick\*  
Conrad Kirkwood  
Cheryl Lamont  
Gerard Lawlor  
Mervyn Martin  
Stephen Martin\*  
Simon McCoy  
Colin McKendry  
Norman McKeown\*  
Michael Wilson

1 Vacancy

*\*Independent Members*

## **Disciplinary Committee**

Bob Fenton  
Ian Frazer  
Charlie Johnston  
Jonathan McMullan  
Sean O'Neill  
Alexander Redpath\*  
Bobbie Reid  
Ian Ward\*

1 Vacancy

*\*Independent Members*

## **Appeals Committee**

Ian Beggs  
Peter Dornan\*  
John Greer\*  
Eileen Larkin\*  
Ciara McReynolds\*  
Carley Shields\*  
Paul Suckling  
1 Vacancy independent  
4 Vacancies

*\*Independent Members*



## **Licensing Committee**

Colin Atkinson\*  
Andrew Clarke\*  
Brendan Dwyer\*  
Andi Jarvis\*  
Finbar Lavery\*  
Philip McDonagh\*  
Allen McKinstry\*  
John Orchin\*  
Barney Shearer\*  
Ross Thompson\*  
John Toner\*  
Alison Watterson\*  
Ashley Wright\*  
*\*Independent Members*

## **Football Committee**

Three Office bearers  
*plus*  
Roy Cathcart  
Sam Dennison  
Alistair Gray  
Stephen Henderson  
Trevor Hogg  
Elaine Junk  
Mark Logan  
Connaire McGreevy  
Bob Nesbitt  
John Taggart  
Brian White  
Vacancy – MUFA

## **Challenge Cup Committee**

President (Chair)  
*plus*  
Alistair Gray  
Jack Grundie  
Colin McCullough  
3 Vacancies

## **Intermediate Cup Committee**

Alistair Gray  
Jerry Stewart  
Brian White  
4 Vacancies

### **Junior and Youth Cup Committee**

Dessie Bradley – NWFA  
Sam Dennison – F&WFA  
Robert Docherty – CAFA  
Wayne Glenn – NWFA  
Jim Jess – CAFA  
Davy King – CAFA  
Enda Love – F&WFA  
Michael Mezza – CAFA  
George Reynolds – CAFA  
Maurice Johnston – MUFA  
Brian Larkin - MUFA  
Andy Millar – NWFA  
Vacancy – MUFA  
Ciaran McRea – CAFA

### **Women's Challenge Cup Committee**

Roy Cathcart  
Trevor Hogg  
Elaine Junk  
David Lynn  
Neil Morrow

### **Referees Committee**

David Best  
Thomas Fairfield  
Frankie Hiles  
Paul Larkin  
David Malcolm  
David Redfern  
Joe Rice\*

Michael Ross  
*\*Independent Member*

# LIFE MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

Trevor Annon  
Marshall Beattie  
Derek Bowles  
John Brown  
Les Caul  
David Chick  
Mervyn Connor  
Sean Cox  
Robert Cupples  
Brian Dunlop  
John Hamilton  
Sam Hanna  
Robert Haworth  
George Henderson  
Bobby Jamison  
Dessie Keenan  
Raymond Loughrey  
Fred Magee  
Roy Marshall  
Trevor McCann  
Hugh McCartan  
John McCrossan  
Jim McDowell  
William McElroy  
Sam McFrederick  
Jim McGrory  
William McIlroy  
Allen McKinstry  
Morton McKnight  
James McLaughlin  
Brian Montgomery  
Jackie Morrison  
Maura Muldoon  
Aidan Murphy  
Terry Pateman  
Eddie Pepper  
David Segel  
Adrian Teer  
Hugh Wade  
Jim Weir  
Alan Willis  
Crawford Wilson

# IRISH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION



## Memorandum of Association

# THE COMPANIES ACTS 1908-1917

## *COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE*

### MEMORANDUM OF ASSOCIATION OF THE IRISH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION LIMITED

1. The name of the Association is “THE IRISH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION LIMITED”.
2. The Registered Office of the Association will be in Northern Ireland.
3. The objects for which the Association is established are:
  - (1) To acquire and take over the properties and liabilities, and to effectuate and carry into execution the powers, obligations, duties, and general objects of the present Irish Football Association.
  - (2) To promote, foster, and develop, in all its branches, the game of Association football, and to take all such steps as may be deemed necessary or advisable for preventing infringements of the rules of the game, or other improper methods or practices in the game, and for protecting it from abuses.
  - (3) To make adopt, vary, and publish rules, regulations, bye-laws, and conditions for the regulation of the said game or otherwise, and to take all such steps as shall be deemed necessary or advisable, for enforcing such rules, regulations, bye-laws and conditions.
  - (4) To promote, provide for, regulate, and manage in all or any of the required details or arrangements including any arrangements for the benefit of associations or clubs, football competitions, contests, and matches, international or otherwise in Northern Ireland or elsewhere, and to do or provide for all or any such matters and things as may be considered necessary for or ancillary to the comfort, conduct, conveyance, convenience, or benefit of players and of the public, or of any other persons concerned or engaged in such competitions, contests, or matches.
  - (5) To accept, take over, or otherwise acquire all such cups, shields, and other prizes as may be approved by the Association, and to provide for the proper custody, insurance, protection exhibition, awarding, distribution, or loan of or other dealings with all or any of the same.
  - (6) To provide for, make, and vary all such rules, regulations, and bye-laws as to amateur and professional players as the Association may from time to time determine.
  - (7) To provide by rules, regulations, and bye-laws, or otherwise, for deciding and settling all differences that may arise between football associations, clubs, or players, or any persons who are members of, or are employed or engaged by, any such associations or clubs, or any other persons in reference to due compliance with the laws of the game, or the rules, regulations or bye-laws of the Association, or to contracts or to

any other matter of dispute or difference arising between such associations, clubs, or persons, or any of them, and whether this Association is concerned in such dispute or difference or not, and to such provisions for enforcing any award or decisions the Association shall think fit.

- (8) To co-operate with or assist any football association or club in any way which the Association shall think, proper, and to enter into or adopt any agreement or arrangement with such Association or club.
- (9) To co-operate with the International Football Association Board in all matters relating to International and other competitions, or otherwise relating to the game of football, or the rules or regulations affecting the same.
- (10) To purchase, lease, or otherwise acquire any real or personal property or any estate of interest whatever is the same respectively, which may be necessary for or calculated to promote or assist in the promotion of any of the objects of the Association.
- (11) To build, construct, maintain, alter, remove or rebuild any buildings, offices, and dwelling houses, and to clear sites for the same, or to join with any person, firm, or company in doing any of the things aforesaid, and to work, manage, and control the same, or join others in so doing.
- (12) To acquire, lay out, improve, hold, use, or turn to account in any way football grounds, or other athletic grounds, with all such pavilions, buildings, erections and basements, and with all necessary fittings and accessories as the Association may deem advisable.
- (13) To promote, support, or assist in all or any athletic contests or sports for which any property of the Association may be available, or which may be determined on or approved by the Association.
- (14) To improve, develop, manage, mortgage, let, sell, dispose of, or otherwise deal with all or any part of the real, or personal property and the rights of the Association, and to turn the same to profit and advantage in any way that the Association may deem advisable.
- (15) To act as trustees for any associations or clubs, and as such trustees to hold any real or personal property upon such trusts, and with and subject to such powers and provisions as may be approved by the Association.
- (16) To invest and deal with the moneys of the Association not immediately required upon such securities and in such manner as may from time to time be thought fit by the Association.
- (17) As an object of the company or as a power incidental to any of its other objects to engage in currency exchange and interest rate transactions, including but not limited to dealings in foreign currency, spot and forward rate exchange contracts, futures, options, forward rate agreements, swaps, caps, floors, collars and any other foreign exchange or interest rate hedging arrangements and such other instruments as are similar to, or derived from any of the foregoing whether for the purpose of making a profit or avoiding a loss or managing a currency or interest rate exposure or any other exposure or for any other purpose.

Provided that:-

- (i) the objects set out in any paragraph of this Clause shall not be restrictively construed but the widest interpretation shall be given thereto and they shall not, except where the context expressly so requires, be in any way limited to or restricted by reference to or inference from any other object or objects set out in such paragraph or from the terms of any other paragraph or by the name of a company; none of such paragraphs or the object or objects therein specified shall be deemed subsidiary or ancillary to the objects mentioned in any other paragraph, but the company shall have full power to exercise all or any of the powers and to achieve and endeavour to achieve all or any of the objects conferred by and provided in anyone or more of said paragraphs.
  - (ii) the word “company” in this Clause, except where used in reference to the Company, shall be deemed to include any firm, partnership, association or other bodies of persons, whether incorporated or not incorporated, and whether resident, domiciled, incorporated, registered, or carrying business in the state or elsewhere.
- (18) To lend and advance money or give credit to such persons and on such terms as may be thought fit by the Association and in particular to members of and persons dealing with or associated with the Association.
  - (19) To borrow or raise money in such manner as the Association shall think fit.
  - (20) To support and subscribe out of the funds of the Association to any charitable, public or other objects which the Association shall deem advisable, to take over, set aside, or provide for a benevolent fund, and to grant or continue pensions, annuities, compensations, or other awards or benefits in money or otherwise to players or other persons disabled or superannuated or otherwise requiring assistance, or to widows or orphans of or other persons dependent wholly or partially on any players or other persons who may die or be disabled or be otherwise incapacitated from earning a living, or who may be, in the opinion of the Association, deserving of having such assistance rendered.
  - (21) To subscribe out of the funds of the Association to any fund, club or institution, charitable or otherwise, in such manner as the Association may deem advisable.
  - (22) To amalgamate, or co-operate with any association club, or body having all or any of their objects similar to any of the objects of the Association.
  - (23) To draw, make, accept, endorse, discount, execute and issue bills of exchange, promissory notes, and other instruments, so as to be negotiable or transferable by delivery, or to order, or otherwise.
  - (24) To effect insurance against risk of loss to the Association, or against risk or accident to any servants of the Association in the course of their employment by the Association, and to pay premiums on any such insurance.
  - (25) To pay all, or any, expenses incurred in connection with the formation and incorporation of the Association.

- (26) To subscribe for, take, purchase, or otherwise acquire and hold shares or other interest or securities of, any other Association having objects altogether, or in part, similar to those of the Association or carrying on any business which may directly or indirectly assist any business carried on by this Association.
  - (27) To distribute among the members of the Association in kind or in specie, all or any property of the Association.
  - (28) To do all such things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects or any of them.
4. Every member of the Association undertakes to contribute to the assets of the Association in the event of the same being wound up during the time that he is a member or within one year afterwards, for payment of the debts and liabilities of the Association contracted before the time at which he ceased to be a member, and the costs, charges and expenses of winding up the same, and for the adjustment of the rights of the contributories amongst themselves, such amount as may be required, not exceeding five shillings. We the several persons whose names and addresses are subscribed, are desirous of being formed into a Company in pursuance of this Memorandum of Association.



## **NAMES, ADDRESSES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF SUBSCRIBERS**

ALEXANDER H. THOMPSON, of North-East Association  
27 Melrose Street, Belfast – Upholsterer

JAMES M. WILTON, of North-West Association  
Marlborough Avenue, Londonderry – Solicitor's Apprentice

W. B. BURROWES, of North-East Association  
1 Ballynafeigh House, Belfast – Cashier

J. MacBRIDE, of North-West Association  
1 Adelaide Street, Belfast – Printer and Stationer

GEORGE TOMLINSON, of North-East Association  
10 Glanworth Street, Belfast – Solicitor's Assistant

JOHN WARICK, of North-East Association  
18 University Street, Belfast – Baker

PERCY H. STEWART, of Leinster Association.  
26 Gilford Avenue, Sandymount, Co. Dublin – Civil Engineer

Dated the Fourteenth day of December, Nineteen Hundred and Eight.

Witness to the above signatures:

THOMAS J CAMPBELL  
of 74 Cromwell Road, Belfast – Barrister-at-law

# IRISH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION



## Articles of Association

Updated 17 December 2020

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## ARTICLE 1

### Definitions

In the Articles, unless the context requires otherwise, terms used have the following meanings:

‘Act’	The Companies Act 2006 and any act, statute or order amending or replacing it or any statutory instrument or regulation made thereunder.
‘AONISC’	Amalgamation of Official Northern Ireland Supporters Clubs.
‘Appeals Committee’	The committee appointed under Article 14.
‘Articles’	The articles of association of the Association.
‘Association’	The Irish Football Association Limited.
‘Association Club Licensing Manual’	A manual published from time to time by the Association setting out the club licensing procedures.
‘Association Football’	Football as played under the auspices of the Association.
‘Associate Member’	A Club which is a member of NIBFA and affiliated to the Association under Article 4.2.
‘Board’	The Board of the Association appointed under Article 10.
‘Chief Executive’	The person appointed under Article 10.1.
‘Club’	A team playing Association Football in Northern Ireland.
‘Council’	The Council appointed under Article 8.
‘Deputy President’	Any Deputy President of the Association elected under Article 9.
‘Disciplinary Committee’	The committee appointed under Article 13.
‘Divisional Association’	The associations governed by Article 11.
‘FIFA’	Fédération Internationale de Football Association.
‘Football Committee’	The committee appointed under Article 11.
‘Full Member’	A Club/Team that plays Association football in Northern Ireland and is affiliated to the Association as in Article 4.
‘Honorary Vice Presidents’	Former Presidents of the Association as defined under Article 9.4.
‘IFAB’	The International Football Association Board.
‘Independent Arbitration Panel’	The arbitration panel appointed under Article 8.5.
‘Judicial Committees’	The Disciplinary Committee, Licensing Committees and Appeals Committee.
‘Laws of the Game’	The Laws of Association Football prescribed by IFAB.
‘League’	Any league admitted as a Member under Article 4.2.
‘Member’	Any Full Member, Associate Member, Organisational Member or League.

‘NIFL’	Northern Ireland Football League Ltd
‘NIWFA’	The Northern Ireland Women’s Football Association.
‘NISFA’	The Northern Ireland Schools’ Football Association.
‘NIBFA’	The Northern Ireland Boys’ Football Association.
‘NIRA’	The Northern Ireland Referees’ Association
‘Office Bearers’	The President and Deputy Presidents of the Association appointed under Article 9.1.
‘Organisational Member’	Each of the following associations: Amalgamation of Official Northern Ireland Supporters Clubs Army Football Association Fermanagh & Western Football Association Mid Ulster Football Association North East Ulster Football Association North West of Ireland Football Association Northern Ireland Boys’ Football Association Northern Ireland Referees’ Association Northern Ireland Schools’ Football Association Northern Ireland Women’s Football Association
‘President’	The President of the Association elected under Article 9.
‘UEFA’	Union des Associations Européenes de Football.
‘Youth Football’	Football played by Members consisting solely of players under 18 years of age who are eligible under Competition Rules.

## ARTICLE 2

### Explanations

1. (a) Save as aforesaid and unless the context otherwise requires, words or expressions contained in the Articles bear the same meaning as in the Act
- (b) A reference to any statute or provision of a statute includes a reference to any statutory modification or re-enactment of it for the time being in force and from time to time
- (c) Unless the context otherwise requires words importing the singular only shall include the plural and vice versa, words importing any gender shall include all genders and words importing natural persons shall include corporations
- (d) The headings are inserted for convenience only and shall not affect the construction of the Articles
- (e) Reference to ‘printed forms’, ‘forms’ or ‘in writing’ includes the use of appropriate electronic media.
- (f) Where there is a conflict between the statutes of FIFA and UEFA and these Articles, the statutes of FIFA and UEFA shall prevail.

2. The regulations contained in Schedule 2 to the Companies (Model Articles) Regulations 2008 and in any similar Model Articles applicable to the Association under any former enactment relating to companies shall not apply to the Association.

## **ARTICLE 3**

### **Duties of Members**

1. All Members shall be subject to and shall comply with the Articles and to any regulations or decisions promulgated by the Board or by any relevant committee of the Association, or by FIFA or UEFA. Each Member shall use best endeavours to ensure that its officials, members, servants, agents and employees comply with the said Articles, regulations or decisions.
2. The Association is a member of FIFA and UEFA. The Association and its Members will at all times:
  - (a) Observe the principles of loyalty, integrity and sportsmanship as an expression of fair play
  - (b) In all matters concerning the Association observe neutrality in politics and religion and avoid any unlawful discrimination
  - (c) Comply with the Laws of the Game
  - (d) Respect the statutes, regulations and decisions of FIFA and UEFA
  - (e) Recognise the jurisdiction of the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in Lausanne (Switzerland), as specified in the relevant provisions of the FIFA and UEFA Statutes
  - (f) In the event that there shall arise a dispute or difference between two or more members of the Association (which shall include for the purposes of this article the Association) including but not limited to a dispute arising out of or in connection with (including any question regarding the existence or validity of):
    - (i) These Articles
    - (ii) The rules and regulations of an affiliated association
    - (iii) The rules and regulations of a Competition which is organised by the Association or in which only members of the Association can participate
    - (iv) The statutes and regulations of FIFA and UEFA
    - (v) The Laws of the Game shall be referred to and finally resolved by arbitration under these Articles without the right to any further appeal and to the exclusion of the jurisdiction of any court of law unless such is contrary to the laws of Northern Ireland.

Notwithstanding the exclusion of the jurisdiction of any court of law and without prejudice to the generality thereof, the parties to any arbitration agree that the provisions of sections 30, 32, 42, 43, 44, 45, 67, 68, 69, 70 and 79 of the Arbitration Act 1996 shall be excluded from and shall not apply to any arbitration carried out under these Articles.

No arbitration can be commenced under these Articles unless the parties who wish to arbitrate have exhausted all rights to appeal under these Articles. Such referrals must be in writing and dispatched by special delivery to the Chief Executive within four days after the date on which the decision is notified to the relevant parties under the Association's own procedures and shall be accompanied by a deposit of £300 which shall be refunded if the referral is successful. A copy of the referral shall be sent simultaneously by special delivery to any other party to the dispute. The party losing the hearing will pay the full costs of the hearing (including, when appropriate, both parties' legal costs).

3. Without prejudice to the generality of this Article, any Club wishing to participate in any UEFA competition on behalf of the Association must comply with the national club licensing procedures set out in the Association's Club Licensing Manual (as published from time to time). Likewise where relevant, compliance is required with domestic club licensing procedures for Clubs to participate in relevant Association cup and league competitions.
4. All Members must produce their books, records and documents for inspection at any time the Board may desire. The financial transactions of a Club, Organisational Member or League shall be entered in their books in detail, particularly as to payments to players.
5. Clubs, Organisational Members and Leagues shall keep minutes of their meetings, showing names and dates of election of members and particulars of all decisions reached.

## **ARTICLE 4**

### **Membership**

1. Members of the Association shall be:
  - (a) Full Members
  - (b) Associate Members
  - (c) Organisational Members
  - (d) Leagues.
2. Applicants for membership of the Association shall apply annually in such form as may be from time to time prescribed by the Board. New applications for membership shall be considered and decided upon by the Board whose decision on the matter shall be final and against whose decision there shall be no appeal (this shall also include applications for any change of member's name which must be approved by the Board prior to affiliation to the Divisional Association).
3. Each Member shall cause to be sent to the Chief Executive no later than 31st July in each calendar year (1st March in the case of women's clubs), or before the commencement of an approved summer season:

- (a) The name and address of its secretary and officers and in the case of a Member playing Youth Football, its Child Welfare Officer
- (b) The legal entity of each Full Member and Organisational Member
- (c) In the event of the same having a ground, the full postal address of that ground and the name and address of the owner of that ground
- (d) In the case of a Member which plays Association Football, the official colours of the team.

In the event of there being a change in the secretary or officers during the year, particulars of the change and the details of any new secretary or officer shall be forwarded forthwith to the Chief Executive. Each Member shall, if and when requested by the Board, furnish forthwith to the Chief Executive a copy of its rules, constitution or memorandum and articles of association.

4. Each Member shall pay (in the case of a Full Member through its Divisional Association) an annual subscription related to its membership category, whose rates will be proposed by the Board for approval by the Members annually in general meeting. All such subscriptions shall be paid by 1st September save that the subscription of a Women's Club shall be paid by the following 1st March. Any Member whose subscription is unpaid by the relevant due date shall, if the Board so decide, cease to be a Member and thereupon forfeit all privileges of membership and cease to have any claim on the property of the Association but its liability as provided for in the Memorandum of Association shall nevertheless continue.

Without prejudice to the foregoing, no Member shall have a right to a representative at a general meeting of the Association whose subscription is not paid on or before the due date preceding such general meeting.

5. Any Member may withdraw from the Association by giving notice in writing to the Chief Executive of its intention to do so, at least one month before the membership is to terminate, provided that:
  - (a) There shall be no money due by the Member to the Association
  - (b) The Member shall not be in breach of any of its obligations to the Association
  - (c) There shall be no disciplinary hearing or complaint outstanding against the Member.

A Member may not seek directly or indirectly to transfer its membership of the Association.

6. The membership of a Member may be suspended or terminated by the Board in the following circumstances:
  - (a) Where a Club fails to have its registered ground accepted by the Board for the then current playing season
  - (b) Where a Club fails for two successive playing seasons to play or to complete its participation in those of the Challenge Cup competitions for which it is eligible and in which it has applied to play



- (c) Where a Member, without the written permission of the Board becomes a member of another national association or of any other body promoting Association Football
  - (d) Where in respect of a Club a petition is presented for its winding up or where the Club in question convenes a meeting to pass a resolution for voluntary winding up or enters into any form of liquidation (other than for the purposes of a bona fide solvent reconstruction or amalgamation) or is deemed by virtue of Article 103 of the Insolvency (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 or any other appropriate statutory provision to be unable to pay its debts.
7. (a) In circumstances other than those specified in Article 4.6 the Board shall have the power to expel any Member on such grounds as it may consider appropriate
  - (b) An appeal against such decision shall be to a general meeting of the Association and shall follow the procedures set out in Article 14.4 and 5
  - (c) Upon receipt of an appeal the Chief Executive shall take all necessary steps to convene a general meeting of the Association to deal with the appeal.
  8. If any Member shall for any reason cease to be a Member it shall remain liable for and shall pay to the Association all monies which may be due by it to the Association. The Association shall not be liable for any debts or obligations of any Member.
  9. Any Member which is in breach of the provisions of these Articles shall if required indemnify the Association and its Members against all losses, damages, liabilities, costs or expenses suffered or incurred by the Association and its Members which result directly or indirectly from such breach, including and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing any loss of income or profits from any undertaking, contract, commercial liaison, sponsorships, or arrangement entered into by the Association or by any of its Members.

## **ARTICLE 5**

### **General Meetings**

1. The Board shall determine the venue, date and time of the annual general meeting, excepting that it shall take place each year no later than 30th June.
2. At least twenty-one days' notice in writing specifying the place, the day, and the hour of the meeting (and in the case of special business the general nature of such business) shall be given to the Members in the manner prescribed by Article 19. Attached to such notice shall be a ticket authorising admission and stating the number of votes, if any, to which the Member is entitled.

3. The Board may when it thinks fit, and shall when required so to do in accordance with the Act, convene a general meeting.
4. A Member or Members proposing a resolution for the annual general meeting shall be required to submit it in writing to the Chief Executive not later than 30th April in each year.
6. Each Full Member, Organisational Member and League shall be entitled to appoint a representative to attend all general meetings of the Association and Associate Members shall be entitled to appoint one representative for every one hundred Clubs in respect of which they have paid an annual subscription, except when such a Member is suspended by the Association. A representative shall represent only one Member. Members of the Board, Council and of any other Association committee shall be entitled to be present and speak at all general meetings, but shall not be entitled to vote unless they are a representative of a Member.

## **ARTICLE 6**

### **Proceedings at General Meetings**

1. No item of business shall be transacted at any general meeting, if the persons attending it do not constitute a quorum at the time when the meeting proceeds to that item.
2. The representatives of 25 Members shall constitute a quorum.
3. The business to be transacted at each annual general meeting shall be as follows:
  - (a) To receive, consider and, if thought fit, approve the report of the Board
  - (b) To receive, consider and, if thought fit, approve the accounts and balance sheet of the Association and the report of the auditors thereon
  - (c) To appoint the auditors and agree or provide for the determination of their remuneration
  - (d) Any other business appropriate to an annual general meeting.
4. If within half-an-hour from the time appointed for the meeting a quorum is not present, the meeting shall stand adjourned to the same day in the next week, at the same time and place, and if at such adjourned meeting a quorum is not present it shall stand adjourned sine die.
5. The President, or in his absence, the First Deputy President, or in his absence, the Second Deputy President shall preside as chairman at every general meeting of the Association.
6. If at any general meeting the President or the Deputy Presidents shall be not present within fifteen minutes after the time appointed for holding the meeting, the representatives of the Members present shall choose one of their number as chairman of the meeting .

7. The chairman may, with the consent of the meeting, adjourn any meeting at which a quorum may be present from time to time and from place to place, but no business shall be transacted at any adjourned meeting other than the business left unfinished at the meeting from which the adjournment took place.

## **ARTICLE 7**

### **Votes of Members**

1. No person shall be admitted to any general meeting unless such person:
  - (a) Has an admission ticket as provided for by Article 5.3, or
  - (b) Has been specifically invited to attend by the Office Bearers.
2. Each representative of a Full Member, an Organisational Member or a League shall be entitled to one vote. The NIBFA, in addition to its vote as an Organisational Member, shall be entitled to one further vote for every 100 Clubs affiliated to it. In exercising the votes to which they are entitled, each Organisational Member and League shall canvas the views of their constituent members and reflect fairly the diversity of such views. For this purpose a Member entitled to more than one vote may exercise such votes both for and against the same proposed resolution.
3. At any general meeting votes may be made personally or by proxy. Proxies may be appointed only by a notice in writing which states the name and address of the Member appointing the proxy, identifies the person appointed and the relevant general meeting, is signed on behalf of the Member appointing the proxy by an authorised signatory and is delivered to the Association in accordance with any instructions contained in the notice of the meeting. An independent accredited body shall be appointed by or with the authority of Council to receive, verify and count proxy votes. The numbers and distribution of proxy votes shall remain confidential in advance of the meeting. A representative of the independent body shall attend each general meeting, verify the attendance of the nominated proxies and announce the results of voting.
5. The chairman at all general meetings of the Association shall have a casting vote.
6. A declaration that a resolution has been carried or carried unanimously or by a particular majority or lost or not carried by a particular majority shall be made by the chairman of the meeting and an entry to that effect in the minute book of the Association shall be conclusive evidence of the fact without proof of the number or proportion of the votes recorded in favour of or against that resolution.
7. At general meetings of the Association:
  - (a) Matters requiring to be passed by ordinary resolution shall be so passed if the relevant resolution is carried by a simple majority of the voting rights of those Members who, being present or represented by a valid proxy, do vote

- (b) Matters requiring to be passed by special resolution shall be so passed if the relevant resolution is carried by a majority of not less than three-fourths of the voting rights of those Members who, being present or represented by a valid proxy, do vote. Changes to these Articles shall require a special resolution
8. For the purposes of Article 17 it shall be deemed a breach of the Articles for any Member or a representative of a Member directly or indirectly to offer any bribe, consideration or other improper inducement to any other Member or representative of a Member for the purpose of procuring a vote on any matter and for any Member or representative of a Member to accept such offer.

## **ARTICLE 8**

### **Council**

1. Unless and until resolved to the contrary by the Members, the Association shall have a Council.
- 2.1 The Council shall consist of:
  - (a) The Office Bearers of the Association as full members
  - (b) Ten persons comprising of:
    - (i) Five persons nominated by the North East Ulster Football Association
    - (ii) Two persons nominated by the North West of Ireland Football Association
    - (iii) Two persons nominated by the Mid Ulster Football Association
    - (iv) One person nominated by the Fermanagh and Western Association
  - (c) Until the AGM in 2016, twelve persons who are representatives of the Senior Division of NIFL, thereafter, six persons who are representatives of the Senior Division of NIFL
  - (d) Until the AGM in 2016, one person nominated by the Intermediate Committee
  - (e) Until the AGM in 2016, one person nominated by the Junior Committee
  - (f) One person nominated by NISFA
  - (g) One person nominated by NIBFA
  - (h) One person nominated by the Army Football Association
  - (i) One person nominated by the Northern Ireland Referees Association
  - (j) One person nominated by the AONISC .
- 2.2 Each Divisional Association shall also have the right to nominate additional representatives to the Council in the proportion of:
  - (a) One Council member for the first ten clubs
  - (b) One for the next twenty clubs
  - (c) One for a further twenty clubs
  - (d) One for each additional fifty clubs affiliated to such Divisional Associations, up to and not exceeding eight additional members for any one Divisional Association.

- 2.3 Each Divisional Association shall also have the right to nominate up to two representatives of Women's clubs affiliated to it as follows:
- (a) One member for the first five Women's clubs
  - (b) One additional member for the next twenty-five Women's clubs.
- 2.4 Each league in continuous membership of the Association, for the past 10 years, will be entitled to have at least one member representing that League on Council. League representation can be achieved by co-option through the relevant Divisional Association. Co-option will not be permitted after AGM 2016 and Divisional nominations must comply with the proportional representation specified in Article 8.2.2.
- 2.5 Members of the Board with the exception of the Office Bearers shall not be members of Council but may attend and speak at Council meetings. Subject to the tenure provisions set out in Articles 9.2 and 10.9, retiring members shall remain eligible for re-election to the Board by indicating their intention prior to completion of their current term in office. Council members wishing to stand for election to the Board shall be nominated by two members of Council.
- 2.6 Nominating bodies shall communicate the names of their nominee(s) to the Chief Executive by 1st June and include the following details in respect of each nominee:
- (a) Address
  - (b) Date of Birth
  - (c) Club (As defined in Article 1)
  - (d) Club status (ie Senior, Intermediate, Junior or Women)
  - (c) and (d) shall not apply to nominees from the Army FA, AONISC, NIBFA, NIRA and NISFA.
- All such nominations shall be for one year at a time. No member of Council shall represent more than one nominating body.
- 2.7 The quorum of the Council shall be 20.
3. No person shall be elected, appointed, nominated or remain as a member of Council if, at the time of the election, appointment or nomination, that person has served on Council for a total of 15 years, whether or not consecutive. This limitation shall be modified in the case of any member of Council on the date of passing of these Articles who shall instead cease to be eligible for election, appointment or nomination on the completion of 15 years service following the date of the passing of these Articles or, if earlier, the Annual General Meeting following their 75th birthday. The foregoing limitations shall not apply to members of the Board and Honorary Vice Presidents.
4. The Association in general meeting may by a special resolution remove any member of Council before the expiry of his period of office. The original nominating body may then appoint a person to act in his place until the expiry of that period of office.

5. In order to discharge its primary function of representing the Members and all those with a material interest in Association Football in Northern Ireland, the Council shall meet at least four times in each year:
  - (a) To review reports from the Board and Football Committee as to the affairs of the Association
  - (b) To consider and advise on specific questions which may be addressed to it by the Board and Football Committee
  - (c) To provide a forum for discussion about and consideration of significant issues for the development of Association Football in Northern Ireland
  - (d) To give advice to any committee of the Association
  - (e) To elect the Office Bearers (in accordance with Article 9) and other members of the Board (in accordance with Article 10.9 (a)) from persons who have been members of Council for at least the preceding two years and to endorse the appointment of Board members co-opted by the Board in accordance with Article 10.9 (b) and (c ). The requirement for two years' service detailed above will not apply to Council members who have been Board members at any time in the preceding two years prior to their nomination.
  - (f) To appoint an independent arbitration panel to adjudicate on disputes subject to Article 3.2, the Chairman of which shall have a legal background, as determined by the Board from time to time
  - (g) To nominate members to judicial committees in accordance with Articles 13 and 14
  - (h) To nominate members to serve on committees in accordance with Articles and Football Regulations.
6. Each member of Council shall have one vote, except the Honorary Vice Presidents who shall be entitled to attend, take part in debate, but not vote. The Chairman of the IFA Board shall attend Council Meetings to report on Board activities.
7. Meetings of Council shall be chaired by the President or, in his absence, the First Deputy President, or in his absence the Second Deputy President.
8. In the event that Council shall not be able to fill the aforementioned committees referred to in Article 8.5(g) and (h) from members of the Council, it may fill the vacancies from persons who are not members of the Council but who are members of a Member and who in the absolute discretion of the Council are considered to have appropriate knowledge and understanding of Association Football.

## **ARTICLE 9**

### **Office Bearers**

1. At its first meeting after each Annual General Meeting, Council shall elect from its members three Office Bearers, namely a President, a First Deputy President and a Second Deputy President to act for a year, at least one of whom shall be from the Senior Division of NIFL at any one time. Nominations for such elections, duly proposed and seconded by two members of Council, shall be made in writing so as to be received by the Chief Executive not later than 31st March, and included in the notice for the relevant meeting. Where, on the day of the election there are no nominees, or the only nominee for the positions of President or Deputy President is unable to accept election, such election or elections shall be postponed until the next meeting of Council with new nominations, as outlined above, to be received by the Chief Executive not later than a date determined by Council.
2. Any Office Bearer shall be eligible for re-election. However, no person shall serve as President or as a Deputy President for more than a total of five years in each role, commencing from the date of their election in accordance with Article 9.1. For the avoidance of doubt, where the President and/or Deputy president is appointed to fill a vacancy in accordance with Article 9.3 (c), any period served prior to their election in accordance with Article 9.1 shall not be taken into account for the purposes of this Article 9.2.
3.
  - (a) Council shall meet within fourteen days following the Annual General Meeting to elect the Office Bearers
  - (b) In the event that more than one nomination is received for each post an election shall be held. Only those candidates receiving more than 50% of the votes cast shall be elected. If no candidate receives more than 50% of the votes, the candidate with the lowest number of votes shall be eliminated and a further vote taken, such process continuing until a candidate receives at least 50% of the votes. In the event of a tie the person to be elected shall then be decided by the drawing of lots
  - (c) In the event that a vacancy occurs in the office of President or a Deputy President during the course of the year the vacancy shall be filled by the Council and the person so appointed shall hold office until the next Annual General Meeting (subject to Article 9.2)
4. Presidents who have completed five years in that office, and at the discretion of Council those who have served for a lesser period, shall be made Honorary Vice-Presidents once they relinquish all involvement in Association committees. Such Honorary Vice-Presidents may remain as members of Council, (in accordance with Article 8.6).

## ARTICLE 10

### Board

1. The management of the business and the control of the Association shall be vested in the Board, which shall be responsible for all matters relating to the conduct and undertaking of the Association (including without prejudice to the generality thereof the playing of Association Football in Northern Ireland). The Board shall appoint a Chief Executive to whom it shall delegate management decisions in accordance with a written Scheme of Delegation adopted by it. The Board's primary focus shall be on setting strategy and on monitoring the implementation of that strategy by the Chief Executive. The Board shall each year
  - (a) Publish its corporate strategy
  - (b) Prepare for presentation to Council a draft business plan and a draft income and expenditure budget
  - (c) Regularly review income and expenditure against budget
  - (d) Evaluate progress towards corporate goals.

The Board shall indicate annually in its corporate strategy and business plan its proposed allocation of resources so as to achieve a balanced approach to the promotion and development of football at all levels. It shall obtain the views of Council on its proposed allocation but retain responsibility for decision-making in the matter.

2. The Board may delegate any of its powers under the Articles to such person or committee and in such manner as it thinks fit. It may make rules of procedure (in the form of Standing Orders or otherwise) governing its members and any person or committee to which it delegates powers. This shall include an Independent Dispute Resolution Panel of three persons, to which the Board may refer any disputes that cannot be resolved using any other mechanism. The terms of reference of such a panel to be agreed by the Board and stated in the Standing Orders.
3. The Board may exercise all powers of the Association and carry out all objects of the Association, as are not by these Articles or by statute expressly directed or required to be exercised or done by the Association in general meeting.
4. The Association in general meeting may by special resolution direct the Board to take, or refrain from taking, specified action.
5. An act done by the Board, whether ultra vires or not, that receives the express or implied sanction of the Association in general meeting, shall not be afterwards impeached by any Members on any grounds whatsoever, and shall be deemed to be a valid and binding act of the Association.



6. A decision by the Board must be either a decision by a majority of those taking part in a meeting (which may, if the chairman so determines, be an electronic meeting during which all members taking part can hear each other) or a decision in relation to which all eligible directors indicate to each other in writing (which may include electronic mail) that they share a common view on the matter. If at a meeting the votes for and against a proposal are equal, the chairman of the meeting shall have a casting vote.
7. Any Board member may call a Board meeting by giving notice (or by authorising the company secretary to give notice) either orally or in writing to all other members.
8. The quorum for Board meetings shall be half of the current members.
9. The Board shall consist of the following:
  - (a) The Office Bearers elected by and from Council pursuant to Article 8.5. The tenure on the Board of the Office Bearers shall be as prescribed by Article 9.
  - (b) Six other members elected by and from Council, at least one of whom shall be a representative of a women's club appointed to Council pursuant to Article 8.2.3. These members shall be entitled to hold office for three years from the date of their election and be eligible for re-election for a maximum of two further three-year periods. Notice of any impending vacancy on the Board shall be given to Council members not less than 3 months prior to the election to fill such vacancy.
  - (c) Two Board members co-opted by the Board following a process prescribed by the Board and set out more particularly in the Standing Orders and which should include public advertisement and endorsement by Council. These co-optees shall be lay members (not being a member of Council or holding office in any Member, or having been so in the three years prior to appointment). Subject to any probation period specified in the Standing Orders, the tenure on the Board of lay Board members shall be three years from the date of their co-option and they shall be eligible for renewal of their co-option (without public advertisement, but following endorsement by Council) for a maximum of two more three-year periods. The Association will also have the discretion to extend the engagement of a co-opted lay Board member beyond the nine year overall period for a maximum of one further year when it is considered necessary for maintaining continuity and experience on the Board.
  - (d) In addition to the two members co-opted under (b) above, the Board shall co-opt one further member, following public advertisement, and endorsement by Council. That third person need not be a lay member but shall have such skills or experience not otherwise available to the Board. Such director shall be subject to the same process referred to in (b) above and the tenure of such director shall be limited to a period of one year renewable (without public advertisement, but following endorsement by Council) for a maximum of eight further years.
10. The Board shall have power to co-opt the Chief Executive as a member of the Board, for so long as he remains Chief Executive, or to appoint him as Company Secretary.

Candidates for co-option under Article 10.9 (b) and (c) shall meet the following criteria:

- (a) Experience of management in the private, public or voluntary sectors
- (b) Awareness of the requirements of corporate governance
- (c) Any other skills and experience specified by the Board as a requirement for each co-option

Should the process result in fewer candidates being approved than there are vacancies on the Board, Council (in the case of directors elected in accordance with Article 10.9 (a)) or the Board (in the case of directors co-opted in accordance with Articles 10.9 (b) or ( c)) shall instigate a rerun of the relevant process until the vacancies are filled.

- 11. (a) No member of the Board may be linked (either directly or indirectly) to more than one Club during service on the Board; nor may more than one member be linked (either directly or indirectly) with any one Club
  - (b) No member of the Board, except Office Bearers, may remain on Council as a person nominated under Article 8.2
  - (c) All members of the Board following election will undertake induction, training, appraisal and mentoring in the role of being a director
  - (d) No member of the Board can simultaneously be a member of the Board of any IFA subsidiary company.
12. The Board will appoint the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the main Association Committees which are as follows:
- (a) Football Committee
  - (b) Disciplinary Committee
  - (c) Appeals Committee
  - (d) Licensing Committee
  - (e) All Board Sub-Committees

And will determine the process for the selection of the same.

## **ARTICLE 11**

### **Organisation and Management of Football**

- 1. The Board may delegate to the Football Committee and its sub-committees the organisation and management of all matters to do with the playing of Association Football. Subject thereto, the operation and playing of Association Football in Northern Ireland shall be undertaken by the following Divisional Associations:
- (a) North East Ulster Football Association
- (b) North West of Ireland Football Association
- (c) Mid Ulster Football Association
- (d) Fermanagh and Western Football Association.

2. The Board shall in its absolute discretion fix the areas and boundaries within which a Divisional Association shall operate and have jurisdiction.
3. Each Divisional Association shall nominate persons to be members of Council in accordance with Article 8.2.
4. (a) In the event that a Divisional Association shall cease to exist or cease to be a Member those Clubs within its jurisdiction shall at the request of the Board form a new Divisional Association  
 (b) Such Divisional Association shall not become an Organisational Member until the Board has resolved in writing to accept it as such  
 (c) Each Divisional Association shall account to the Association for all subscriptions that it receives for the account of the Association in respect of subscriptions of Members and referees  
 (d) Each Divisional Association shall submit their annual financial statements to the Football Committee.  
 (e) Fines resulting from disciplinary sanctions imposed by Divisional Associations in Junior Football will be collected by the Irish Football Association through the approved Football Management System. All such monies will be forwarded to the respective Divisional Associations at agreed times during the season.
5. The Association in general meeting may make regulations governing the organisation and playing of Association Football which, when published, shall be binding on Members, players registered with Members, and referees registered with the Association.
6. Without prejudice to Article 11.5, the Association shall not administer or organise directly any football association, league or combination of Clubs after 1st June 2013.
7. Members appointed by Council to Judicial Committees which includes the disciplinary, appeals and licensing committee, shall not be a member of any other IFA committee or body within the Association.

## **ARTICLE 12**

### **Licensing Committee**

1. The Board shall appoint a Licensing Committee and a Licensing Appeals Committee in line with regulations issued from time to time by UEFA. Each of these Committees shall consist of no more than seven members who shall not be connected with or be representatives of any Clubs with involvement in any of the Association's licensing programmes. The quorum of each Committee shall be three.
2. The Licensing Committee shall issue licensing manuals for both UEFA and domestic licensing schemes, and manage the programmes to enable the annual issuing of licences where appropriate.

3. Each Committee as above shall submit a written report of its meetings to the Board.

## **ARTICLE 13**

### **Disciplinary Committee**

1. The Disciplinary Committee shall, unless the Members in a general meeting determine otherwise, consist of nine persons as follows:
  - (a) Two Members appointed by the Board who shall have a legal background as determined by the Board from time to time, who shall not be members of any Club, who shall serve as Chairman and Vice Chairman
  - (b) Seven members nominated by Council with at least one member from each of Senior, Intermediate and Junior Football.

No member of the Board shall be a member of the Disciplinary Committee.

2. The quorum of the Disciplinary Committee shall be three (including Chairman / or Vice-chairman).
3. The Disciplinary Committee will have full powers to deal with all disciplinary matters contained within terms of reference determined for it by the Football Committee together with those matters delegated to it by the Board under Articles 10.2 and 17, including the publication of a Disciplinary Code.
4. The Disciplinary Committee shall submit written reports of its meetings to the Football Committee.
5. Each member of the Disciplinary Committee shall hold in confidence all matters discussed at meetings of the Committee.

## **ARTICLE 14**

### **Appeals Committee**

1. The Appeals Committee shall, unless the Members in a general meeting determine otherwise, consist of a panel of twelve persons:
  - (a) Six members nominated by Council with at least one member from each of Senior, Intermediate and Junior Football.
  - (b) Six members nominated by the Board, who shall not be members of any Club and who shall serve for such time as the Board decides, from whom the Board shall appoint the Chairman who shall have a legal background, as determined by the Board from time to time.

No member of the Board shall be a member of the Appeals Committee.

2. Other than an appeal by a Member against its expulsion, a player, official, referee, Club, Associate Member, Organisational Member or League has the right to appeal to the Appeals Committee against any decision of a Club, committee, League or other such body within the Association which is imposed upon him or it, provided that the appellant has exhausted such appeals procedures as were available to the appellant consequent upon the decision in question, unless satisfactory grounds are given for not having done so. For the avoidance of doubt, an appeal by a player must be submitted either:
  - (a) By the player personally, setting out the grounds for the appeal in writing; or
  - (b) By the player's Club on the player's behalf, setting out the grounds for the appeal in writing, and countersigned by the player.
3. An appeal hearing shall not be conducted as a re-hearing and will not allow evidence which was not previously adduced to the body which heard the case in the first instance unless good reason can be shown as to why it was not made available in the first instance. In such a case the Appeal Board will refer the case back to the body whose decision is appealed in line with Article 14(6)(e).
4. An appeal must be despatched by special delivery letter to the Chief Executive within four 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 that meeting, in which case it must be despatched by special delivery letter to the Chief Executive within four days after the date on which the decision was notified in writing to the person or body concerned. Such letter shall state the grounds of appeal. A deposit of £100 shall be lodged with each appeal which shall be returnable only where the appeal is upheld. A copy of the Appeal must be sent simultaneously by special delivery letter to the body or committee whose decision is appealed against.
5. The Chief Executive shall, upon receipt of an appeal, forward it to the chairman of the Appeals Committee. The chairman of the Appeals Committee shall appoint from its members an appeal board consisting of a minimum of three persons to hear and determine an appeal. No person shall sit on an appeal which involves himself or any Club in which he has an interest. All appeals should be heard, where possible, within fourteen days of receipt of appeal.
6. The appeal board shall have the power to:
  - (a) Affirm the decision of the body whose decision is appealed against
  - (b) Uphold the appeal by setting aside the decision appealed against and quashing any penalty imposed
  - (c) Uphold the appeal in part by setting aside part only of the decision appealed against
  - (d) Substitute for the decision appealed against a decision to find the appellant guilty of a lesser offence and/or to impose a lesser penalty or penalties in respect thereof

- (e) Refer the case, or any part of it, back to the body whose decision is appealed against
- (f) Take any step which, in the exercise of its discretion, the appeal Board considers appropriate in order to deal justly with the case in question, but only within the parameters laid down by the FIFA and IFA Disciplinary Codes and these Articles of Association.

If the appeal is unsuccessful, the appellant may be held liable for all or part of the expenses of the appeal procedure. Should the appeal board consider any appeal to be of a frivolous or vexatious nature or merely to release a player/official from suspension in order to enable him to participate in a match it shall have power to deal with the appellant as it shall deem appropriate.

An appeal may be withdrawn by an appellant prior to the hearing of the case by notifying the Chief Executive of withdrawal in writing. The appeal shall, upon receipt of such notification by the Chief Executive, be deemed to be abandoned and the original decision against which the appellant appealed shall be regarded as final and binding. Upon withdrawal of an appeal, the appeal deposit shall be forfeited. The appellant may be held liable by the appeals board for all or part of the expenses of the appeal procedure.

- 8. Upon the conclusion of each appeal the appeal board shall submit a written report on the outcome of the appeal to the Appeals Committee and Football Committee.
- 9. Each member of the Appeals Committee shall hold in confidence all matters discussed at meetings of the Committee and of appeal boards.

## **ARTICLE 15**

### **Disqualification from Office**

- 1. An Office Bearer or any member of the Board, Council or Association committee shall cease to be an Office Bearer or member of such body
  - (a) If he becomes bankrupt or compounds or makes an arrangement with his creditors, but he may notwithstanding any such event, be eligible for re-appointment if the Board so decides
  - (b) If he becomes incapable of managing his own affairs or physically incapable of performing the duties of an Office Bearer or member of such body
  - (c) If, when not on Association business, he absents himself from three consecutive meetings of any such body without providing a reason acceptable to that body
  - (d) The Club of which he is a representative ceases to be a Member
  - (e) If he is a paid official or employee of the Association, other than the Chief Executive or a professional referee, but then only during the period he holds such office or employment

- (f) If he is a member of a Club which has been suspended under Article 16 but only during the period of suspension. For the purposes of this provision, a person shall be a member of a Club if his name is shown in the official team sheet (or he is paid) for the match in respect of which the suspension is made
- (g) If an individual by his wilful actions puts the Association at legal or financial risk.

The foregoing is without prejudice to Articles 8.4 and 10.4.

## **ARTICLE 16**

### **Suspension**

1. In the event that a Club has been suspended from playing football, that Club shall be disqualified from playing matches or fixtures promoted by or on behalf of the Association during the period of suspension.
2. The suspension of a Club shall not of itself disqualify any player in such Club from playing in matches or fixtures promoted by or on behalf of the Association.
3. The suspension of an Organisational Member or League shall disqualify all its members from acting in any capacity under the Association during the period of suspension.
4. A member or any honorary or paid official or employee of a Club, Organisational Member or League shall not, during the period of his suspension, play or take part in any match or fixture promoted by or on behalf of the Association, hold any office in any Club, Organisational Member or League or in any capacity under the Association or attend any meeting of the Association, any Organisational Member or League, or any committee of the Association.
5. A player shall not during the period of his suspension, play or take part in any match or fixture promoted by or on behalf of the Association, hold any office in any Club, Organisational Member or League, or act in any capacity under the Association.
6. A Club, Organisational Member or League shall not during the period of its suspension have any representation at any general meeting of the Association, or at any meetings of any Organisational Member or League.
7. For the purposes of this article suspensions shall include only those imposed directly by the Disciplinary Committee or the Board.

## **ARTICLE 17**

### **General Discipline**

1. Where any person or body has breached or caused or contributed to the breach of any of the Articles or brings the game of Association Football into disrepute, that person or body shall be liable to expulsion, suspension, fine and/or such other penalty or sanction as the Board may think fit.

The Board may delegate these powers to the Disciplinary Committee.

2. The Board, or the Disciplinary Committee acting on behalf of the Board, shall be the sole judge (and shall be unfettered in its judgment) as to what brings the game of Association Football into disrepute and what constitutes loyalty, integrity and sportsmanship.

## **ARTICLE 18**

### **Administrative Arrangements**

1. The annual report and accounts of the Association shall be prepared to 31st December in each year.
2. No member shall have any right of inspecting any accounting records or other books or documents of the Association except as conferred by statute or authorised by the Board or by the Association in general meeting.
3. The Association shall have a common seal, which shall be under the charge of the Board, and all documents bearing the seal shall be countersigned by one member of the Board and the Chief Executive.

Informative Note: To facilitate the change from 31st March to 31st December, the 2013 financial year will be 9 months from 1st April 2013 to 31st December 2013.

## **ARTICLE 19**

### **Notices**

1. Notices of the Association requiring authentication may be authenticated by the signature of the Chief Executive or by any other person appointed by the Board to do so. Any notice to be given to or by any person pursuant to these Articles shall be in writing, except that a notice calling a meeting of any committee need not be in writing.

The signature on any notice required to be given by the Association may be typed or printed or otherwise written.

2. A notice may be served by the Association by sending it through the post in a prepaid letter addressed to the person who is to be served at its or his registered address.



The Association is authorised generally and unconditionally to use electronic communications with its Members (and members of Council) and in particular the Association is authorised to send or supply documents or information to its Members (and members of Council) by making it available on a website.

Subject to the Articles, anything sent or supplied by or to the Association under the Articles may be sent or supplied in any way in which the Companies Act 2006 provides for documents or information which are authorised or required by any provision of that Act to be sent or supplied by or to the Association.

Subject to the Articles, any notice or document to be sent or supplied to a Board Member in connection with the taking of decisions by the Board may also be sent or supplied by the means by which the Board Member has asked to be sent or supplied with such notices or documents for the time being.

A Board Member may agree with the Association that notices or documents sent to that Board Member in a particular way are to be deemed to have been received within a specified time of their being sent, and for the specified time to be less than 48 hours.

3. Any notice sent by post shall be deemed to have been served on the day following that in which the envelope containing the same was posted, and in proving such service it shall be sufficient to produce a certificate by the person posting the envelope that the envelope containing the notice was properly addressed, stamped and duly posted.
4. Where a number of days' notice or notice extending over any period is required to be given, the day for which notice is given shall be included in such number of days or other period, but the day of service, i.e. the day following that upon which the envelope containing same was posted, shall not be so included.
5. The accidental omission to give notice of a meeting to, or the non-receipt of a notice for any meeting of the Association by, any person entitled to receive notice shall not invalidate the proceedings at such meeting.
6. A Member present at any meeting of the Association shall be deemed to have received notice of the meeting and, where requisite, of the purposes for which it was called.

7. If at any time by reason of the suspension or curtailment of postal services within the United Kingdom the Association is unable effectively to convene a general meeting by notices sent through the post, a general meeting may be convened by a notice advertised in at least one daily newspaper circulated throughout Northern Ireland and such notice shall be deemed to have been duly served on all Members entitled thereto by noon on the day when the advertisement appears. In any such case the Association shall send confirmatory copies of the notice by post if at least seven days prior to the meeting the posting of notices to addresses throughout the United Kingdom again becomes practicable.

## **ARTICLE 20**

### **Communications**

In order that the affairs of the Association may be conducted without unreasonable hindrance, any Member, committee member, official, player, referee or other person under the jurisdiction of the Association is required to answer a written communication from the Association promptly. Any such body or person failing to comply with this shall be liable to censure, fine or suspension, or a combination of such penalties.

## **ARTICLE 21**

### **Conduct**

1. Members of Council or any Association committee shall carry out their duties in accordance with the Association's policies and procedures including any code of conduct adopted by the Board. Without prejudice to the foregoing, they shall be at liberty to contract with the Association, and shall not be disqualified by reason of their having so contracted and shall not be bound to account to the Association for any profit which they may derive from the Association from having so contracted, provided that at the time the contract is entered into they disclose their interest therein and do not vote on the matter.
2. Members of Council and Association committees shall be allowed such expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as the Board shall approve.
3. Each member of Council and of any other Association committee shall be entitled during his term of office to gain admission free of charge to all matches under the jurisdiction of the Association (excepting matches involving clubs or representative teams from other associations). Any person who has acted as a member of Council for a total period of ten years or member of any other Association committee or commission who has so been for a total period of ten years shall, on retiring or ceasing to be such member (other than by reason of expulsion), become an Honorary Life Member entitling him to admission free of charge to all matches under the jurisdiction of the Association (excepting matches involving clubs or representative teams from other associations). Council may confer Honorary Life Membership on any individual as it sees fit.

## **ARTICLE 22**

### **Indemnity**

1. Every Office Bearer, member of the Board, Council or any committee, Chief Executive or other officer or employee of the Association shall be indemnified by the Association against all costs, losses and expenses incurred by him in or about the discharge of his duties, except such as happen from his own wilful neglect, dishonesty or fraud.
2. The Board shall have the power to purchase and maintain insurance for or for the benefit of any persons who are or were at any time Office Bearers, members of the Board, Council or any committee, Chief Executive or other officer or employee of the Association or of any other company in which the Association or any of the predecessors of the Association has any interest whether direct or indirect or which is in any way allied to or associated with the Association, or of any subsidiary undertaking of the Association or of any such other company, or who are or were at any time trustees of any pension fund in which any employees of the Association or of any such other company or subsidiary undertaking are interested, including (without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing) insurance against any liability incurred by such persons in respect of any act or omission in the actual or purported execution and/or discharge of their duties and/or in the exercise or purported exercise of their powers and/or otherwise in relation to their duties, powers or offices in relation to the Association or any such other company, subsidiary undertaking or pension fund.

# IRISH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION



## Football Regulations

Updated 14th December 2021

## DEFINITIONS

1. These Regulations have been made by the Association in general meeting pursuant to Article 11.5 of the Articles of Association. In these Regulations, except where the context otherwise requires, the definitions and explanations contained in Articles 1 and 2.1 of the Articles of Association shall apply *mutatis mutandis*. Changes to these Regulations may be made by ordinary resolution of the Association in general meeting.

## FOOTBALL COMMITTEE

2. The Football Committee shall consist of the following members:
  - (a) The Office Bearers of the Association
  - (b) Four members of Council nominated by the Divisional Associations, one by each Association
  - (c) A member of Council representing a Women's Club, nominated under Article 8.2.3
  - (d) A member of Council nominated by NIBFA
  - (e) A member of Council nominated by NISFA
  - (f) A member nominated by the Junior Committee
  - (g) A member nominated by the Intermediate Committee
  - (h) Three members nominated from the Senior Division of the NIFL who are members of Council.

Each body nominating members of the Football Committee must do so by 1st June in any year.

3. The Football Committee shall appoint, from amongst its members, one to serve as an observer to the Referees' Committee, to ensure that the Committee is operating in line with the UEFA Convention on Refereeing.
4. The Football Committee shall meet at least bi-monthly to deal with the following:
  - (a) Sanctioning of the format of any Club, Association, League or other organisation and the annual approval of rules of such bodies
  - (b) Appointment of six members to the Referees Committee in accordance with Regulation 19
  - (c) Administrative matters including affiliations and regulations
  - (d) Oversight of Members' facilities and of football development at all levels of the game
  - (e) Review of the annual financial statements of the Divisional Associations
  - (f) Responsibility for coaching structures and development programmes

- (g) Responsibility of all arrangements for Junior International Matches and the UEFA Regions cup matches, including selection of players and team officials. This function will be delegated to the Junior and Youth Cup Committee.
- (h) Responsibility for the process and when necessary the competition to decide Promotion to and Relegation from NIFL and other Intermediate Leagues
- (i) Overseeing the allocation of referees to leagues at Intermediate level.
- (j) The promotion and control of Women's Football
- (k) All other matters delegated by the Board.

The Chairman of the Board shall be entitled to attend meetings of the Football Committee. A report from each meeting of the Football Committee shall be presented to the Board.

- 5. The Football Committee may appoint sub-committees and may delegate responsibilities to such sub-committees. The Football Committee may co-opt a maximum of two members of Council with the appropriate skills onto any such sub-committee.

## **PLAYER STATUS COMMITTEE**

- 6. The Player Status Committee shall consist of
  - (a) Two independent members, (not being a member of a club), who are legally qualified, to be appointed by the Board to serve as Chairman and Vice Chairman for a three-year period, at least one of whom should have knowledge of employment law.
  - (b) Six members of Council – to include at least one representative from senior, intermediate, junior and women's football.

The quorum of the Committee shall be three.
- 7. The Committee shall deal with the following issues
  - (a) Registration disputes
  - (b) Transfer disputes involving an amateur player
  - (c) Contract disputes between a professional player and his club
  - (d) Priority of registration disputes
  - (e) Compensation disputes
  - (f) To review, approve and monitor implementation of the Regulations
  - (g) Impose sanctions on leagues for non-compliance
  - (h) All other player registration issues as may arise from time to time

The Player Status Committee will submit reports of its meetings to the Football Committee.

## **CHALLENGE CUP COMMITTEE**

6. The Challenge Cup Committee shall consist of
  - (a) The President, who shall act as Chairman
  - (b) Five members nominated by Council, (including no less than three from the Senior Division of the NIFL). All five members must represent clubs which participate in the competition.
7. The Committee shall deal with
  - (a) The organisation and management of the Irish FA Challenge Cup Competition including drafting of competition rules, selection of Clubs to participate, the drawing of ties, and organisation of the semi-final and final ties. It shall submit reports of its meetings to the Football Committee.
  - (b) All reports, protests, complaints and other matters relating to the playing and conduct of the Challenge Cup Competition (other than referee reports).
8. The Challenge Cup Committee shall submit reports of its meetings to the Football Committee.

## **INTERMEDIATE CUP COMMITTEE**

9. The Intermediate Cup Committee shall consist of seven members nominated from and by Council. All members must represent clubs which participate in the Intermediate Challenge Cup Competition.

The Intermediate Cup Committee shall appoint one member to serve on the Football Committee.

10. The Committee shall deal with
  - (a) The organisation and management of the Intermediate Challenge Cup Competition including drafting of competition rules, selection of clubs to participate, the drawing of ties, and the organisation of the semi-final and final ties.
  - (b) All reports, protests, complaints and other matters relating to the playing and conduct of the Intermediate Challenge Cup Competition (other than Referee Reports).
11. The Intermediate Cup Committee shall submit reports of its meetings to the Football Committee.

## **JUNIOR AND YOUTH CUP COMMITTEE**

12. The Junior and Youth Cup Committee shall consist of 14 members nominated by Council made up as follows:

- (a) Six members from the North East Ulster Football Association
- (b) Three members from the Mid Ulster Football Association
- (c) Three members from the North West of Ireland Football Association
- (d) Two members from the Fermanagh and Western Football Association

All members must represent clubs which participate in one of the two competitions.

13. The Junior and Youth Cup Committee shall appoint one member to serve on the Football Committee.

14. The Committee shall deal with the following:

- (a) The management of the Junior Challenge Cup Competition including the drafting of Competition rules, selection of Clubs to participate, drawing of ties and organisation of the semi-final and final ties
- (b) The management of the Harry Cavan Youth Challenge Cup Competition including the drafting of Competition rules, selection of Clubs to participate, drawing of ties and organisation of the semi-final and final ties
- (c) All reports, protests, complaints and other matters relating to the playing and conduct of the Junior Challenge Cup and the Harry Cavan Youth Challenge Cup (other than referee reports).

15. The Junior and Youth Cup Committee shall submit reports of its meetings to the Football Committee.

## **WOMEN'S CHALLENGE CUP COMMITTEE**

16. The Women's Challenge Cup Committee shall consist of five members nominated by Council.

17. This Committee shall deal with the following

- (a) The organisation and management of the Irish FA Women's Challenge Cup Competition including drafting of Competition rules, selection of Clubs to participate, the drawing of ties, and the organisation of the semi-finals and final tie.
- (b) All reports, protests, complaints and other matters relating to the playing and conduct of the Women's Challenge Cup Competition (other than referee reports).



18. The Women's Challenge Cup Committee shall submit reports of its meetings to the Football Committee.

## **REFEREES' COMMITTEE**

19. The Referees' Committee shall consist of:
- (a) Six former referees appointed by the Football Committee, at least three of whom shall have served on the FIFA list of International Referees or Assistant Referees at some stage.
  - (b) The Council representative of the NIRA
  - (c) One independent person, who is not a Referee, appointed by the Football Committee who brings appropriate skills to the operation of the Committee, such as knowledge of the Law, education, marketing or people management. Such person shall act as Chair of the Committee and shall be appointed for a term of three years which may be extended by the Football Committee to allow for a maximum period of nine years.
20. The Referees' Committee shall be responsible for all matters pertaining to referees (other than the payment of fees and expenses to referees) including but not limited to recruitment, training, grading, dealing with complaints concerning the application of the Laws of the Game, instruction, appointment of international referees, other relevant appointments and assessment. It shall also annually produce a strategy for the development of refereeing and maintain a register of qualified referees and shall be entitled to remove a referee from the register or suspend him. It shall submit reports of its meetings to the Football Committee and will act on behalf of the Football Committee on any refereeing matter as delegated to it.
21. No person under the age of 16 shall be registered as a referee. Any such applicants shall be deemed to be "youth referees" and shall only referee matches between Clubs made up of players who are aged less than sixteen. Referees Under the age of 18 will only be permitted to officiate at youth matches and must have parental consent to do so.
22. Referees who wish to referee Association Football in Northern Ireland shall apply annually via the Divisional Association for the geographical area in which they reside. Each referee shall pay an annual subscription of £15, and each youth referee £5, 50% of which shall be retained by the Divisional Association registering such referee and the balance shall be forwarded by such Divisional Association to the Association. Subscriptions shall be paid to the Association no later than 1st September in each year. Club Referees (that is qualified referees who are members of a club), who may only officiate at matches involving a club of which they are a member where there is no

appointed referee or where the appointed referee does not appear, may affiliate annually directly to the Association by paying a fee of £5. Referees may not be permitted to officiate in any football match played under the jurisdiction of the Association until such times as they have registered and their subscriptions are received by the Association.

23. Referees shall be required to satisfy the Referees' Committee as to their qualifications for the role, and professional referees shall be remunerated as determined by the Board. Amateur referees shall only receive their traveling expenses. No professional referee can play or hold office in any affiliated club or league, or represent any Member, at any meeting of the Association or of any Organisational member whilst refereeing simultaneously in the same season. On registering referees must declare any interest they have in any affiliated club or league within the Association.

A professional referee shall only be eligible to serve on the IFA Council, subject to Article 8.2 (i) and the Referees' Committee and shall not be eligible to serve on any other Association Committee.

24. In respect of breaches of the Laws of the Game, a referee shall deal with any player or players as specified within those Laws and shall report such players or players to the Association or a Divisional Association as appropriate.
25. All referees are forbidden from taking part, either directly or indirectly, in betting and similar events or transactions connected with football matches in which they are officiating or otherwise involved.

## **PLAYERS**

26. (a) The FIFA Statutes governing the status and transfer of players will have precedence over anything in these Regulations in relation to, but not limited to, player registration, training compensation and contractual stability.
- (b) The IFA shall annually publish Player Registration Regulations, approved by the Football Committee. Such regulations shall set out all conditions of player registration (notwithstanding Regulations 26 (a)) and must be adopted by all members.

All Clubs required to register amateur players must do so in accordance with the IFA Player Registration Regulations and the regulations of their relevant leagues and such players details will be recorded centrally with the Association.

There shall be no direct cost to clubs or affiliated leagues resulting from registration.

27. The word 'play' shall be understood to mean, engage in a match or competition in which the number of players a side is more than five.
28. A professional player shall not be allowed to serve on the Council or any other Association Committee or Commission or on the Council or Committee of any Organisational Member, League or Club or represent any such body at any meeting of the Association or any Organisational Member.
29. A player shall play only for the club with which he is registered and shall not play for any other Club without permission of the Association, but he may play for any team in connection with the Club by which he is registered subject to Competition Rules.
30. It shall be the responsibility of clubs playing in any match to be played under the jurisdiction of the Association to ensure that its players are eligible to play in such a match.
31. Benefit matches may, under special circumstances, be sanctioned by the Football Committee for amateur players. Benefit matches shall not be provided for amateur players unless sanctioned in writing by the Football Committee prior to the match taking place.
32. All players and officials are forbidden from taking part, either directly or indirectly, in betting and similar events or transactions connected with football matches within their own League or competition in which they or their Club are involved.

## **MATCHES**

33. Each Club shall, when required, place its players and ground at the disposal of the Association. Members of such Clubs will not be admitted without payment to International Matches, Cup Semi-Finals or Finals.
34. Any player selected to play in an International or other match arranged by the Association, and without good or sufficient cause refusing to comply with the arrangements of the Football Committee for the playing of the match, or failing to play in such match, may be adjudged by the Football Committee to be guilty of misconduct, and such player, and any Club which may be deemed to have caused, encouraged, aided or abetted such player to refuse to comply with the arrangements, may be dealt with as the Football Committee shall think just.
35. (a) All receipts in respect of International Matches shall be retained by the Association

- (b) All receipts for other matches shall be allocated between the Association and those Clubs engaged in the relevant matches, in such proportions as the Board shall decide.
36. (a) No match (other than matches in women's football) shall be played between 31st May and 1st August of each year, and in the case of the women's football between 1st November and the following 28th February, without written permission of the Football Committee, or where a league has designated that it shall play in a summer season and has received Board permission to do so, except for competitions limited to five or less players on each side and friendly matches including two clubs affiliated to the Association
- (b) No match shall be played within Northern Ireland on a Sunday, unless the two participating clubs and competition organisers agree to do so. No sanction may be taken against any Club, combination of Clubs or individual player not agreeing to participate in Sunday Football. Any complaint or allegation of discrimination shall be referred to the Board for determination
  - (c) No match shall be played involving a club from outside the jurisdiction of the Association without written permission of the Football Committee, except for matches in official competitions organised by UEFA or FIFA
  - (d) No match shall be played commencing less than 5 hours prior to the kick-off of an "A" International, where the same are being played in Northern Ireland, or (in the town or city in which it is being played) an Irish Cup Semi-Final or Final or Women's Challenge Cup Final, without written permission of the Football Committee.
37. The Association will organise six National Challenge Cup Competitions
- (a) The Irish Challenge Cup Competition
  - (b) The Intermediate Challenge Cup Competition
  - (c) The IFA Women's Challenge Cup Competition
  - (d) The Junior Challenge Cup Competition
  - (e) The Harry Cavan Youth Challenge Cup Competition
  - (f) The Irish FA Girls' Challenge Cup
- The competitions shall be organised and managed within the committee structure of the Association and shall in all circumstances take precedence over any Divisional Association fixture or any League fixture. Divisional Association competition fixtures will in all circumstances take precedent over any League fixture.

## **CLUBS AND COMBINATIONS**

38. The formation of any league or other organisation that includes a Club requires the prior approval of the Board.

39. All Clubs shall play under the Articles and all Clubs playing under any articles or rules other than those of the Association, or playing with clubs not members of the Association, without the permission of the Association shall be liable to be expelled, suspended, fined or otherwise dealt with as the Association shall think fit. This Regulation shall not apply to individual amateur players.
40. Any Member shall have the right to obtain the opinion of the Board on any point connected with these Articles (or any rules and regulations made thereunder) or the Laws of the Game on payment of such fee as the Board may from time to time prescribe.
41. Resolutions and decisions of the Board shall be binding upon Members.
42. All League and Organisational Members shall be composed of Clubs (who shall be members). Their rules shall be approved by the Board annually. Such rules shall be submitted before the 30th June (with the exception of Women's football where the submission date shall be 31st January) in each year or such later date as the Board may approve, and if not so submitted the then existing rules shall be deemed to have continued until the Board shall otherwise direct. The Board shall have the power at any time to make enquiries into the working of such Leagues and Organisational Members, and to deal with them as they may consider necessary.  
All members must meet all safeguarding standards as set down by the Association from time to time.
43. Any Club taking part in a competition not authorized by its League or organizational Member will be liable to be fined, suspended, expelled or otherwise dealt with as the Board shall think just.

## **DUAL INTEREST IN CLUBS**

44. (a) Except with the prior written consent of the Board no person, being a member of a Member club of the Association, may at the same time, either directly or indirectly
- (i) Be a member of another club
  - (ii) Be involved in any capacity whatsoever in the management or administration of another club
  - (iii) Have any power whatsoever to influence the management or administration of another club provided such written consent shall not be required in the circumstances where a person is a member of two or more connected Member Clubs or is involved in any capacity whatsoever in the management or administration of two or more connected Member Clubs or has any power whatsoever to influence the management or administration of two or more connected Member Clubs.

- (b) In exercising their authority to consider any such request the Board shall have regard to the need to promote and safeguard the interests, integrity and public profile of Association Football, its players, spectators and others concerned with the game, and shall have regard to the Articles, Regulations and Rules of the Association and to the constitution and rules of FIFA and UEFA, and accordingly any such consent shall be subject to such conditions as the Board shall consider appropriate in the circumstances.
- (c) For the purpose of this regulation 44 “connected Member Clubs” means clubs that are governed by or under the control of the same legal entity or clubs that are governed by the rules and/or constitution of or under the control of the same unincorporated association.

## **INTEGRITY OF MATCHES AND COMPETITIONS AND MATCH-FIXING**

- 45. All persons bound by IFA’s rules and regulations must refrain from any behaviour that damages or could damage the integrity of matches and competitions and must cooperate fully with IFA at all times in its efforts to combat such behaviour.
- 46. The integrity of matches and competitions is violated, for example, by anyone:
  - a) who acts in a manner that is likely to exert an unlawful or undue influence on the course and / or result of a match or competition with a view to gaining an advantage for himself or a third party;
  - b) who participates directly or indirectly in betting or similar activities relating to competition matches or who has a direct or indirect financial interest in such activities;
  - c) who uses or provides others with information which is not publicly available, which is obtained through his position in football, and damages or could damage the integrity of a match or competition;
  - d) who does not immediately and voluntarily inform IFA if approached in connection with activities aimed at influencing in a unlawful or undue manner the course and/or result of a match or competition;
  - e) who does not immediately and voluntarily report to IFA any behaviour he is aware of that may fall within the scope of this article.
- 47. If filed after the relevant competition stage has finished, complaints regarding match-fixing can have no impact on the sporting result of the competition or match in question and, therefore, the match cannot be replayed, unless the competent disciplinary body decides otherwise.

48. The Anti-Doping rules of the Irish Football Association are the UK Anti-Doping Rules, published by UK Anti-Doping, as amended from time to time. Such rules shall take effect and be construed as rules of the Irish Football Association.

Persons participating in the sport of Football under the jurisdiction of the Irish Football Association are bound by and must comply in all respects with the Anti-Doping Rules.

The Irish Football Association shall recognise and take all necessary steps to give full force and effect within its jurisdiction to the Anti-Doping Rules and to any sanction(s) imposed under the Anti-Doping Rules.

# IRISH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION



## Standing Orders

Updated 17 February 2022



## DEFINITIONS

1. In these standing orders, except where the context otherwise requires, the definitions and explanations contained in Articles 1 and 2.1 of the Articles of Association shall apply mutatis mutandis. For the purpose of the Standing Orders the term 'committee' shall include Council, save as Council otherwise determines.

## PROCEDURE AT MEETINGS

2. Meetings of the Board for transaction of ordinary business shall be held on such dates and times and at such places as it shall decide.
3. Any committee meetings shall be held at such dates and times and at such places as the committee decides or as the Board directs. Meetings may, if the Chairperson so determines, be held electronically or by hybrid means during which all members taking part can hear each other. The quorum for meetings shall be half of current members (unless otherwise stated in the Articles, these Standing Orders, the Football Regulations or the Committee Terms of Reference).
4. An agenda setting out Board or committee business shall be prepared and circulated to members not less than three working days before the day of meeting. A meeting may be held at shorter notice if all members entitled to be present so agree.
5. All other requirements with regard to notice of meetings shall be as set out in Article 19.
6. Decisions shall be taken on a show of hands at all meetings unless a director calls for a recorded vote.
7. A vote by way of proxy may be used by a Board member on behalf of another Board member. Any question as to the validity of a proxy at a meeting shall be determined by that meeting, whose decision shall be final. No proxy vote shall be allowed at committee meetings.
8. The chairman of any meeting shall have a casting vote save in respect of a particular meeting (or part of a meeting) if, in accordance with the Articles or these Standing Orders, the chairman is not eligible to vote for the purposes of that meeting (or part of a meeting).
9. The members of the Board in each year shall elect one of their independent members to be the chairman and one of their members to be vice chairman. Each chairman and vice chairman shall hold office for one year but shall be available for re-election for a maximum period of five years. The Association will also have the discretion to extend their terms for a maximum of one further year when it is considered necessary for maintaining continuity and experience on the Board.

10. The members of any of the Association committees, (unless otherwise stated in the Articles, these Standing Orders, the Football Regulations or the committee Terms of Reference) in each year shall elect from amongst its members a chairman and a vice chairman. Each chairman and vice chairman shall hold office for one year but shall be available for re-election for a maximum period of five years. The Board shall compile a register of the chairmen of all Committees and all newly appointed chairmen shall attend an induction session to prepare them for their duties. The chairman of the Football Committee shall be the President from time to time.
11. If the chairman and vice chairman are not present within ten minutes of the time appointed for holding a meeting, the members present shall choose one of their number to be chairman of that meeting.

## **ORDER OF BUSINESS AT MEETINGS**

12. The order of business at meetings shall be:
  - Declarations of interest
  - Apologies for non-attendance
  - Approval of the minutes of the preceding meeting (including electronic /hybrid meetings), and signature by the Chairman
  - Matters arising
  - Chairman's remarks
  - Report from the Chief Executive (in the case of the Board)
  - Reports from committees
  - Such other business as may be determined in advance by the Chairman
  - Any other business
  - Date and time of next meeting.

## **RULES OF DEBATE**

13. A member when speaking shall address the chairman. Where two or more members attempt to speak, the chairman will decide the order of their addressing the meeting. No speech shall exceed three minutes except by consent of the chairman.
14. A member shall direct his speech to the question under discussion or to a point of order. A point of order shall relate only to an alleged breach of an identified standing order. The ruling of the chairman on a point of order shall be final.

15. When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except the following:
  1. To amend or adjourn the motion
  2. That the question be now put
  3. That a member be no longer heard
  4. That a member leave the meeting.
16. If unfinished business remains after a period of 2 1/2 hours, the meeting shall stand adjourned unless either a majority present agrees that this standing order be suspended or any failure to comply with this standing order is accidental.

## **RECORD OF MEETINGS**

17. The Board and each committee shall keep minutes in some permanent, retrievable and verifiable format of their proceedings at their meetings. Without prejudice to the generality thereof, such minutes shall include but shall not be limited to the date and venue of the meeting, the names of those attending, the result of any election held, the text of and result of all resolutions proposed and other relevant deliberations.
18. Except with the prior approval of the Board or the relevant committee, no audio or video recorder or other instrument shall be used to record discussion at a meeting.
19. To enable Council to hold the Board accountable it shall receive verbal reports of Board meetings and the Chairman of the Board, or his/her nominee, shall provide such updates at Council meetings.

## **INTERESTS OF BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

20. Board and committee members shall have regard to Article 21.1 and disclose interests accordingly.
21. The Association shall keep a register recording conflicts/declarations of interest by Board and committee members and employees in any entity in which they or a close relative may be concerned and which could give rise to a conflict or duality of interest. A close relative is defined as father, mother, stepfather, stepmother, son, daughter, stepson, stepdaughter or spouse.
22. Board and committee members and employees are required to inform the Association of any new or changed interest, direct or indirect, pecuniary or otherwise.

## **INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS**

23. All reports made or minutes kept by any committee, and all documents presented to that committee, shall be open for inspection by any member of that committee.

## **AUTHORITY OF BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

24. No member shall enter either orally or in writing into any contract or admit liability on behalf of the Association without the authority of the Board.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY OF PAPERS**

25. Board and committee members attending any meeting shall respect the confidentiality of all papers presented to that meeting or matters raised and decisions taken at that meeting.
26. The Association is subject to legislation protecting data held relating to individuals. Board and committee members and staff must not disclose such data for any purpose not permitted by the legislation.

## **BOARD DELEGATION**

27. The Board shall establish a Chairman's Committee, the full details of which can be found within the Scheme of Delegation/Terms of Reference approved by the Board.
28. The Board shall further prepare and keep under review a written Scheme of Delegation authorising the Chief Executive to take decisions in defined areas, up to approved monetary limits, without recourse to the Board.

## **REPORTING**

29. The Board shall ensure that it has a full understanding of the reporting obligations contained in the Project Documentation and shall ensure compliance, in a timely fashion, with these obligations in accordance with the terms of the Project Documentation. "Project Documentation" has the meaning given to it in the funding agreement entered into by the Association, the IFA Stadium Development Company Limited and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure in relation to the redevelopment of Windsor Park Stadium.

## **AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE**

30. The Board shall establish an Audit and Risk Committee and provide it with terms of reference deriving from relevant published guidance. The latest version of the terms of reference contains full details of this Committee.
31. Included in the Committee's responsibilities shall be detailed consideration of the annual accounts for recommendation to the Board and compliance with the reporting obligations set out in the Project Documentation and considered in Standing Order 30 above.

## **COMMITTEES**

32. Each committee will act for one year from the annual general meeting of the Association to its next annual general meeting.

33. No person shall be elected, appointed, nominated or remain as a member of a committee if, at the time of the election, appointment or nomination, that person has served on that committee for a total of 15 years, whether or not consecutive. This limitation shall be modified in the case of any member of a committee on the date of passing of these Articles who shall instead cease to be eligible for election, appointment or nomination to that committee on the completion of 15 years' service following the date of the passing of these Articles or, if earlier, the Annual General Meeting following their 75th birthday. The foregoing limitations shall not apply to members of the Board.

## **CONDUCT AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

34. Board and committee members shall observe the Association's Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics, a copy of which must be signed and returned to the nominating body for onward submission to the Association in advance of taking up post.
35. The Board shall appoint one of its members to be a senior independent director (as recommended by the UK Corporate Governance Code) to provide a sounding board for the chairman, to serve as an intermediary for the other directors when necessary and to be available to members of the Association who have concerns which contact through the normal channels of Chairman or Chief Executive has failed to resolve or for which such contact is inappropriate.
36. Members shall receive induction on joining the Board and undertake training relevant to their responsibilities, provide detail thereof for training records maintained by the Association and submit themselves for annual appraisal by the Chairman. In the case of the President, Deputy President and the Chairman of the Board, training shall include media presentation and public speaking.
37. Annual appraisal of the Chairman shall be undertaken by the senior independent director.
38. The Board shall agree and adopt a director induction, training and appraisal process for each of the Board members from time to time.
39. The Board and each of its committees shall also evaluate annually their own collective performance.
40. The Association should ensure that terms of appointment for each director are agreed, and that a service agreement is signed with effect from the date of appointment. The service agreement shall also include a termination clause within it.
41. To support the process of election of Board members, the Chairman of the Board shall be entitled to commend to Council any candidate who the Board believes would have a particular contribution to make to its work (taking account of the composition, skills and experience of the Board) and giving reasons for this endorsement. This is without prejudice to the right of other eligible candidates to present themselves for election.

42. The Chairman shall prepare a statement of compliance with corporate governance standards for inclusion in the Association's annual report.
43. Board members must show commitment to their responsibilities and as evidence their attendances at Board meetings shall be summarised in the annual report.
44. To ensure unambiguous governance arrangements the President and Chairman of the Board (together with the Deputy President and Vice Chairman) shall observe their respective roles as defined in Appendix 1 to these standing orders.

## **SELECTION OF INDEPENDENT BOARD MEMBERS**

45. The Board should lead the process for board appointments in accordance with the Articles.
46. On seeking to appoint an independent director the board shall produce and agree the selection criteria (following an evaluation of the balance of skills, experience, independence and knowledge on the board) and a public advertisement.
47. Each applicant or nominee shall undergo a comprehensive interview and selection process. The interview panel shall be determined by the Board and shall include an independent panel member sourced from outside the Association. The process shall be validated by an independent person or body.
48. The preferred candidate shall be proposed, and recommended to the Council for endorsement, by the Chairman. The appointment should be endorsed by the Council at a Council meeting in accordance with Article 8.5(e).

## **ALTERATIONS OF STANDING ORDERS**

49. Standing orders may be altered by Board resolution, which shall require not less than three days' notice thereof to all Board members.

## **DISTRIBUTION OF STANDING ORDERS**

50. A printed copy of these standing orders, including a copy of the Articles, Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics, shall be given to each Board and Committee member. A copy of the Code of Conduct/Code of Ethics must be signed and returned to the nominating body for onward submission to the Association in advance of taking up post. Printed copies shall also be available for reference during office hours at the premises of the Association.
51. For the purposes of this Standing Order the following definitions shall apply:  
"IFA Bodies" – the Board, the Council and the Committees of the Association.

“Independent Dispute Resolution Panel” – a panel of three persons to determine a dispute between IFA Bodies and who are independent of and have no connection (direct or indirect) with the IFA Bodies or any of them and shall act impartially.

“IDRP” means the Independent Dispute Resolution Panel.

“Panel List” – means the list of persons appointed by the IFA Board who have volunteered to sit on an IDRP when they are appointed to do so.

- 51.1 If a dispute (“the” or “a Dispute”) arises between IFA Bodies they shall use all reasonable endeavours to find a resolution (including the resolution of the Dispute by conciliation).
- 51.2 In the event of the Dispute being unresolved within such time as determined by the Board it may in addition to other powers set out under Article 10 of the Articles of Association, refer the matter to an IDRP to determine the Dispute (“the Referral”).
- 51.3.1 The Chairperson of the IDRP (“the Chairperson”) shall have a legal background.
- 51.3.2 The parties shall endeavour to agree the appointment of the Chairperson to the IDRP within ten working days of the date of the Referral (“the Referral Period”).
- 51.3.3 In the event that the parties are unable to agree the appointment of the Chairperson within the Referral Period the Chairperson shall be nominated by the President for the time being of the Law Society in Northern Ireland on the application of either of the parties to the Dispute or the IFA Board.
- 51.4.1 Each of the IFA Bodies involved in the Dispute shall nominate a member from the Panel List to be appointed to the IDRP within the Referral Period.
- 51.4.2 If any of the IFA Bodies involved in the Dispute fails to nominate a person from the Panel List to sit on the IDRP within ten working days of the date of the Referral the IFA Board shall appoint the member of the IDRP from the Panel List on behalf of that IFA Body.
- 51.4.3 Each person appointed to the IDRP shall prior to his or her acceptance of the role on the IDRP declare all conflicts of interest which he or she has.
- 51.4.4 In the event of a referral to an IDRP and any of the parties to that referral perceives or considers that any person appointed to the IDRP has a conflict of interest, or if any person appointed to the IDRP has a conflict of interest, the parties shall be afforded an opportunity to object to the appointment of that person. If any of the parties object within five working days of being notified of the constitution of the IDRP, to the appointment of a member of the IDRP who has an actual or perceived conflict of interest, that person shall stand down and the IFA Body who made the nomination shall within five working days nominate a replacement from the Panel List to be appointed to the IDRP.

- 51.4.5 The parties shall be notified of the names of the members of the IDRP appointed and the Chairperson.
- 51.5 The IFA Bodies involved in a Dispute may make submissions in writing to the IDRP. The IDRP shall consider all relevant documentation made available to it and may make further enquiries as appropriate.
- 51.6 The IDRP shall act as experts and not as arbitrators and shall determine any question relating to any relevant document or issue arising but only for the purposes of resolving the Dispute.
- 51.7 In so far as they are able the relevant IFA Bodies shall procure that the IDRP is given such assistance as is reasonably required for the purpose of resolving the Dispute and provide access to all documents relating to the Dispute that have been requested by the IDRP. Any failure to reply within a specified timescale, (without just or reasonable cause) to correspondence sent by the IDRP will render the IFA Body to whom such correspondence is sent to be in breach of this Standing Order and render the IFA body to such penalties as the IDRP shall deem fit to impose.
- 51.8 Any communication from one party to the IDRP must be sent to the other parties.
- 51.9 The IDRP shall use all reasonable endeavours to issue its determination to the parties within [thirty] days of its appointment but it may extend this timeframe if it considers it reasonable to do so.
- 51.10 The IDRP's determination shall be in writing, reasoned and final and binding upon the IFA Bodies involved in the Dispute who shall have no right to any form of appeal review or recourse to any court, arbitration or judicial authority.
- 51.11 The IDRP shall settle its own procedures save that the Chairperson shall have a second or casting vote. The IDRP shall be serviced and supported by IFA administrative staff.
- 51.12 Apart from the determination of the IDRP, all documents, submissions and statements submitted to the IDRP and between the IFA Bodies shall be confidential.
- 51.13.1 The Chairperson shall be entitled to receive remuneration for his role at an hourly rate agreed by the IFA Board.
- 51.13.2 The other members of the IDRP shall not receive any remuneration. However, all members of the IDRP will be entitled to reasonable and properly vouched out of pocket expenses.
- 51.14 All members of the IDRP shall be subject to the IFA Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics as laid down in the IFA Articles and the Standing Orders.



## **APPENDIX 1**

### **ROLE DESCRIPTIONS – PRESIDENT AND CHAIRMAN**

#### **President**

The role of the President is as an ambassador for the sport. His/her duties are to:

- Act as a senior statesperson in leading the IFA, speaking with authority on matters relating to the game, but not part of the politics of the Association
- Make his/her experience and understanding of the ethos and interests of the game available to the Board
- Support the Board and its Chairman and, without limiting his contribution to debate, endorse any decisions of the Board regardless of his/her own private views
- Attend major football events and functions as the IFA representative
- Represent the IFA at FIFA, UEFA, and IFAB meetings
- Together with the Chief Executive communicate with the media as the principal spokespersons on football matters.

#### **Chairman**

The role of the Chairman is to lead the Board in setting strategy and in overseeing the management of the IFA as a business. His/her duties are to:

- Provide leadership, drive and direction to all Board members to include the setting of annual objectives and completion of annual appraisals as set out in these Standing Orders
- Lead the Board in setting strategy and in ensuring that the targets contained in that strategy are achieved
- Together with the President and Chief Executive, represent the IFA externally on all matters of strategy
- Report on behalf of the Board to Council and General Meetings and to DCAL (as agreed with DCAL from time to time)
- Ensure that the work of the Board takes proper account of views expressed by Council
- Support and lead the Chief Executive in ensuring that the Association is managed in accordance with the decisions of the Board
- Ensure that the Association operates within the terms of its Articles of Association and observes high standards of corporate governance.

#### **Deputy President and Vice Chairman**

The roles of the Deputy President and Vice Chairman are to support respectively the President and the Chairman. They are therefore subject to the corresponding duties and requirements set out above.

# CUP COMPETITION RULES



## SEASON 2021-2022

# CHALLENGE CUP COMPETITION RULES

## 1. Annual Competition

- a. The Cup shall be called the 'Irish Football Association Challenge Cup' and shall be governed by the Challenge Cup Committee, hereinafter known as the Committee.
- b. The Competition for the Cup shall be annual and open to Clubs in full membership of the NIFL Premiership/NIFL Championship (hereinafter Senior Clubs) and such other Clubs as may be permitted to compete. Such other clubs must also compete in the Intermediate Cup Competition during the current season. Any club withdrawing from the Intermediate Cup and without sufficient reason for so doing shall be debarred from competing in the Challenge Cup for the ensuing three seasons. **Entry for permission to compete in the competition shall be made online via Comet FMS, not later than 30 June and shall be accompanied by an entry fee of £50.00.** It shall be the sole responsibility of clubs to enter in order to participate in the competition. This application shall affect a club for one season only. The Competition shall be conducted under the Articles of Association, the Laws of the Game, and these Rules. The Committee may at its discretion accept sponsorship for the Competition or any part thereof.

## 2. Committee may call upon players or clubs objected to for proof of qualification.

Notwithstanding anything in any Rule, if the Committee, has any doubt at any time and whether arising out of a Protest or otherwise as to the qualification of any player taking part in the Competition, they shall have power to call upon such player and/or Club to which he belongs, or for which he played, to prove that he is qualified according to the Rules. Any Club found guilty of fielding an ineligible player in any round of the competition and prior to the next round being played, up to and including the semi-final tie may be fined up to a maximum sum of £250.00. Furthermore, the said club will be dismissed from the competition and the club losing the game in such circumstances shall replace the dismissed club and progress to the next round.

## 3. Eligible Players

- a. The competing teams shall number eleven players each. While the players in each team may be changed, no individual shall play for more than one Club in the Challenge Cup in the same season.
- b. To be eligible to participate in the Challenge Cup all players must be registered by their clubs, in accordance with the IFA Professional Game Player Registration Regulations.
- c. For the avoidance of any doubt to be eligible to play in this competition a player must also be eligible to participate for his club in the relevant league competition.
- d. Clubs who play in a purely amateur league competition and who are permitted to register players to participate in such purely amateur competition outside the following registration periods shall not be

permitted to play any player so registered in this competition until the commencement of the subsequent registration period. The registration periods are:

First registration period - 9 June – 31 August

Second registration period - 1 January – 31 January

- e. No player who is registered by his club after 31st January shall be eligible to participate in that same season.

#### **4. Completion of team sheet/match card**

- a. Each Club shall complete the official team sheet by including the names of players and Team officials (a maximum of 6 officials) and their functions taking part in each match (including the name of the nominated substitutes) and confirm the lineup via Comet FMS 1 hour prior to kick-off for matches from round one to round four and 75 minutes prior to kick-off from round 5 to the final tie.
- b. Players' names must correspond with the numbers assigned on the official team sheet. The Club Comet user shall be considered to verify the accuracy of the information provided on the team sheet via Comet FMS.

#### **5. Substitute Players**

- a. A club may at its discretion use three substitute players at any time in any tie, except to replace a player who has been expelled from the game by the referee. The substitutions can only be made when play is stopped for any reason and the referee has given permission. Only three substitutions by each side will be permitted in any tie and the substitute players shall be nominated prior to the commencement of the tie.
- b. In all matches of the qualifying phase Clubs may nominate a maximum of five substitute players, from which three substitutions shall be permitted.
- c. In matches from Round 1 onwards, clubs may nominate a maximum of seven substitute players, from which three substitutions shall be permitted.
- d. Exceptionally, a fourth substitute may take part exclusively during extra time in all rounds of the competition.

#### **6. Players must wear registered colours**

- a. The players in each competing team must wear the registered colours of the club for which they are playing, except when opposing teams have similar colours in which case the visiting club shall change.
- b. In a semi-final or final tie, or any other tie played on neutral ground, where opposing teams have similar colours both teams will change unless they are agreed that only one need to do so. The colours of the club shall be taken as the colour of the shirt, shorts and socks. A goalkeeper must wear a shirt of different colour, and said shirt must be of a colour distinctive from that of his opponents. Referees shall have power to instruct a Club to change any part of their playing kit if he considers the colour not quite distinctive from that of his opponents, and the Referee shall have power to deal with any player refusing to comply with this instruction.

## **7. The duration of a match**

- a. The duration of each match shall be 90 minutes. The match must be started at the time appointed by the Committee, but no protest will be upheld for late starting, unless the Committee is satisfied that the result of the match was affected by such delay.
- b. The referee shall have power to allow additional time for stoppages, his decision thereon to be final. If a match has been stopped by the referee, before the completion of the time specified, for any reason stated in Law 5 of the Laws of the Game, the Committee shall have power to deal with the matter as they may determine.

## **8. Competition format**

- a. The Committee shall determine the competition format.
- b. In order to determine the additional clubs to join the Senior Clubs in Round 1 of the Competition, the Committee may play a qualifying round or rounds of ties (qualifying phase). In the event of the Committee deciding to play a qualifying round or rounds, it shall then determine which clubs will be invited to participate. Ties shall be played on the ground of the first drawn club (subject to the conditions detailed in rule 10). A player who plays for a club in a qualifying round(s) cannot play for another in the competition during the same season.
- c. In the event that it is not possible to conclude the qualifying phase, due to restrictions imposed by the NI Executive or Irish FA Board, it shall be at the discretion of the Committee to determine which clubs shall be invited to join the twenty four (24) Senior Clubs in Round 1 of the competition.

## **9. Byes may be given**

The Committee may draw subsequent round or rounds before the winners of the previous rounds have been declared, and the winners according to such draw shall compete against each as in the previous round. The Committee shall have power to exempt any number of Clubs from any number of rounds, and byes may be given so that the required number of additional clubs is obtained to play in Round 1 where the Senior Clubs enter the Competition.

## **10. Entry levels**

There shall be two entry levels in the competition.

- i. Clubs playing intermediate status football shall enter the competition at the first entry level – the qualifying phase.
- ii. Clubs playing in the NIFL Premiership/NIFL Championship shall enter the competition at the second entry level – Round 1.

## **11. Draw after Bye**

In the event of a club getting a bye in any of the drawings, the Committee at the subsequent drawing, shall first draw a Club to play against it from the lot, the two shall again be put in the ballot-box and again drawn, and the club first out of the box shall have choice of ground (subject to the conditions detailed in rule 10); but the Committee may so arrange that four clubs compete in the semi-finals.

## **12. Method of Drawing**

- a. In principle the club that is first drawn in the ballot shall play at their registered home venue. However, should an intermediate club that enters the competition at the first or second entry level be drawn against a senior club the tie will be played at the registered home venue of the senior club. As an exception to this rule, NIFL Premier Intermediate League clubs who have obtained a Championship Licence will be permitted to host senior clubs at their registered home venue.
- b. The first drawn club may forfeit home advantage with the agreement of their opponents and in such circumstances written confirmation of same must be notified to the Secretary by both clubs not later than 5 days following the date of the relevant draw.
- c. Each club entering the competition should play their home games on their registered home ground (unless otherwise directed in exceptional circumstances by the Committee, Health and Safety authorities or the PSNI). Any match expenses incurred in staging a game at a neutral venue, in any round prior to the semi- finals and final, will be the responsibility of the club that was first drawn in the ballot.
- d. Should a club having a registered home ground which, for whatever reason be unavailable (excluding inclement weather conditions) be drawn at home, they must travel to the ground of their opponents. Any match expenses incurred in staging a game in any round prior to the semi- finals and final will be the responsibility of the club that was first drawn in the ballot.

## **13. Kicks from the Penalty Mark**

- a. In the event of any match resulting in a draw extra time of fifteen minutes each way shall be played, and should the score be equal at the end of this period of extra time, the match shall be decided by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with the conditions approved by the International FA Board.
- b. However, for Season 21/22, in light of the worldwide Pandemic the Challenge Cup Committee retain the right to order that matches in any given round shall, if resulting in a draw be decided by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with the conditions approved by the International FA Board with no extra time required.

## **14. Venues for Semi-finals and Finals**

In the semi-finals the grounds shall be chosen by the Committee and shall be neutral unless otherwise determined by the Committee who may, upon request, permit the match or matches to be played at the registered home venue of either of the participating teams. The final tie shall be played at the National Football Stadium, Windsor Park unless otherwise determined by the Committee. Should any club participate in the final tie at their registered ground no ground rent will be payable.

## **15. Annual Returns**

Under article 4 of the Articles of Association each club must forward, to the Association on or before 31st July each year, the following:-

1. Whether ground is public or private
2. Situation of ground
3. Colours of Club shirt, shorts and socks.
4. The name and address of Secretary

## **16. Private Ground**

- a. NOTE: A private ground shall be taken to be a ground over which the Club has sole control during the match, properly enclosed so as to prevent spectators entering the ground except by admission gates, and in which the dressing rooms and other appurtenances shall be up to standard required by the Committee. A fee must be charged for all Cup Tie matches and the minimum admission prices shall be fixed annually by the Committee. In this Competition the dimensions of the field of play shall be:

Maximum length - 120 metres

Minimum length - 90 metres

Maximum breadth - 90 metres

Minimum breadth - 55 metres

- b. For Season 2021/22 the Challenge Cup Committee have agreed to waive the field of play dimensions and accept those set down in the Intermediate Ground Criteria. The Challenge Cup Committee have accepted that all clubs participating in the Intermediate cup 2021/22 have met the required ground criteria for the Competition. However, for season 2022/23 the above criteria will be strictly adhered to.

## **17. Clubs shall be drawn in lots**

The lots shall be drawn and Competition matches played as the Committee may determine, and immediately after each drawing the Secretary shall intimate to each of the clubs drawn the name and the colours of the Club it is drawn against and the date upon which the tie is to be played.

## **18. Clubs failing to play**

- a. Any club refusing or failing to play the club against which it has been drawn on the date fixed by the committee (except for reasons due to circumstances relating to the COVID 19 Pandemic which are particularly set out in clauses b and c below) and without sufficient reasons for doing so, shall be adjudged to have lost the match, and otherwise dealt with as the Committee may determine.
- b. If a group of players of a team are placed into mandatory quarantine or required to self-isolate in accordance with the regulations or mandatory guidance issued by the UK Government or Northern Ireland Assembly or other relevant authority arising from the COVID 19 Pandemic, the match involving that team will go ahead as scheduled as long as the team has at least 13 players available (including at least one goalkeeper). If, however,

a team is not in a position to field a team, with the above mentioned number of players (13 players including at least one goal-keeper), the match will be re-scheduled to a date to be fixed by the Secretary to the Committee who shall have power to assign and re-schedule the match to a neutral venue if the Secretary to the Committee deems it appropriate. In the event that the match is re-scheduled the home team will remain responsible for all of the organisation of the re-scheduled fixture and all related costs. In the event that a match cannot be played or completed on the date appointed for the re-scheduled fixture the Challenge Cup Committee will have authority to make a decision on the matter. The team that is responsible for the match not taking place or not being played in full will be declared to have forfeited the match by the Challenge IFA Cup Committee unless the Committee comes to the conclusion that both or neither of the teams are responsible for the match not taking place or not being played in full. In this event the match will not be declared as forfeited and the outcome of the match will be decided by drawing lots carried out by the Secretary to the Committee in the presence of members of the Committee.

- c. If a Club is unable to field a team (13 players including at least one goalkeeper) due to circumstances relating to the COVID-19 Pandemic set out in clause b above the Club shall as soon as practicable provide the Challenge Cup Committee with evidence that the player[s] concerned have been placed into mandatory quarantine or who are required to self-isolate and the relevant dates of the quarantine/self isolation. The Challenge Cup Committee will require all relevant evidence from the Club including, if appropriate, the following:
  - i. Details that a player has received positive test results and the notification from the appropriate authority.
  - ii. Evidence that a player has been contacted through “Track and Trace” and asked to isolate (together with the notification from the appropriate body).
  - iii. Evidence that a player has booked a COVID test and/or is waiting for a COVID test result.
  - iv. Evidence that a player is self-isolating due to a family member, colleague or friend having received a positive COVID test result.
- d. The Club shall notify the Challenge Cup Committee as soon as it becomes aware that it will be unable to field a team. All evidence shall be sent electronically by email to the Challenge Cup Committee. The Club shall forward the written consent from the Players or persons concerned confirming the Players’ and/or persons’ agreement to the information/documents being furnished to the Challenge Cup Committee along with the Club’s evidence.



## **19. When postponed games must be played**

In the event of a tie prior to the round where the Senior Clubs enter being postponed the clubs must forthwith arrange to meet on the following Saturday. In the event of a tie from where the Senior Clubs enter to the Quarter Finals being postponed the clubs must arrange to meet on a date to be determined by the Committee. In the case of such a postponed tie should only one of the clubs concerned have floodlights available at its registered home venue the rearranged tie shall be played at the venue with floodlights. In the case of protested ties the Committee shall decide the dates and venues. Should either club refuse to compete, the club shall be removed from the competition, and otherwise dealt with as the Committee may determine.

## **20. Match Officials**

- a. In all matches the match officials shall be appointed by the IFA administration.
  - i. In matches up to and including Round 4 only a Referee shall be appointed.
  - ii. In matches from Round 5 onwards a Referee, two Assistant Referees and a 4th Official shall be appointed.
  - iii. A Reserve Assistant Referee will also be appointed to final tie.
- b. On points of fact connected with the play over which the Assistant Referees have control, their decision should be given by flags. The Referee must use a whistle. In the question of interpretation of these rules or the laws of the game, an appeal may be made to the Committee, but the Referee's decision must be acted on in the field.
- c. In all matches of the qualifying phase it will be the responsibility of the home team to pay the match officials fees and expenses on the day of the match.
- d. In Rounds 1, 2 and the Quarter Finals the costs of referees will be split equally between the two competing clubs. The Association will pay the referees directly and will deduct such referee costs from the prize money payment owing to clubs when they are dismissed from the competition.
- e. In the semi-final and final matches the Association will be responsible for making payment to the match officials.

## **21. Protests**

- a. Protests must be received by the Secretary of the Association per special delivery letter\* bearing post mark within two days after the cause of the protest accompanied by a deposit of £100 which shall be forfeited in all cases where the protest has not been sustained.
- b. Protests against ineligible players must give the names of players protested against, and cause of protest.
- c. A copy of the protest must also be sent by special delivery letter\* to the club protested against bearing post mark within two days after the cause of the protest.

- d. In no case will the deposit be returned after received by the Secretary of the Association unless the protest is upheld or withdrawn.

***\* The proof of posting of such special delivery letter shall be the postmark on the certificate of posting.***

## **22. Protest – objection to ground**

- a. In the event of one of the competing clubs protesting that the ground of its opponent is not private, or fit and proper to be played upon, a committee of inspection shall be appointed by the Committee to investigate and decide the question. The protest must be lodged with the Secretary of the Association by Special Delivery letter five days previous to the date fixed for the match together with an inspection fee of £100.
- b. In the event of a protest not being sustained the fee will be forfeited, but should the protest be sustained, the club protested against shall be required to refund the same through the Secretary of the Association previous to the tie being played. No protest will be entertained after a match as to the privacy of a ground, provided there has been sufficient time to enable clubs to take advantage of this Rule.

## **23. Objections to ground, etc.**

Goal-nets must be used in all cup ties. Any objection to ground, goal-posts, goal-nets or ball must be lodged in writing by a responsible club official on the day with the Referee before the game, and the Referee shall have power to have such objections made right before the game starts.

## **24. Referee to inspect Ground**

- a. In case of unfavourable weather conditions the Referee, to be appointed by the Association, shall inspect the ground not less than three hours previous to the scheduled time of kick-off or earlier if requested by the home club, and shall immediately give his decision as to the fitness of ground for play.
- b. No game shall be postponed without an inspection by a referee appointed by the Association, who shall take due cognizance of local advice and the travelling supporters.
- c. In the event of a Referee not arriving at the ground by the time of kick off the match shall be postponed and the clubs must agree to re-arrange the match in accordance with rule 16.

## **25. Intimidation by spectators**

When it can be proven that the partisans of the club which has the choice of ground systematically interfere with the play of opposing clubs, by using improper language or inciting the home players to use violence to their opponents, on the application of the club which is to play against said club the committee shall have power to order the match to be played on another ground, neutral if possible.

## **26. Powers of Committee**

- a. All questions of eligibility or qualification of competitors, or of application of these rules or the laws of the game, shall be referred to the committee and they shall have power to withhold the cup and medals or mementoes.

- b. The Committee shall also have the power to deal with any other matter not provided for in these rules.

## **27. Agreement for Cup**

It shall be the responsibility of the winning club to return the cup to the Association on or before the 1st day of March or earlier if so requested by the Association. The winning club shall return the cup in good or like condition and shall be liable for any costs in the event that the cup is destroyed by fire, or lost, or damaged by any other accident whilst in the possession of the club.

## **28. Medals**

The Association will present medals only to the participants in the final tie. For the avoidance of any doubt this shall include the 18 players, Manager and Secretary of each club.

## **29. Admission to matches**

A fee must be charged at all cup tie matches and the minimum admission charges will be determined annually by the Committee.

## **30. Division of receipts up to Semi-Final**

- a. In all ties previous to Semi-Finals, the gate receipts after payment of the costs pertaining to referees, professional security company, turnstiles, ambulance/first aid cover, ticketing or live streaming (if approved by the Committee) shall be equally divided between the two competing Clubs. (The home club shall ensure that copies of the receipts for such costs are furnished to the away team upon request).
- b. Payment shall be made to the away team within 7 days following the date on which the match was played, except when the match has been designated as an 'all ticket' match. In such circumstances, all revenue generated from the sale of tickets by the away team shall be paid to the home team within 7 days following the date on which the match was played together with a reconciliation of unsold tickets (the home team shall then make payment to the away team within 7 days of receiving such revenue).
- c. Non-payment by the deadlines for either the home or away teams shall result in an automatic increase of 10% of the monies due for up to 7 days late payment and 20% between 7 to 14 days late payment. All other cases shall be referred to the Committee who will deal with the matter as they consider appropriate.
- d. Season tickets shall not be valid for any tie played in this Competition.

## **31. Division of Semi-Final and Final receipts**

- a. In the **semi-final ties** the nett receipts (including stands) shall be divided as follows: 10% to the Association and the balance divided equally amongst the competing clubs.
- b. In the **Final Tie**, the receipts after all expenses are paid, shall be divided as follows: The Association to take 20% and the remaining balance to be equally divided between the competing clubs.

- c. All tickets for the final tie shall be sold via the Association's online ticketing platform.
- d. In principle all tickets for semi-final ties will be sold via the Association's online ticketing platform. However, in the event that the clubs are required to sell tickets then all money generated from the sale of tickets in respect of semi-final and final ties must be submitted by the respective clubs to the Association within 7 days following the date of the match. In respect of such ticket sales any balance of unsold tickets must be returned to the Association by a pre-determined date, which in all cases will be a date prior to the match, or the club shall be financially liable for the balance.
- e. Non-payment by this deadline shall result in an automatic increase of 10% of the monies due for up to seven (7) days late payment and 20% between seven (7) to fourteen (14) days late payment. All other cases shall be referred to the committee who will deal with the matter as they consider appropriate

### **32. Committee may alter Rules**

The Committee shall, except as to the returns by Clubs, have power to alter these Rules, but in no case shall they do so until after the Final Tie has been played in any year.

***Special Note: Sundays shall not be reckoned in the computation in these Rules.***

# INTERMEDIATE CUP RULES

## **Name**

1. This competition shall be called the Irish Football Association Intermediate Cup competition and shall be governed by the Intermediate Cup Committee.

## **Committee approve of clubs**

2. The Competition shall be annual and open to the Intermediate clubs in membership of the Association subject to the approval of the Committee. Application for permission to compete in the competition shall be made online via Comet FMS, not later than 30 June and shall be accompanied by an entry fee of £30.00. It shall be the sole responsibility of clubs to enter in order to participate in the competition. This application shall affect a club for one season only. The Competition shall be conducted under the Articles of Association, the Laws of the Game and these Rules. The Committee may at its discretion accept sponsorship for the Competition or any part thereof.

## **Drawing of Ties**

3. The names of the clubs approved for the competition shall be placed in one lot, or lots, as the Committee may determine. The Committee may draw subsequent round or rounds before the winners of the previous rounds have been declared, and the winners according to such draw shall compete against each other as in the first round.

## **Byes may be given**

The Committee shall have the power to exempt any number of clubs from any number of rounds, and byes may be given so that four clubs shall compete in the Semi Finals.

4. There shall be one entry level in the competition.  
All Clubs playing intermediate status football shall enter the competition at the first entry level.

## **Clubs shall be drawn in lots**

5. The lots shall be drawn and the competition matches played as the Committee may determine, and immediately after each draw the Secretary shall intimate to each of the clubs drawn the name and the colours of the club it is drawn against and the date upon which the tie is to be played.

Matches will be played on or before the date set by the Intermediate Cup Committee. Any alterations to the date or kick-off time must be submitted in writing by both clubs and approved by the Intermediate Cup Committee.

## **Draw after bye**

6. In the event of a club getting a bye in any of the drawings the Committee at the subsequent drawing shall first draw a club to play against it from the lot, the two shall again be put in the ballot box and again drawn, and the club first out of the box shall have choice of ground; but the Committee may so arrange that four clubs compete in the semi-finals.

## Method of drawing

7. The clubs which are in each instance first drawn in the ballot shall have the choice of ground subject to the approval of the Committee. The first drawn club may forfeit home advantage (in exceptional circumstances) with the agreement of their opponents and the approval of the Committee. In such circumstances written confirmation of same must be notified to the Secretary by both clubs not later than 5 days prior to the date of the match.
8. Only those clubs playing in Intermediate Leagues whose registered ground has been approved by the Intermediate Cup Committee are eligible to participate in the Intermediate Cup.

All Intermediate Cup games must be played on the clubs' registered League ground.

Matches will be permitted to be played on 3rd Generation Artificial Turf pitches which have been approved by the Intermediate Cup Committee.

From Season 2017/18 only clubs playing in Intermediate Leagues whose registered ground has been approved by the Intermediate Cup Committee on or before 31 May will be eligible to participate in the Intermediate Cup.

9. Should a club having a registered home ground which, for whatever reason be unavailable (excluding inclement weather conditions) be drawn at home they must travel to the ground of their opponents. If neither team's registered home ground is available, the first drawn team must procure another ground where the facilities comply with Rule 8. Notification of a non-available ground must be received by the Secretary of the Association not later than 5 days prior to the date of the tie.
10. A minimum fee of £3 must be charged at all cup ties.
11. The match must be started at the time appointed by the Committee but no protest will be upheld for late starting, unless the Committee are satisfied that the result of the match was effected thereby. If a match has been stopped by the referee before the completion of the time specified, for any reason, the Committee shall have the power to deal with the matter as it sees fit.
12. In the event of unfavourable weather conditions, the home club must contact the Irish Football

Association to organise a referee's inspection not later than four (4) hours before kick-off. The match referee or an alternative referee appointed by the IFA must inspect the ground at least three (3) hours or more previous to the advertised time of kick-off and shall decide as to the fitness of the ground, his/her decision being final after consultation with the Club Secretary and the Irish Football Association.

Only a referee appointed by the Irish Football Association shall have the power to postpone a tie having taken due cognizance of local advice and the travelling team and supporters.

In the event of the home club failing to request an early inspection the committee shall be empowered to grant compensation to the other club for actual expenses incurred for such match.

Should the match referee deem the ground unfit for play then he/she shall be paid half the match fee and travelling expenses actually incurred by the home club. Should another association appointed referee deem the ground unfit for play then he/she shall be paid £5 plus travelling expenses actually incurred.

### **Ineligible Players**

13. An ineligible player shall be a player who has
- i. Played in the current or previous 3 seasons in a senior International Match
  - ii. Played in a Senior Inter League Match during the current season
  - iii. Played more than 12 Senior Matches (a senior match being a match in one of the recognised 'senior' competitions – ie NIFL Premiership and Championship, Irish Challenge Cup, NIFL League Cup, Co Antrim Shield, Mid Ulster Cup, North West Challenge Cup) during the current season except if player has taken part in such senior match/es as a player for an Intermediate club.
  - iv. Competed in a National Association Cup Tie Match for an English, Scottish or Welsh club during the current season
  - v. Played in the winning team in the final tie of a National Association Senior Cup competition during the current or previous season, except for a player who has played in a winning team which had qualified from an Intermediate Competition
14. The competing teams shall number eleven players each. No individual shall play for more than one Club in the Intermediate Cup in the same season.

#### **Qualification of Players**

All players must be registered by their clubs, in accordance with the IFA Professional Game Player Registration Regulations.

For the avoidance of any doubt to be eligible to play in this competition a player must also be eligible to participate for his club in the relevant league competition and must have been registered during one of the two professional game registration periods. The registration periods are:-

First registration period                      -                      9 June – 31 August

Second registration period                      -                      1 January – 31 January

Clubs who play in a purely amateur league competition and who are permitted to register players to participate in such purely amateur competition outside the above registration periods shall not be permitted to play any player so registered in this competition until the commencement of the subsequent registration period.

No player who is registered by his club after 31st January shall be eligible to participate in this competition in that same season. For the avoidance of doubt any player signed after the 31st January in the current season (including 'Out of Contract Professional') shall not be eligible to participate in the competition.

15. Notwithstanding anything in any rule, if the Intermediate Cup Committee in the case of the Intermediate Cup, have any doubt at any time whether arising out of a protest or otherwise, as to the qualification of any player taking part in a competition, they shall have the power to call upon such player and/or club to which he belongs, or for which he played to prove he is qualified according to the rules. Any club found guilty of fielding an ineligible player in any round of the competition and prior to the next round being played up to and including the semi final may be fined up to a maximum sum of £100.00. Furthermore, the said club will be dismissed from the competition and the club losing the tie in such circumstances shall replace the dismissed club and progress to the next round.

### **Clubs failing to play**

- 16.1 Any club refusing or failing to play the club against which it has been drawn on the date fixed by the Committee (except for reasons due to circumstances relating to the COVID 19 Pandemic which are particularly set out in clause 16.2 below) and without sufficient reason for doing so, shall be adjudged to have lost the match and be otherwise dealt with as the Committee see fit. In such circumstances the Committee reserve the right to exclude such club from subsequent competitions.
- 16.2.1 If a group of players of a team are placed into mandatory quarantine or required to self-isolate in accordance with the regulations or mandatory guidance issued by the UK Government or Northern Ireland Assembly or other relevant authority arising from the COVID 19 Pandemic, the match involving that team will go ahead as scheduled as long as the team has at least 13 players available (including at least one goalkeeper). If, however, a team is not in a position to field a team, with the above mentioned number of players (13 players including at least one goal-keeper), the match will be re-scheduled to a date to be fixed by the Secretary to the Committee who shall have power to assign and re-schedule the match to a neutral venue if the Secretary to the Committee deems it appropriate. In the event that the match is re-scheduled the home team will remain responsible for all of the organisation of the re-scheduled fixture and all related costs. In the event that a match cannot be played or completed on the date appointed for the re-scheduled fixture the Intermediate Cup Committee will have authority to make a decision on the matter. The team that is responsible for the match not taking place or not being played in full will be declared to have forfeited the match by the Intermediate IFA Cup Committee unless the Committee comes to the conclusion that both or neither of the teams are responsible for the match not taking place or not being played in full. In this event the match will not be declared as forfeited and the outcome of the match will be decided by drawing lots carried out by the Secretary to the Committee in the presence of members of the Committee.



- 16.2.2 If a Club is unable to field a team (13 players including at least one goalkeeper) due to circumstances relating to the COVID-19 Pandemic set out in sub-paragraph 15.2.1 above the Club shall as soon as practicable provide the Intermediate Cup Committee with evidence that the player[s] concerned have been placed into mandatory quarantine or who are required to self-isolate and the relevant dates of the quarantine/self isolation. The Intermediate Cup Committee will require all relevant evidence from the Club including, if appropriate, the following:
- (i) Details that a player has received positive test results and the notification from the appropriate authority.
  - (ii) Evidence that a player has been contacted through “Track and Trace” and asked to isolate (together with the notification from the appropriate body).
  - (iii) Evidence that a player has booked a COVID test and/or is waiting for a COVID test result.
  - (iv) Evidence that a player is self-isolating due to a family member, colleague or friend having received a positive COVID test result.

The Club shall notify the Intermediate Cup Committee as soon as it becomes aware that it will be unable to field a team. All evidence shall be sent electronically by email to the Intermediate Cup Committee. The Club shall forward the written consent from the Players or persons concerned confirming the Players’ and/or persons’ agreement to the information/documents being furnished to the Intermediate Cup Committee along with the Club’s evidence.

17. The duration of each match shall be 90 minutes. In the event of a drawn match, extra time of 10 minutes each way shall be played and should the score be equal at the end of this extra time, the match shall be decided by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with the conditions approved by the International FA Board.
18. In the event of a postponed match, due to inclement weather, in any round prior to the semi finals the clubs must forthwith arrange to play on or before the following Saturday. In the event of the match not taking place on or before the second Saturday the club which was first drawn away will have the choice of venue for on or before the subsequent Saturday. If there are any further postponements the Clubs will alternate for choice of venue on a weekly basis.

### **Players must wear registered colours**

19. The players in each competing team must wear the registered colours of the club for which they are playing, except when opposing teams have similar colours in which case the home club shall change.

In a semi-final or final tie, or any other tie played on neutral ground, where opposing teams have similar colours both teams will change unless they are agreed that only one need to do so. The colours of the club shall be taken as the colour of the shirt, shorts and socks. A goalkeeper must wear a shirt of different colour, provided that said shirt is of a distinctive colour from that of his opponents. Referees shall have power to instruct a player to change shirts, and/or shorts and/or socks if he considers the colour not quite distinctive from that of their opponents.

### **Completion of team sheet**

20. Each competing team shall enter the full names of the players on the team sheet and confirm the line-up via Comet FMS. Players' names must correspond with the numbers assigned on the official team sheet. The Club Comet user shall be considered to have verified the accuracy of the information provided upon confirming the line up in Comet FMS. 20.1 A club may, at its discretion, use 3 substitute players at any time in any tie, except to replace a player who has been expelled from the game by the referee. The substitutions may only be made when play is stopped for any reason and the referee has given permission. Only 3 substitutions by each team will be permitted in any tie and a maximum of 5 substitute players shall be nominated prior to the commencement of the tie. A fourth substitute may take part exclusively during extra time in all rounds of the competition.

### **Substitutes**

- 20.1 A substitute player shall be construed as taking part in the game for which he was nominated only if he is required to play.

### **Clubs shall appoint the Assistant Referees**

21. The competing clubs, in all but the last two rounds of ties, shall appoint the Assistant Referees, unless otherwise arranged by the Referees' Committee, but in all the matches the Referees' Committee shall appoint the referee, who shall have the power to dispense with the Assistant Referees in case he finds one or other giving decisions at variance with the facts, and appoint substitutes.
22. On points of fact connected with the play over which the Assistant Referees' have control, their decisions must be given by flags. The referee must use a whistle. In the question of these rules or the laws of the game, an appeal may be made to the Committee, but the referee's decision must be acted on the field.

### **Protest – objection to ground**

23. In the event of one of the competing clubs protesting that the ground of their opponents is not private nor fit and proper to be played upon, a pitch inspection sub-committee shall be appointed by the Committee to investigate and decide the question. The protest must be lodged with the Secretary of the Association at least 5 days previous to the date fixed for the match together with a fee of £100 to cover all expenses of the pitch inspection sub-committee. In the event of a protest not being sustained the expenses will be forfeited, but should the protest be sustained, the club protested against shall be required to refund the same, through the Secretary of the Association previous to the tie being played. No protest will be entertained after a match as to the privacy of a ground provided there has been sufficient time to enable the clubs to take advantage of this rule.

## **Protests**

25. Protests must be received by the Secretary of the Association by special delivery service bearing the post mark within two days after the cause of the protest, accompanied by a deposit of £100.00 which shall be forfeited in all cases where the protest has not been sustained. A copy of the protest must also be sent by special delivery post to the club protested against bearing postmark within two days after the cause of protest. In no case will the deposit be returned after receipt by the secretary of the Association unless the protest be upheld. Protests against ineligible players must give the names of players protested against and also cause of protest. *\*The proof of posting of such a special delivery letter shall be the post mark on the certificate of posting.*
26. Goal nets must be used in all cup ties. Any objection to ground, goal posts, goal nets or ball must be lodged in writing by a responsible Club official with the referee before the game has started, and the referees shall have the power to have such objections made right before the game starts.
27. In all competition matches, with the exception of the semi finals and final, the receipts (including stands) after payment of the referees charges shall be kept by the home club. The home club shall be considered to be the club who host the match.

In case the expenses in the Semi Finals exceed the receipts the deficit shall be taken from the final tie receipts, same being considered expenses of match.

## **Neutral grounds of Semi Finals and Final**

28. In the Semi Finals and Final ties the grounds shall be chosen by the Committee, and shall be neutral, but if the clubs agree to play on the ground of either participating club the Committee may allow the match or matches to be played there.
29. In the Semi Finals ties the receipts after all expenses are paid, shall be divided as follows: 10% to the Association and the balance divided equally amongst the competing clubs.

If the Final tie is held at the National Football Stadium, 10% of the net gate receipts to be retained by the Association and the remaining 90% to be divided equally between the 2 finalists with the IFA bearing the cost of all match expenses.

If the Final tie is held at an alternative venue the receipts after all expenses are paid shall be divided as follows: the Association to take 20% and the remaining balance to be equally divided between competing clubs.

### **Agreement for Cup**

30. When the winning club shall have been declared, the secretary of the Association shall hand the cup to its representatives on receiving a document to the following effect, subscribed by three persons whose names shall be previously submitted and approved of by the Committee:

“We A.B. of the Y club, and C.D. and E.F. members of and representing the said club which has now been declared to have won the Irish Football Association Intermediate Cup, and the said cup having been delivered to us by JX, secretary of said Association, do hereby, on behalf of said club, and individually or collectively, engage to return same to the said JX, Secretary of the Association for the time being, on or before the 1st day of December next, or at an earlier date if requested by the Association in like good order and condition: and providing the said Cup is destroyed by fire, or lost by any other accident whilst in our possession, we agree to refund the Association the amount of its current value”.

### **Medals or Badges**

31. In addition to the Cup, the Association will present medals only to the participants in the final tie. For the avoidance of any doubt this shall include the 16 players, Manager and Secretary of each club.

### **Powers of Committee**

32. All questions of eligibility, qualification of competitors, or of application of these rules or the Laws of the Games shall be referred to the Committee, and they shall have power to withhold the Cup and medals or mementoes.

The Committee shall also have the power to deal with any other matter not provided for in these rules.

### **Committee may alter Rule**

33. The Committee shall, except as to the returns by clubs, have power to alter these rules, but in no case shall they do so until after the Final tie in any year shall have been played.

### *Special Notes:*

- *Sundays shall not be reckoned in the computation of time under these rules*
- *A season will be considered to be the period from 1 August to 31 May*

# **JUNIOR CUP RULES**

## **Name**

1. This Cup shall be called the “Irish Football Association Junior Challenge Cup”.

## **Competition Annual**

2. The Competition shall be Annual, and open to Clubs, members of the Irish Football Association Ltd., subject to the approval of the Junior & Youth Cup Committee. Applications will only be considered from clubs in membership of recognised Leagues. Any club which has not competed in the Junior Cup Competition the previous season must have been in membership of a recognised league during the previous season. Only one team from each Club will be admitted to the Competition.

## **Date for application to play**

3. A team's standing – i.e. Senior, Intermediate or Junior – shall be decided by the Council. Application for permission to compete in this Competition shall be made not later than 15 August as directed by the Association (via Comet FMS), accompanied by an entrance fee of £20.00.

This decision shall affect the Club for one season only.

## **Eligible Players**

4. Notwithstanding the additional restrictions in rules 5 and 6 to be eligible to play in the Competition players must be registered to play for their Club in their respective league competitions (via Comet FMS). No player shall be eligible to play in this Competition for more than one Club in the same season.

Clubs must satisfy themselves as to the eligibility of their players. Any club playing an ineligible player may be removed from the Competition, and may be debarred from competing for up to three seasons, and the Committee shall have power to suspend any offending player or Official, and may impose a fine not exceeding £50.00 for each ineligible player played and may withhold the Cup and Medals if they are satisfied that such Club has violated the rules during the course of the Competition.

Notwithstanding anything in any rule, if the Committee has any doubt at any time and whether arising out of a protest or otherwise as to the qualification of any player taking part in the competition, they shall have power to call upon such player, and/or the Club to which he belongs, or for which he played, to prove that he is qualified according to the rules, and failing satisfactory proof, they shall disqualify such player and shall remove the club from the competition, and impose such other penalty they may think fit.

In such circumstances the Committee shall have the power to reinstate the defeated team to the competition in the event that the following round has not yet taken place.

## **Ineligible Players**

5. Should a player take part in any Cup Tie Match for the Irish Challenge Cup or Intermediate Cup he may not compete for the Junior Cup in the same season, except in the case of Junior teams, three members of which may play for the Senior or Intermediate teams of the same Club. However, no such player/s shall play in more than two matches collectively in the Irish Challenge Cup or Intermediate Cup.

Any player who has competed in any National Cup Tie Matches under any other National Association shall be ineligible to compete during the same Season in this Competition.

6. In addition the following shall be ineligible to compete for the Junior Cup
  - a. Any players who have played in a Senior International or Senior Inter-League match.
  - b. Any player who in the current or previous season has played in the Final Tie of any Senior Competition.
  - c. Any player who in the current or previous season has played in the final tie of any Intermediate status competition except a player who has played in such final as a member of a Junior Club.
  - d. Any player who has at any time taken part in more than twelve competitive matches for NIFL Senior Clubs during the current and previous season collectively.
  - e. Any player who has taken part in more than four competitive matches for Senior or Intermediate Clubs collectively during the current season.
  - f. A professional shall not be allowed to take part in the Junior Cup Competition

## **Committee decide Player's standing**

7. A player's standing shall be decided by the Junior Committee of the Association.
8. A player named as a substitute for an Irish Senior or Intermediate Club and not called upon to play shall not be considered as having played.

## **Annual Returns by Clubs**

9. In accordance with Article 4 clubs should forward their annual club return not later than 31 July. Each Club must forward to the Association the following particulars:
  1. Whether ground is public or private
  2. Situation of ground
  3. Colours of Club shirts/shorts/socks
  4. Name and address of Secretary

In the event of change of Secretary or change of address during the Season, same must be notified to the Secretary of the Association.

## Competition Draw

10. a. The lots shall be drawn and Competition matches played as the Committee may determine, and immediately after each drawing the Secretary shall intimate to each of the clubs drawn the name and colours of the Club it is drawn against and the date upon which the tie is to be played.
- b. Committee may draw subsequent round or rounds before the winners of the previous rounds have been declared. The Committee shall have power to exempt any number of Clubs from any number of rounds, and byes may be given so that the required number of clubs is obtained.
- c. In the event of a club getting a bye in any of the drawings, the Committee at the subsequent drawing, shall first draw a Club to play against it from the lot, the two shall again be put in the ballot-box and again drawn, and the club first out of the box shall have choice of ground, but the Committee may so arrange that four clubs compete in the semi-finals.
- d. The teams which are in each instance first drawn in the ballot and known as the "Home Team" shall play on the ground registered with the Association. The second drawn team shall be known as the "Away Team". If the registered ground is available it will not be necessary for the visiting team, or the Secretary of the Association to receive further notification, but if the match is being transferred to another ground it will be the responsibility of the team drawn at home to notify both their opponents and the Secretary of the Association by Special Delivery or email not later than the Friday of the week previous to the date of the match, giving clear direction to location of ground; failing which the team will be dismissed from the Competition.

The proof of posting of such Special Delivery shall be the postmark on the Certificate of Posting.
- e. In the event of a match not taking place on the date arranged owing to the ground being declared unplayable by the referee and/or in the case of public grounds by the Local Authorities (including their facilities), the teams shall forthwith arrange to play the following Saturday.
- f. In the event of the match not taking place on the second Saturday due to circumstances as 10 (e) the clubs will arrange to play the following Saturday on the ground of the "Away team" and if not played on this day due to weather conditions arrangements must be made to play at the same location on the following Saturday.
- g. In the event of the match not taking place on the second attempt at the ground of the original "Away team" the tie will revert from the following Saturday to alternate weeks at the "Home" and "Away" grounds.
- h. If necessary the Committee will permit the playing of the match at either club's registered or alternative ground if agreed in writing and confirmed to the Association Secretary by both clubs at least one day prior to the match.

- i. In all cases the Secretary of the Team on whose ground a match was to be played must, immediately, advise the Secretary of the Association and their opponents of any postponement. Any club failing to conform to this rule shall be dealt with by the Junior & Youth Cup Committee who shall have power to compel the offending Club to pay such expenses or take such action as they may deem expedient.
  - j. Dressing accommodation, including adequate shower facilities must be provided on-site by the Home club unless otherwise stated by Irish Football Association or Northern Ireland Executive. Any club failing to conform to this rule shall be dealt with by the Junior & Youth Cup Committee who shall have power to compel the offending Club to pay such expenses or take such action as they may deem expedient.
  - k. Matches will be permitted to be played on artificial turf providing that the pitch is at least FIFA 1 star standard. Clubs playing their home matches on artificial turf must notify their opponents and the Association by email.
- Any team not adhering to this rule will be dealt with as the Committee consider appropriate.

### **Notice of Scratching**

- 11. Any Club intending to scratch must give notice to the Secretary of this Association and to the Secretary of the opposing Club, such notice to be received at least four days before the date of the match. Any club failing to conform to this rule shall be dealt with by the Junior & Youth Cup Committee who shall have power to compel the offending Club to pay such expenses or take such action as they may deem expedient.

### **Matches**

- 12. a. Any Club refusing or failing to play the Club against which it has been drawn on the date fixed by the Junior Committee (except for reasons due to circumstances relating to the COVID 19 Pandemic which are particularly set out in clause 12b below) and without sufficient reasons for so doing shall be adjudged to have lost the match, and shall be otherwise dealt with as the Committee may determine, which may include bearing the cost of pitch rental and referee expenses and exclusion from future competitions as the Committee may determine.
- b. If a group of players of a team are placed into mandatory quarantine or required to self-isolate in accordance with the regulations or mandatory guidance issued by the UK Government or Northern Ireland Assembly or other relevant authority arising from the COVID 19 Pandemic, the match involving that team will go ahead as scheduled as long as the team has at least 13 players available (including at least one goalkeeper). If, however, a team is not in a position to field a team, with the above mentioned number of players (13 players including at least one goal-keeper), the match will be re-scheduled to a date to be fixed by the Secretary to the Committee who shall have power to assign and re-schedule the match to a neutral venue if the Secretary to the



Committee deems it appropriate. In the event that the match is re-scheduled the home team will remain responsible for all of the organisation of the re-scheduled fixture and all related costs. In the event that a match cannot be played or completed on the date appointed for the re-scheduled fixture the Junior and Youth Cup Committee will have authority to make a decision on the matter. The team that is responsible for the match not taking place or not being played in full will be declared to have forfeited the match by the Junior and Youth Cup Committee unless the Committee comes to the conclusion that both or neither of the teams are responsible for the match not taking place or not being played in full. In this event the match will not be declared as forfeited and the outcome of the match will be decided by drawing lots carried out by the Secretary to the Committee in the presence of members of the Committee.

### **The duration of a match**

13. The duration of each match shall be 90 minutes. The match must be started at the time appointed by the Committee, but no protest will be upheld for late starting, unless the Committee is satisfied that the result of the match was affected by such delay.

The Referee shall have power to allow additional time for stoppages, his decision thereon to be final.

In the event of any match in the Competition resulting in a draw, extra time of 10 minutes each way shall be played. In the event of the score being equal at the end of this period of extra time the Tie will be decided by taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with the conditions approved by the International FA Board.

### **Abandoned match**

14. If a match has been stopped by the referee, before the completion of the time specified, for any reason stated in Law 5 of the Laws of the Game, the Committee shall have power to order such match to be replayed in full or, to allow result of the match at the time of such stoppage to stand or to dismiss or debar one or both teams from the competition if considered appropriate.

### **Completion of Match Sheet**

15. The Secretary or other responsible official of each competing team shall enter the full names of players in Comet FMS and must certify the accuracy of the information supplied. Players names must correspond with the number of their shirt. Any Club not completing Comet FMS in the prescribed manner shall be liable to a fine not exceeding £25.00. It shall be at the Committee's discretion whether or not such Club should be allowed to remain in the Competition.

### **Substitutes**

16. A Club may at its discretion, use three substitute players at any time in any tie, except to replace players who have been expelled by the referee.

The substitutions can only be made when play is stopped for any reason and the referee has given permission. Only three substitutions by each side will be permitted in any tie and a maximum of five substitute players may be nominated by each side prior to the commencement of the tie.

A fourth substitute may take part exclusively during extra time in all rounds of the competition.

### **Objection to ground**

17. Any objection to ground, dressing accommodation, goal-posts, or ball must be lodged in writing by the Captain for the day with the Referee before the game is started, and the Referee shall have power to have such objections made right before the game starts.

### **Intimidation by spectators**

18. When it can be proven that the partisans of a club systematically interfere with the play of an opposing club, by using improper language or inciting the players to use violence towards their opponents, the Committee shall have the power to order the match to be played or replayed on another ground.

### **Protests**

19. Protests (including full details of protest) must be received by the Secretary of the Association per Special Delivery\* bearing post-mark within two days after the cause of the protest, accompanied by a deposit of £50.00.

Protests against ineligible players must give names of players protested against and also the cause of protest, including the reason/s for the player/s being ineligible.

20. A copy of the protest must be sent by Special Delivery\* to the Club protested against, bearing post-mark within two days after the cause of the protest.

In case of protested Ties, or replays of same, the Committee shall decide the dates and venues. Should either Club refuse to compete such Club shall be removed from the Competition, and otherwise dealt with as the Committee may determine.

### **Players must wear registered colours**

21. The players in each competing team must wear the registered colours, except when opposing teams have similar colours, in which case the team on whose ground the match is played shall change theirs. Failure to comply will result in offending clubs being fined in the sum of £50.00. In all other cases the Committee shall decide which team shall change their colours. The colours of the Club shall be taken to be the colours of the shirt. A goalkeeper must wear a shirt of different colour, and said shirt must be of a colour distinctive from that of his opponents. Referees shall have power to instruct a Club to change any part of their playing kit if he considers the colour not quite distinctive from that of his opponents, and the Referee shall have power to deal with any player refusing to comply with this instruction.

### **Referees & Assistant Referees**

22. The competing Clubs in all but the Semi-Final and Final Ties shall appoint the Assistant Referees, unless otherwise arranged by the Junior & Youth Cup Committee, but in all the matches the IFA Administration shall appoint the Referee, who shall have power to dispense with the services of the Assistant Referees in case he finds one or other giving decisions at variance with the facts and appoint substitutes.

In all but the semi-final or final ties the Club on whose ground the match is played shall pay the Referee's charges. If the Referee fails to turn up, the match must not take place.

*\* The proof of posting of such Special Delivery shall be the post-mark on the certificate of posting.*

### **Venues for Semi-finals and Final tie**

23. The venue for the semi-final and final ties shall be decided by the Junior & Youth Cup Committee.

### **Agreement for Cup**

24. It shall be the responsibility of the winning Club to return the cup to the Association on or before 1 March or earlier if so requested by the Association. The winning club shall return the cup in good or like condition and shall be liable for any costs in the event that the cup is destroyed by fire, or lost, or damaged by any other accident whilst in the possession of the winning club.

### **Medals**

25. The Association will present medals only to the participants in the final tie. For the avoidance of any doubt this shall include the 16 players, Manager and Secretary of each club.

### **Division of Receipts**

26. In all Competition matches, with the exception of the semi-finals and Final, the Club on whose ground the match is played shall take the receipts and pay all expenses. In case the expenses in semi-finals exceed the receipts, the deficit shall be taken from the final tie receipts, same being considered expenses of match.

### **Division of Semi-final receipts**

27. In the semi-final ties the nett receipts shall be divided as follows: 10% to the Association and the balance divided equally amongst the competing clubs.

### **Division of Final Tie receipts**

28. In the Final Tie, the receipts shall be divided as follows: 10% to the Association and balance divided equally amongst the competing clubs.

### **Committee may alter rules**

29. The Junior & Youth Cup Committee shall have power to alter these Rules, but in no case shall they do so until after the Final Tie in any year shall have been played. Powers of Committee

### **Powers of Committee**

30. All questions of eligibility or qualification of competitors, or of application of these rules, or the laws of the game, shall be referred to the Committee, whose decision will be final (notwithstanding each club's right of appeal in accordance with the Articles of Association) and they shall have the power to withhold the cup and medals or mementoes.
31. The Committee shall have power to deal with offending Club or Clubs, player or players, official or officials, as they may think fit, and to deal with any matter not provided for in these Rules.

*Special note – Sundays shall not be reckoned in the computation of time in these rules.*

# YOUTH CUP COMPETITION RULES

## **Name**

1. The Cup shall be called the “Irish Football Association Youth Challenge Cup”.

## **Competition Annual**

2. The Competition shall be Annual, and open to Clubs, members of the Irish Football Association Ltd., subject to the approval of the Junior & Youth Cup Committee. Applications will only be considered from clubs in membership of recognised Leagues. Only one team from each Club will be admitted to the Competition.

## **Date of Application**

3. Application for permission to compete in the Competition, accompanied by the entry fee of £10.00 shall be made not later than 15th day of August each Season as directed by the Association (via Comet FMS).

## **Annual Returns by Clubs**

4. Under Article 4 of the Articles of Association, each club must forward to the Association, not later than 31st July each year, the following particulars:
  1. Whether ground is public or private
  2. Situation of ground
  3. Club Colours (shirt/shorts/socks)
  4. Name and Address of Secretary

In the event of change of secretary or change of Address during the season, same must be notified to the Secretary of the Association.

## **Substitutions**

5. A Club may at its discretion, use three substitute players at any time in any tie, except to replace players who have been expelled by the referee. The substitutions can only be made when play is stopped for any reason and the referee has given permission. Only three substitutions by each side will be permitted in any tie and a maximum of five substitute players may be nominated prior to the commencement of the tie.

A fourth substitute may take part exclusively during extra time in all rounds of the competition.

## **Eligible Players**

6. To be eligible to play in the Competition players must be registered to play for their Club in their respective league competitions (via Comet FMS). No player shall be eligible to play in this Competition for more than one Club in the same season.

Clubs must satisfy themselves as to the eligibility of their players. Any Club playing an ineligible player may be removed from the Competition, and may be debarred from competing for up to three seasons, and the Committee shall have power to suspend any offending player or official, and shall impose a fine not exceeding £50.00 for each offending player played, and may withhold the

Cup and mementos if they are satisfied that such Club has violated the Rules during the course of the Competition. Notwithstanding anything in any rule, if the Committee has any doubt at any time and whether arising out of a protest or otherwise as to the qualification of any player taking part in the competition, they shall have power to call upon such player, and/or the Club to which he belongs, or for which he played, to prove that he is qualified according to the rules, and failing satisfactory proof, they shall disqualify such player and shall remove the club from the competition, and impose such other penalty they may think fit. In such circumstances the Committee shall have the power to reinstate the defeated team to the competition in the event that the following round has not yet taken place.

### **Ineligible Players**

7. a. No player shall be eligible to take part who is 18 years of age or older before the 1st day of January in the year in which the competition commences.
- b. A professional shall not be allowed to take part in the Youth Cup Competition.

### **The duration of a match**

8. The duration of each match shall be 90 minutes. The match must be started at the time appointed by the Committee, but no protest will be upheld for late starting, unless the Committee is satisfied that the result of the match was affected by such delay.

The Referee shall have power to allow additional time for stoppages, his decision thereon to be final.

9. In the event of any match in the Competition resulting in a draw, extra time of 10 minutes each way shall be played. In the event of the score being equal at the end of this period of extra time the tie will be decided by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with the conditions approved by the International F.A. Board.

### **Competition Draw**

10. a. The lots shall be drawn and Competition matches played as the Committee may determine, and immediately after each drawing the Secretary shall intimate to each of the clubs drawn the name and colours of the Club it is drawn against and the date upon which the tie is to be played.
- b. The Committee may draw subsequent round or rounds before the winners of the previous rounds have been declared.

The Committee shall have power to exempt any number of Clubs from any number of rounds, and byes may be given so that the required number of clubs is obtained.

- c. In the event of a club getting a bye in any of the drawings, the Committee at the subsequent drawing, shall first draw a Club to play against it from the lot, the two shall again be put in the ballot-box and again drawn, and the club first out of the box shall have choice of ground, but the Committee may so arrange that four clubs compete in the semi-finals.

- d. The teams which are in each instance first drawn in the ballot and known as the “Home Team” shall play on the ground registered with the Association. The second drawn team shall be known as the “Away Team”. If the registered ground is available it will not be necessary for the visiting team, or the Secretary of the Association to receive further notification, but if the match is being transferred to another ground it will be the responsibility of the team drawn at home to notify both their opponents and the Secretary of the Association by Special Delivery or email not later than the Friday of the week previous to the date of the match, giving clear direction to location of ground; failing which the team will be dismissed from the Competition. The proof of posting of such Special Delivery shall be the postmark on the Certificate of Posting.
- e. In the event of a match not taking place on the date arranged owing to the ground being declared unplayable by the referee and/or in the case of public grounds by the Local Authorities, the teams shall forthwith arrange to play the following Saturday.
- f. In the event of the match not taking place on the second Saturday due to circumstances as
- g. the clubs will arrange to play the following Saturday on the ground of the “Away team” and if not played on this day due to weather conditions arrangements must be made to play at the same location of the following Saturday. (g) In the event of the match not taking place on the second attempt at the ground of the original “Away team” the tie will revert from the following Saturday to alternate weeks at the “Home” and “Away” grounds.
- h. If necessary the Committee will permit the playing of the match at either clubs registered or alternative ground if agreed in writing and confirmed to the Association Secretary by both clubs at least one days prior to the match.
- i. In all cases the Secretary of the Team on whose ground a match was to be played must immediately advise the Secretary of the Association and their opponents of any postponement. Any club failing to conform to this rule shall be dealt with by the Junior & Youth Cup Committee who shall have power to compel the offending Club to pay such expenses or take such action as they deem expedient.
- j. Dressing accommodation including adequate shower facilities must be provided on site by the Home club unless otherwise stated by Irish Football Association or Northern Ireland Executive. Any club failing to conform to this rule shall be dealt with by the Junior & Youth Cup Committee who shall have power to compel the offending Club to pay such expenses or take such action as they deem expedient.
- k. Matches will be permitted to be played on artificial turf providing that the pitch is at least FIFA 1 star standard. Clubs playing their home matches on artificial turf must notify their opponents and the Association by email.

Any team not adhering to this rule will be dealt with as the Committee consider appropriate.

## **Clubs failing to play**

11. a. Any Club refusing or failing to play the Club against which it has been drawn on the date fixed by the Committee (except for reasons due to circumstances relating to the COVID 19 Pandemic which are particularly set out in clause 11b below) and without sufficient reasons for so doing shall be adjudged to have lost the match and be otherwise dealt with as the Committee may determine. In case of disputed ties the Committee shall decide dates and venues. Should either Club refuse to compete, such Club shall be removed from the Competition, and otherwise dealt with as the Committee may determine. Clubs disregarding this Rule will be liable to be dealt with as the Committee consider appropriate.
- b. If a group of players of a team are placed into mandatory quarantine or required to self-isolate in accordance with the regulations or mandatory guidance issued by the UK Government or Northern Ireland Assembly or other relevant authority arising from the COVID 19 Pandemic, the match involving that team will go ahead as scheduled as long as the team has at least 13 players available (including at least one goalkeeper). If, however, a team is not in a position to field a team, with the above mentioned number of players (13 players including at least one goal-keeper), the match will be re-scheduled to a date to be fixed by the Secretary to the Committee who shall have power to assign and re-schedule the match to a neutral venue if the Secretary to the Committee deems it appropriate. In the event that the match is re-scheduled the home team will remain responsible for all of the organisation of the re-scheduled fixture and all related costs. In the event that a match cannot be played or completed on the date appointed for the re-scheduled fixture the Junior and Youth Cup Committee will have authority to make a decision on the matter. The team that is responsible for the match not taking place or not being played in full will be declared to have forfeited the match by the Junior and Youth Cup Committee unless the Committee comes to the conclusion that both or neither of the teams are responsible for the match not taking place or not being played in full. In this event the match will not be declared as forfeited and the outcome of the match will be decided by drawing lots carried out by the Secretary to the Committee in the presence of members of the Committee.

## **Protests**

12. All questions of eligibility, qualifications of competitors, or interpretation of Rules or Laws of the game shall be referred to the Committee, whose decision shall be final, subject always to the right of any Club or player to appeal to the Association, in accordance with the Articles of Association.

Protests must be received by the Secretary of the Association by Special Delivery bearing postmark within two days after the cause of the protest, accompanied by a deposit of £50.00, which shall be forfeited in all cases where the protest has not been sustained.

A copy of the protest must also be sent by Special Delivery bearing post-mark within two days after the cause of the protest to the Club protested against. No protests relative to the playing pitch or appurtenances of the game shall be entertained by the Committee, unless a complaint has been lodged with the referee in writing before the commencement of the match.

### **Abandoned match**

13. If a match has been stopped by the referee, before the completion of the time specified, for any reason stated in Law 5 of the Laws of the Game, the Committee shall have power to order such match to be replayed in full or, to allow result of the match at the time of such stoppage to stand or to dismiss or debar one or both teams from the competition if considered appropriate.

### **Completion of match sheet**

14. The full names of players shall be entered on Comet FMS, and a responsible official of the Club must certify the accuracy of the information supplied. Player's names must correspond with the number of their shirt.  
Any Club not completing Comet FMS in the prescribed manner shall be liable to a fine not exceeding £25.00. It shall be at the Committee's discretion whether or not such club should be allowed to remain in the Competition.

### **Committee's doubts as to qualifications of players**

15. If the Committee has any doubt as to the qualification of any player competing in this competition it shall have power to call upon such player, or the club to which he belongs or for which he played, to prove to the satisfaction of the Committee that he is properly qualified according to the Rules, and failing such satisfactory proof, the Committee shall have power to disqualify such player, and remove such Club from the Competition.

### **Clubs appoint Assistant Referees**

16. The competing Clubs in all but the last two rounds of ties shall appoint the Assistant Referees, unless otherwise arranged by the Committee.
17. In all the matches the IFA Administration shall appoint the Referee, who shall have power to dispense with the Services of the Assistant Referees in case he finds one or other giving decisions at variance with facts and appoint substitutes. In all but the last two rounds of ties the Club on whose ground the match is played shall pay the Referee's charges. If the Referee fails to turn up, the match must not take place.

### **Players must wear registered colours**

18. The players in each competing team must wear the registered colours, of the club for which they are playing, except when opposing teams have similar colours, in which case the team on whose ground the match is played shall change theirs. Failure to comply will result in offending clubs being fined in the sum of £50.00. In all other cases the Committee shall decide which team shall change their colours. The colours of the Club shall be taken to be the colours of the shirt of Jersey.



### **Notice of Scratching**

19. Any club intending to scratch must give notice to the Secretary of this Association and to the Secretary of the Opposing Club, such notice to be received at least four days before the date of the match. Any Club failing to conform to this Rule shall be dealt with by the Junior & Youth Cup Committee who shall have power to compel the offending Club to pay such expenses incurred and take such action as they may deem expedient.

### **Venue for Semi Finals and Final Tie**

20. The venues for the Semi Finals and Final Ties shall be decided by the Committee and shall be neutral. However, if the competing Clubs are in agreement the Committee may permit the match to be played on the ground of either of the Clubs concerned.

### **Agreement for Cup**

21. It shall be the responsibility of the winning Club to return the cup to the Association on or before 1 March or earlier if so requested by the Association. The winning club shall return the cup in good or like condition and shall be liable for any costs in the event that the cup is destroyed by fire, or lost, or damaged by any other accident whilst in their possession.

### **Medals**

22. The Association will present medals only to the participants in the final tie.  
For the avoidance of any doubt this shall include the 16 players, Manager and Secretary of each club.

### **Division of Receipts**

23. In all Competition matches, with the exception of the semi-finals and Final, the Club on whose ground the match is played shall take the receipts and pay all expenses. In case the expenses in semi-finals exceed the receipts, the deficit shall be taken from the final tie receipts, same being considered expenses of match.

### **Division of Semi-final receipts**

24. In the semi-final ties the nett receipts shall be divided as follows: 10% to the Association and the balance divided equally amongst the competing clubs.

### **Division of Final Tie receipts**

25. In the Final Tie, the receipts shall be divided as follows: 10% to the Association and balance divided equally amongst the competing clubs.

### **Committee may alter rules**

26. The Junior & Youth Cup Committee shall have power to alter these Rules, but in no case shall they do so until after the Final Tie in any year shall have been played.

### **Powers of Committee**

27. All questions of eligibility or qualification of competitors, or of application of these rules, or the laws of the game, shall be referred to the Committee, whose decision will be final (notwithstanding each club's right of appeal in accordance with the Articles of Association) and they shall have the power to withhold the cup and medals or mementoes.
28. The Committee shall have power to deal with offending Club or Clubs, player or players, official or officials, as they may consider appropriate, and to deal with any matter not provided for in these Rules.

***Special Note:*** *Sundays shall not be reckoned in the computation of time in these Rules.*

# WOMENS CHALLENGE CUP RULES

## 1. **Name**

The Cup shall be called the 'Irish Football Association Women's Challenge Cup'. The competition for the cup shall be annual and shall be open to women's clubs in membership of the Irish Football Association.

## 2. **Control**

The entire control and management of the Competition shall be vested in the Women's Challenge Cup Committee of the Irish Football Association.

## 3. **Date of Application**

Application for permission to compete in the Competition shall be made not later than the last day in March and accompanied by an entrance fee of £20. This decision shall affect the club for one season only. Each club shall be permitted to submit only one entry to the Competition.

## 4. **Substitutes**

A club may at its discretion, use 3 substitute players at any time in any tie, except to replace players who have been expelled by the referee. The substitutions can only be made when play has stopped for any reason and the referee has given permission. Only 3 substitutions by each side will be permitted in any tie and the maximum of 5 substitute players may be nominated prior to the commencement of the tie.

## 5. **Eligible Players**

To be eligible to play in the Competition, players must be eligible to play for their Club in League Competitions. A player registering with her club after 31 July in any season will not be eligible to play in this Competition. Players shall be permitted to play for one club only in any season in the Women's Challenge Cup.

Clubs must satisfy themselves as to the eligibility of their players before registration. Any club playing an ineligible player shall be removed from the Competition and may be de-barred from competing during the ensuing three seasons. The Women's Challenge Cup Committee may also impose a fine not exceeding £25 for each ineligible player played. Each competing team shall enter the full names of players on the IFA Comet Football Management System. Players' names must correspond with the numbers of their shirt.

## 6. **Entry Levels**

The Women's Challenge Cup Committee may determine the entry levels of teams to the competition at their complete discretion.

## 7. **Draw**

In the event of any match in the Competition resulting in a draw, the tie will be decided by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with the conditions approved by the International FA Board.

## **8. Draw after bye – Competition draw**

The lots shall be drawn and the competition matches played as the Committee may determine. Immediately following each draw a schedule of matches will be circulated to all participating clubs.

The clubs which are in each instance first drawn in the ballot shall have choice of ground. Should 2 clubs be drawn against each other, only 1 of which has a ground available, the match shall be played on that ground. In the event of a club getting a bye in any draw, the Committee at the subsequent draw shall first draw a club to play against it from the lot, the two shall again be put in the ballot box and again drawn with the first drawn club having choice of ground. The Committee may draw subsequent round or rounds before the winners of the previous rounds have been declared. The Committee shall have power to exempt any number of Clubs from any number of rounds, and byes may be given so that the required number of clubs is obtained.

## **9. Playing Surfaces**

Matches may be played on grass or 3rd generation (3G) artificial turf pitches providing that the latter is at least FIFA 1 star standard.

## **10. Change of Venue**

In the event of a match being transferred to an alternative ground it shall be the responsibility of the team drawn at home to notify in writing, by email, both their opponents and the Irish Football Association not later than 4 days prior to the date of the match giving clear directions to the location of the ground. Failure to notify the Irish Football Association and opponents may result in the team being dismissed from the Competition.

## **11. Clubs Failing to Play**

Any club refusing or failing to play against the club against which it has been drawn on the date fixed by the Committee, and without sufficient reasons for so-doing, shall be adjudged to have lost the match and will be otherwise dealt with as the Committee may determine. Also, any club leaving the ground before the expiration of the game must be adjudged to have lost the match and shall be liable to be dealt with by the Committee.

## **12. Inclement Weather**

In the event of a match not taking place on the date arranged owing to the ground being declared unplayable by the referee or in the case of public grounds by the Local Authorities, up to and including the Preliminary Round and Rounds 1, 2 and 3, the teams shall forthwith arrange to play the following Friday. Matches postponed due to inclement weather from the Quarter-Finals stage, will be rescheduled at the discretion of the Committee.

In the event of the match not taking place on the second Friday due to circumstances as above, the clubs will arrange to play the following Friday on the ground of the “!way team” and if not played on this day due to weather conditions arrangements must be made to play at the same location on the following Friday.

In the event of the match not taking place on the second attempt at the ground of the original “!way team” the tie will revert from the following Friday to alternate weeks at the “Home” and “!way” grounds.

**13. Protests**

Protests must be received by the Chief Executive of the Association by Special Delivery post, bearing post mark within 4 days after the cause of the protest, accompanied by a deposit of £50 which shall be forfeited in all cases where the protest has not been sustained. A copy of the protest must also be sent by Special Delivery post, bearing post mark within 4 days after the cause of the protest, to the club protested against.

**14. Committee’s doubts as to qualifications of players**

If the Committee has any doubt as to the qualification of any player competing in the Competition it shall have the power to call upon such player, and / or the club to which she belongs or for which she played, to prove to the satisfaction of the Committee that she is properly qualified according to the Rules. Failing satisfactory proof, the Committee shall have the power to disqualify such player and remove such club from the Competition.

**15. Appointment of Referees, Fees & Expenses**

For the 2021 Competition, the Association shall pay the fees and expenses of the match officials. The Association shall appoint a Referee and two Assistant Referees for the matches up to and including the Quarter-Finals; in addition, the Association shall appoint 4th Officials for the Semi-Finals and Final ties.

**16. Players must wear registered colours**

The players in each competing team must wear the registered club colours except when opposing teams have similar colours, in which case the team on whose ground the match is being played shall change. Failure to comply will result in offending clubs being fined £50.

In Semi-Final or Final ties when opposing teams have similar colours both teams shall change unless it is mutually agreed that only one team shall change.

**17. Notice of scratching**

Any club intending to withdraw (scratch) from the Competition must give notice to the Association and to the Secretary of the opposing club. Such notice must be received at least 4 days before the date of the match. Any club failing to conform to this rule shall be dealt with by the Committee who may compel the offending club to pay the expenses incurred and to take any other action they consider appropriate.

**18. Venues for Semi-Finals and Final**

The venue for the Semi-Finals and Final ties shall be decided by the Committee.

**19. Agreement for Cup**

When the winning club has been declared they shall receive the Women’s Challenge Cup and must agree to return same to the Association in like good order and condition on or before 1 August.

**20. Medals / Mementoes**

In addition to the Cup, the Committee shall present suitable mementoes to the winners and runners up. Each club will receive 16 Player medals, 1 Manager medal and 1 Secretary medal.

**21. Division of Semi-Finals Receipts**

In the Semi-Finals ties, the receipts after all expenses are paid, shall be divided as follows: 10% to the Association and the balance divided equally amongst the competing clubs.

**22. Division of Final Receipts**

10% of the net gate receipts to be retained by the Association and the remaining 90% to be divided equally between the 2 finalists with the IFA bearing the cost of all match expenses.

**23. Powers of Committee**

The Committee shall have the power to deal with offending club/s, player/s, official/s, as they consider appropriate and to deal with any matter not otherwise provided for in these rules.



# PROFESSIONAL GAME PLAYER REGISTRATION REGULATIONS



## SEASON 2021-2022



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## 1.0 Introduction

- a. Players participating in organised football are either amateurs or professionals. A professional is a player who has a written contract with a club and is paid more for his footballing activity than the expenses he effectively incurs. All other players are considered to be amateurs.
- b. Youth players shall not be subject to the Player Registration Regulations and may register freely until the season in which their 10th birthday occurs, subject to individual competition rules.
- c. **The following regulations shall apply for players registering for their club to play in competitions in which professional players may participate. Competition rules shall determine whether it permits professional players to participate.**
- d. All registrations shall be administered by Clubs/s using Comet FMS.
- e. All Club registrars will be obliged to agree to the terms and conditions of the access to and use of Comet FMS.
- f. Appointed league officials shall have full access to player registration records within their own league and will have full administrator rights to assist clubs as and when required. Such officials will be obliged to agree to the terms and conditions of the access to and use of the Comet FMS.
- g. A player not registered with the Association who appears for a club in any official match shall be considered to have played illegitimately. Without prejudice to any measure required to rectify the sporting consequences of such an appearance, sanctions may also be imposed on the player and/or the club by the organising body of the competition concerned.
- h. It shall be the responsibility of clubs playing in any match to be played under the jurisdiction of the Association to ensure that its players are eligible to play in such a match.

## 2.0 Number of Registrations/Clubs

- a. Each association must have an electronic player registration system, which must assign each player a FIFA ID when the player is first registered. A player must be registered at an association to play for a club as either a professional or an amateur in accordance with the provisions of article 2 (FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players). Only electronically registered players identified with a FIFA ID are eligible to participate in organised football. By the act of registering, a player agrees to abide by the statutes and regulations of FIFA, the confederations and the associations.
- b. A player may only be registered with a club for the purpose of playing organised football. As an exception to this rule, a player may have to be registered with a club for mere technical reasons to secure transparency in consecutive individual transactions (cf. Annexe 3 of the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players).
- c. A player may only be registered with one club at a time.
- d. Players may be registered with a maximum of three clubs during one season (the period from 1st August to 31st May, and in the case of NIFL Women's Premiership and NIWFA from 1st March to 31st October). During this period, the player is only eligible to play in official matches for two clubs, subject to the temporary exception below. As an exception to this rule, a player moving between two clubs belonging to associations with overlapping seasons (i.e. start of the season in summer/autumn as opposed to winter/spring) may be

eligible to play in official matches for a third club during the relevant season, provided he/she has fully complied with his/her contractual obligations towards his/her previous clubs. Equally, the provisions relating to the registration periods (article 6 – FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players) as well as to the minimum length of a contract (article 18 paragraph 2 – FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players) must be respected.

- i. This exception may also apply to players moving between two clubs belonging to domestic leagues with overlapping seasons.
- ii. In the accordance with article 5.4.i – FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players), during the following period, players may be registered with a maximum of three clubs and are eligible to play official matches for three clubs during one season:
  - a. for associations following a dual-year calendar: the 2019/20 and 2020/21 seasons; and
  - b. for associations following a single-year calendar: the 2020 and 2021 season.
- e. Under all circumstances, due consideration must be given to the sporting integrity of the competition. In particular, a player may not play official matches for more than two clubs competing in the same national championship or cup during the same season, subject to stricter individual competition regulations of member associations.
- f. Notwithstanding any of the above, a player may only register for any club twice in one season.
- g. In the event of the Association receiving formal notification, in writing, of a club ceasing to exist all amateur players registered with said club during the current season shall be immediately released from their registration and free to register with another club, subject to compliance with the relevant league's rules. For the avoidance of any doubt the club who cease to exist will not be counted in the number of clubs for which the player has been registered in the current season.

### **3.0 Registration Periods**

- a. Players may only be registered during one of the two annual registration periods fixed by the relevant association. Associations may fix different registration periods for their male and female competitions. As an exception to this rule, a professional whose contract has expired prior to the end of a registration period may be registered outside that registration period. Associations are authorised to register such professionals provided due consideration is given to the sporting integrity of the relevant competition. Where a contract has been terminated with just cause, FIFA may take provisional measures in order to avoid abuse, subject to article 22 (FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players).
  - i. As an exception to paragraph 1, a female player may be registered by an association outside of a registration period to temporarily replace a female player that has taken maternity leave. The period of the contract of the temporary replacement female player shall, unless otherwise mutually agreed, be from the date of registration until the day prior to the start of the first registration period after the return of the female player that has taken maternity leave.

- ii. A female player may be registered by an association outside of a registration period upon completion of her maternity leave (cf. article 18 paragraph 7; and article 18quater of FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players) subject to her contractual status.
- iii. Associations shall adapt their domestic rules accordingly. However, priority shall be given to ensuring that a female player that has returned from maternity leave is eligible to participate in domestic competitions, and the sporting integrity of the relevant competition.
- iv. As a temporary exception to paragraph 1, a professional whose contract has expired or been terminated as a result of COVID-19 has the right to be registered by an association outside a registration period, regardless of the date of expiry or termination.
- b. The first registration period shall begin on the first day of the season, subject to the temporary exceptions below. This period may not exceed twelve weeks. The second registration period shall normally occur in the middle of the season and may not exceed four weeks. Two registration periods for the season shall be entered on TMS at least 12 months before they come into force (cf. Annexe 3, article 5.1 paragraph 1 of FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players). All transfers, whether a national transfer or an international transfer, shall only occur within these registration periods, subject to the exceptions in article 6 of the FIFA Regulations on the Status & Transfer of players. FIFA shall determine the dates for any association that fails to communicate them on time.
- c. Players may only be registered – subject to the exception and temporary exception provided for in article 6 paragraph 1 (FIFA Regulations of the Status and Transfer of Players) – upon submission through the electronic player registration system of a valid application from the club to the relevant association during a registration period.
- d. The following registration periods will apply:  
 9 June 2021 – 31 August 2021  
 1 January 2022 – 31 January 2022

#### **4.0 Professional Registrations**

- a. All professional registrations must be submitted via Comet FMS by Club Registrars. The application for registration for a professional must be submitted together with a copy of the player's contract. The relevant decision-making body has discretion to take account of any contractual amendments or additional agreements that have not been duly submitted to it.
- b. All mandatory fields of Comet FMS must be accurately completed in full before a registration is confirmed. The player shall be considered registered upon completion of the online procedure. Any player who is under the age of 18 on the date of registration must have written consent from a parent or guardian agreeing to the registration.
- c. The minimum basic rates of weekly remuneration shall apply to all professional registrations as follows:  
 23 year old and over – £62.37  
 21 year old and over – £58.52  
 18-20 year olds – £45.92  
 16-17 year olds – £32.34

- d. In the event of these minimum thresholds not being observed the relevant registration documents shall be considered null and void.
- e. If an intermediary is involved in the negotiation of a contract, he/she shall be named in that contract. The intermediary's involvement must also be recorded in Comet FMS.
- f. The minimum length of a Standard Professional Contract shall be from its effective date until the end of the season, while the maximum length shall be five years. Contracts of any other length shall only be permitted if consistent with national laws. Players under the age of 18 may not sign a professional contract for a term longer than three years. Any clause referring to a longer period shall not be recognised.
- g. Professionals who end their careers upon expiry of their contracts and amateurs who terminate their activity shall remain registered at the association of their last club for a period of 30 months.  
This period begins on the day the player made his last appearance for the club in an official match.
- h. Priority of registration shall determine the eligibility of a player to play for the club with which he was first registered.

## **5.0 Reacquisition of Amateur Status**

- a. A player registered as a professional may not re-register as an amateur until at least 30 days after his last match as a professional (and provided the previous registration has either expired or been cancelled).
- b. No compensation is payable upon reacquisition of amateur status. If a player re- registers as a professional within 30 months of being reinstated as an amateur, his new club shall pay training compensation in accordance with Article 20 of the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players.

## **6.0 Amateur Registrations**

- a. All amateur registrations must be submitted via Comet.
- b. All mandatory fields of Comet FMS must be accurately completed in full before a registration is confirmed. The player shall be considered registered upon completion of the online procedure. Any player who is under the age of 18 on the date of registration must have written consent from a parent or guardian agreeing to the registration.
- c. The length of an amateur registration shall be from its effective date until the end of June 2022. Re-registration of players in a professional league is available via Comet FMS from 9 June – 3 July 2021.
- d. Priority of registration shall determine the eligibility of a player to play for the club with which he was first registered.
- e. In the event of a team whose club participate in both professional and purely amateur competitions such clubs shall be permitted to register players outside the fixed registration periods (but within the amateur game registration period of 4th July 2021 – 31st March 2022) but such players so registered shall be restricted to playing for the team who participates in purely amateur competitions. Such player will only become eligible to participate in a professional game competition at the commencement of the subsequent registration period.

## 7.0 Contractual Stability

### Overdue payables

- a. Clubs are required to comply with their financial obligations towards players and other clubs as per the terms stipulated in the contracts signed with their professional players and in the transfer agreements.
- b. Any club found to have delayed a due payment for more than 30 days without a prima facie contractual basis may be sanctioned in accordance with paragraph 4 below.
- c. In order for a club to be considered to have overdue payables in the sense of the present article, the creditor (player or club) must have put the debtor club in default in writing and have granted a deadline of at least ten days for the debtor club to comply with its financial obligation(s).
- d. Within the scope of their respective jurisdiction (article 22 in conjunction with articles 23 & 24 of FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players), the Players' Status Committee, the Dispute Resolution Chamber, the single judge or the DRC judge may impose the following sanctions:
  - i. A warning;
  - ii. A reprimand;
  - iii. A fine;
  - iv. A ban from registering any new players, either nationally or internationally, for one or two entire and consecutive registration periods
- e. The sanctions provided for in paragraph D above may be applied cumulatively
- f. A repeated offence will be considered as an aggravating circumstance and lead to a more severe penalty
- g. The execution of the registration ban in accordance with paragraph D above may be suspended. By suspending the execution of a registration ban, the deciding body subjects the sanctioned club to a probationary period ranging from six months to two years.
- h. If the club benefitting from a suspended registration ban commits another infringement during the probationary period, the suspension is automatically revoked and the registration ban executed; it is added to the sanction pronounced for the new infringement.
- i. The terms of the present article are without prejudice to the application of further measures in accordance with article 17 of the FIFA Regulations on the Status & Transfer of Players in the event of unilateral termination of the contractual relationship.

### Respect of contract

A contract between a professional and a club may only be terminated upon expiry of the term of the contract or by mutual agreement.

### Terminating a contract with just cause

- a. A contract may be terminated by either party without consequences of any kind (either payment of compensation or imposition of sporting sanctions) where there is just cause.
- b. Any abusive conduct of a party aiming at forcing the counterparty to terminate or change the terms of the contract shall entitle the counterparty (a player or a club) to terminate the contract with just cause.

#### Terminating a contract with just cause for outstanding salaries

- a. In the case of a club unlawfully failing to pay a player at least two monthly salaries on their due dates, the player will be deemed to have a just cause to terminate his contract, provided that he has put the debtor club in default in writing and has granted a deadline of at least 15 days for the debtor club to fully comply with its financial obligation(s). Alternatively provisions in contracts existing at the time of this provision coming into force may be considered.
- b. For any salaries of a player which are not due on a monthly basis, the pro-rata value corresponding to two months shall be considered. Delayed payment of an amount which is equal to at least two months shall also be deemed a just cause for the player to terminate his contract, subject to him complying with the notice of termination as per paragraph A above.
- c. Collective bargaining agreements validly negotiated by employers' and employees' representatives at domestic level in accordance with national law may deviate from the principles stipulated in paragraphs A and B above. The terms of such an agreement shall prevail.

#### Terminating a contract with sporting just cause

An established professional who has, in the course of the season, appeared in fewer than ten per cent of the official matches in which his club has been involved may terminate his contract prematurely on the grounds of sporting just cause. Due consideration shall be given to the player's circumstances in the appraisal of such cases. The existence of a sporting just cause shall be established on a case-by-case basis. In such a case, sporting sanctions shall not be imposed, though compensation may be payable. A professional may only terminate his contract on this basis in the 15 days following the last official match of the season of the club with which he is registered.

#### Restriction on terminating a contract during the season

A contract cannot be unilaterally terminated during the course of a season.

#### Consequences of terminating a contract without just cause

The following provisions apply if a contract is terminated without just cause:

- i. In all cases, the party in breach shall pay compensation. Subject to the provisions of article 20 and annexe 4 (FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players) in relation to training compensation, and unless otherwise provided for in the contract, compensation for the breach shall be calculated with due consideration for the law of the country concerned, the specificity of sport, and any other objective criteria. These criteria shall include, in particular, the remuneration and other benefits due to the player under the existing contract and/or the new contract, the time remaining on the existing contract up to a maximum of five years, the fees and expenses paid or incurred by the former club (amortised over the term of the contract) and whether the contractual breach falls within a protected period.  
Bearing in mind the aforementioned principles, compensation due to a player shall be calculated as follows:
  - a. In case the player did not sign any new contract following the termination of his previous contract, as a general rule, the compensation shall be equal to the residual value of the contract that was prematurely terminated;

- b. In case the player signed a new contract by the time of the decision, the value of the new contract for the period corresponding to the time remaining on the prematurely terminated contract shall be deducted from the residual value of the contract that was terminated early (the 'Mitigated Compensation'). Furthermore, and subject to the early termination of the contract being due to be entitles to an amount corresponding to three monthly salaries (the 'Additional Compensation'). In case of egregious circumstances, the Additional Compensation may be increased up to a maximum of six monthly salaries. The overall compensation may never exceed the rest value of the prematurely terminated contract.
  - c. Collective bargaining agreements validly negotiated by employers' and employees' representatives at domestic level in accordance with national law may deviate from the principles stipulated in the points a and b above. The terms of such an agreement shall prevail.
- ii. Entitlement to compensation cannot be assigned to a third party. If a professional is required to pay compensation, the professional and his new club shall be jointly and severally liable for its payment. The amount may be stipulated in the contract or agreed between the parties.
- iii. In addition to the obligation to pay compensation, sporting sanctions shall also be imposed on any player found to be in breach of contract during the protected period. This sanction shall be a four-month restriction on playing in official matches. In the case of aggravating circumstances, the restriction shall last six months. In all cases, these sporting sanctions shall take effect from the start of the following season at a new club. Unilateral breach without just cause or sporting just cause after the protected period shall not result in sporting sanctions. Disciplinary measures may, however, be imposed outside the protected period for failure to give notice of termination within 15 days of the last official match of the season (including national cups) of the club with which the player is registered. The protected period starts again when, while renewing the contract, the duration of the previous contract is extended.
- iv. In addition to the obligation to pay compensation, sporting sanctions shall be imposed on any club found to be in breach of contract or found to be inducing a breach of contract during the protected period. It shall be presumed, unless established to the contrary, that any club signing a professional who has terminated his contract without just cause has induced that professional to commit a breach. The club shall be banned from registering any new players, either nationally or internationally, for two entire and consecutive registration periods. The club shall be banned from registering any new players, either nationally or internationally, only as of the next registration period following the complete serving of the relevant sporting sanction. In particular, it may not make use of the exception and the provisional measures stipulated in article 6.1 of the FIFA Regulations on the Status & Transfer of Players in order to register players at an earlier stage.
- v. Any person subject to the FIFA Statutes and Regulations (club officials, players' agents, players, etc) who acts in a manner designed to induce a breach of contract between a professional and a club in order to facilitate the transfer of the player shall be sanctioned.



### Special provisions relating to contracts between professionals and clubs

- a. If an intermediary is involved in the negotiation of a contract, he shall be named in that contract.
- b. The minimum length of a contract shall be from its effective date until the end of the season, while the maximum length of a contract shall be five years. Contracts of any other length shall only be permitted if consistent with national laws. Players under the age of 18 may not sign a professional contract for a term longer than three years. Any clause referring to a longer period shall not be recognised.
- c. A club intending to conclude a contract with a professional must inform the player's current club in writing before entering into negotiations with him. A professional shall only be free to conclude a contract with another club if his contract with his present club has expired or is due to expire within six months. Any breach of this provision shall be subject to appropriate sanctions.
- d. The validity of a contract may not be made subject to a successful medical examination and/or the grant of a work permit.
- e. If a professional enters into more than one contract covering the same period, the provisions set forth in Chapter IV shall apply.
- f. Contractual clauses granting the club additional time to pay to the professional amounts that have fallen due under the terms of the contract (so-called 'grace periods') shall not be recognised. Grace periods contained in collective bargaining agreements validly negotiated by employers' and employees' representatives at domestic level in accordance with national law shall, however, be legally binding and recognised. Contracts existing at the time of this provision coming into force shall not be affected by this prohibition.

### Third-party influence on clubs

- a. No club shall enter into a contract which enables the counter club/counter clubs, and vice versa, or any third party to acquire the ability to influence in employment and transfer-related matters its independence, its policies or the performance of its teams.
- b. The FIFA Disciplinary Committee may impose disciplinary measures on clubs that do not observe the obligations set out in this article. Third-party ownership of players' economic rights.

### Third-party ownership of players' economic rights

- a. No club or player shall enter into an agreement with a third party whereby a third party is being entitled to participate, either in full or in part, in compensation payable in relation to the future transfer of a player from one club to another or is being assigned any rights in relation to a future transfer or transfer compensation.
- b. The interdiction as per paragraph A comes into force on 1 May 2015.
- c. Agreements covered by paragraph A which predate 1 May 2015 may continue to be in place until their contractual expiration. However, their duration may not be extended.
- d. The validity of any agreement covered by paragraph A signed between 1 January 2015 and 30 April 2015 may not have a contractual duration of more than 1 year beyond the effective date.

- e. By the end of April 2015, all existing agreements covered by paragraph a need to be recorded within the Transfer Matching System (TMS). All clubs that have signed such agreements are required to upload them in their entirety, including possible annexes or amendments, in TMS, specifying the details of the third party concerned, the full name of the player as well as the duration of the agreement.
- f. The FIFA Disciplinary Committee may impose disciplinary measures on clubs or players that do not observe the obligations set out in this article.

## **8.0 Transfers**

- a. Both Professional and Amateur players moving clubs will be required to complete a transfer. The transfer instruction must be submitted via the Comet FMS in accordance with the Comet User Guide and approved by both clubs involved in the transfer.
- b. No club or player shall be involved in a bridge transfer.
- c. It shall be presumed, unless established to the contrary, that if two consecutive transfers, national or international, of the same player occur within a period of 16 weeks, the parties (clubs and player) involved in those two transfers have participated in a bridge transfer.
- d. The FIFA Disciplinary Committee, in accordance with the FIFA Disciplinary Code, will impose sanctions on any party subject to the FIFA Statutes and regulations involved in a bridge transfer.

## **9.0 International Transfer Certificates (ITC)**

- a. An amateur or professional whose last registration was held outside Northern Ireland may not be registered with a Club unless the Association has received an International Transfer Certificate (ITC) issued by the National Association which the player wishes to leave.
- b. A player shall not, under any circumstances, be authorised to play in official matches for his new Club until an ITC has been received by the Association. Only the Irish Football Association is entitled to request an ITC to enable a player to be registered in Northern Ireland.
- c. The ITC may not be made subject to any conditions. In particular, the validity of an ITC shall not be restricted to a certain period and any clauses to this effect appended to the certificate shall be considered null and void.
- d. The loan of a professional player by one Club in one national association to another Club in another national association is dealt with administratively like a transfer. An ITC shall therefore be issued:
  - i. Whenever a player leaves a national association to join another national association to which he has been released on loan
  - ii. Whenever, on expiry of the period of loan, a player re-joins the national association of the Club which released him on loan
- e. In the case of both amateur and professional players instructions must be entered on to FIFA Transfer Matching System (TMS) by the club/s involved in accordance with FIFA TMS guidelines.
- f. The registering association is obliged to provide the club with which the player is registered with a player passport containing the relevant details of the player. The player passport shall indicate the club(s) with which the player has been registered since the season of his 12th birthday. If a birthday falls between seasons, the player passport shall indicate the club with which he was registered during the season following his birthday.

## **10.0 Loan of Professional Players**

- a. A professional player may be loaned to another club on the basis of a written agreement between him and the clubs concerned (temporary transfer (loan) of Standard Professional Contract) and submitted by the Club Registrar via Comet FMS in accordance with the Comet club user guide. Any such loan is subject to the same rules as apply to the transfer of players, including the provisions on training compensation and the solidarity mechanism.
- b. The loan of amateur players is not permitted.
- c. All loans shall be subject to the following terms and conditions:
  - i. The minimum loan period shall be the time between two registration periods (subject to Article 5.4 of the FIFA Regulations).
  - ii. A player's loan period must not exceed the period of the player's registration with his parent club.
  - iii. Upon the expiry of the loan period the player shall automatically return to his parent club.
  - iv. A player whose registration is temporarily transferred shall be permitted to play only for the borrowing club during the period of such transfer and shall not be permitted to play in matches against the parent club.
  - v. The loaning club shall be permitted to recall a player temporarily transferred to another club at any time during an official registration period.
  - vi. It shall be the responsibility of the club registering the player on loan to ensure that the necessary insurance cover is provided should the player become injured during his period of loan. In the event that no such insurance is secured the club may be liable for all costs associated with such injury.
  - vii. The club that has accepted a player on a loan basis is not entitled to transfer him to a third club without the written authorisation of the club that released the player on loan and the player concerned.

## **11.0 Cancellation of a Registration**

### Professional

- a. A professional registration may be cancelled at any time by mutual consent on the submission of the official cancellation form via Comet FMS.

### Amateur

- b. Cancellation of an amateur player shall only be administered by the Irish Football Association to cancel an amateur player's registration where he/she is moving to another national association.

## **12.0 Right of Approach**

- a. A club intending to conclude a contract with a player who is at present under written contract with another club is obliged to inform the club and the player in writing before commencing negotiations with either of them.
- b. The player shall only be free to conclude a contract with another club if his contract with his present club has expired or will expire within six months.
- c. All correspondence in this regard must be sent by special delivery post or email to the player, their current club and the IFA (registrations@irishfa.com ).

### 13.0 Pre-Contract

Where a club is submitting a pre-contract agreement to commence following the expiry of the player's current contract the club should email all relevant documentation to [registrations@irishfa.com](mailto:registrations@irishfa.com)

### 14.0 Protection of Minors

1. International transfers of players are only permitted if the player is over the age of 18.
2. The following five exceptions to this rule apply:
  - a) The player's parents move to the country in which the new club is located for reasons not linked to football.
  - b) The player is aged between 16 and 18 and:
    - i. the transfer takes place within the territory of the European Union (EU) or the European Economic Area (EEA); or
    - ii. The transfer takes place between two associations within the same country.

The new club must fulfil the following minimum obligations.

- iii. It shall provide the player with an adequate football education and/or training in line with the highest national standards.
  - iv. It shall guarantee the player an academic and/or school and/or vocational education and/or training, in addition to his football education and/or training, which will allow the player to pursue a career other than football should he cease playing professional football.
  - v. It shall make all necessary arrangements to ensure that the player is looked after in the best possible way (optimum living standards with a host family or in club accommodation, appointment of a mentor at the club, etc.).
  - vi. It shall, on registration of such a player, provide the relevant association with proof that it is complying with the aforementioned obligations.
- c. The player lives no further than 50km from a national border and the club with which the player wishes to be registered in the neighbouring association is also within 50km of that border. The maximum distance between the player's domicile and the club's headquarters shall be 100km. In such cases, the player must continue to live at home and the two associations concerned must give their explicit consent.
  - d. The player flees his country of origin for humanitarian reasons, specifically related to his life or freedom being threatened on account of race, religion, nationality, belonging to a particular social group, or political opinion, without his parents and is therefore at least temporarily permitted to reside in the country of arrival.
  - e. The player is a student and moves without his parents to another country temporarily for academic reasons in order to undertake an exchange programme. The duration of the player's registration for the new club until he turns 18 or until the end of the academic or school programme cannot exceed one year. The player's new club may only be a purely amateur club without a professional team or without a legal, financial or de facto link to a professional club.

3. The conditions of this article shall also apply to any player who has never previously been registered with a club, is not a national of the country in which he wishes to be registered for the first time and has not lived continuously for at least five years in said country.
4. The following general principles shall apply:
  - a. Every international transfer according to paragraph 2) and the first registration according to paragraph 3, as well as every first registration of a foreign minor player who has lived continuously for at least five years in the country in which he wishes to be registered, is subject to the approval of the sub-committee appointed by the FIFA Players' Status Committee for that purpose if the concerned minor player is at least ten years old. The application for approval shall be submitted by the association that wishes to register the player. The former association shall be given the opportunity to submit its position. The sub-committee's approval shall be obtained prior to any request from an association for an International Transfer Certificate and/or first registration.
  - b. If the minor player concerned is under the age of ten, it is the responsibility of the association that intends to register the player – as per the request of its affiliated club – to verify and ensure that the circumstances of the player fall, beyond all doubt, under one of the exceptions provided for in paragraph 2 above or the five-year rule (cf. paragraphs 3 and 4a)). Such verification shall be made prior to any registration.
  - c. Under special circumstances, a member association may submit a written request through the Transfer Matching System (TMS) to the sub-committee, seeking a decision granting it a limited minor exemption ("LME"). The LME, if granted, relieves the member association, under specific terms and conditions and solely for amateur minor players who are to be registered with purely amateur clubs, from the obligation to make a formal application for approval through TMS to the sub-committee in accordance with paragraph 4a) above and Annexe 2 of these regulations. In such a case, prior to any request for an ITC and/or a first registration, the association concerned is required to verify and ensure that the circumstances of the player fall, beyond all doubt, under one of the applicable exceptions provided for in paragraph 2 above or the five-year rule (cf. paragraphs 3 and 4 a) of FIFA Regulations of the Transfer and Status of Players).
  - d. The Disciplinary Committee, in accordance with the FIFA Disciplinary Code, will impose sanctions for any violation of this provision. In addition, sanctions may also be imposed on the former association for issuing, when applicable, an ITC without the prior approval of the sub-committee, as well as on the clubs that were involved in the transfer of a minor.
5. The procedures for applying to the sub-committee for a first registration and an international transfer of a minor are contained in Annexe 2 of the FIFA regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players.

#### **15.0 Registration and reporting of minors at academies**

- a. Clubs that operate an academy with legal, financial or de facto links to the club are obliged to report all minors who attend the academy to the association upon whose territory the academy operates.

- b. Each association is obliged to ensure that all academies without legal, financial or de facto links to a club:
  - i. Run a club that participates in the relevant national championships; all players shall be reported to the association upon whose territory the academy operates, or registered with the club itself; or
  - ii. Report all minors who attend the academy for the purpose of training to the association upon whose territory the academy operates.
- c. Each association shall keep a register comprising the names and dates of birth of the minors who have been reported to it by the clubs or academies.
- d. Through the act of reporting, academies and players undertake to practise football in accordance with the FIFA Statutes, and to respect and promote the ethical principles of organised football.
- e. Any violations of this provision will be sanctioned by the Disciplinary Committee in accordance with the FIFA Disciplinary Code.
- f. Article 19 of the FIFA Regulations on the Status & Transfer of Players shall also apply to the reporting of all minor players who are not nationals of the country in which they wish to be reported.

## **16.0 Transfer Disputes**

- a. Where a club has not responded to a transfer request for an amateur player within 7 days the League (if both clubs are in membership of the same League) or the IFA (if both clubs are in membership of different Leagues) shall terminate the former registration to enable the transfer to be completed unless 16b applies.
- b. Where a club objects to a transfer request for an amateur player they must notify their League/IFA within 7 days. Proceedings will be instigated to arrange a dispute resolution hearing.
  - i. If both clubs are in membership of the same League such hearing shall be considered by that League.
  - ii. If both clubs are in membership of different Leagues such hearing shall be considered by the IFA Player Registration Sub Committee.
- c. All registration disputes will be dealt with on a case by case basis.
- d. Any club who rejects the transfer of an amateur player within 7 days, without just cause, shall be fined a minimum of £100.
- e. In the event of any transfer dispute being officially reported to the Association less than 7 days before the expiry of a registration period the Player Registration Sub Committee shall have discretionary powers on a case by case basis to approve such registration.

## **17.0 Domestic Training and Development Compensation Regulations**

- a. a player's training and education takes place between the ages of 12 and 23. Training compensation shall be payable, as a general rule, up to the age of 23 for training incurred up to the age of 21.
- b. Domestic Training and Development Compensation shall only be paid when a player moves between clubs in membership of the Irish Football Association.
- c. Training compensation is due when:
  - i. a player is registered for the first time as a professional; or
  - ii. a professional is transferred between clubs before the end of the season of his 21st birthday.

- d. Compensation will only be claimable from the start of the season of the players 12th birthday up to the end of the season of the players 21st birthday. Training compensation shall be payable until the end of the season of the player's 23rd birthday.
- e. In order for compensation to be due the player must be registered as a professional player with the new club, regardless of his status with the former club.

#### Categorisation

Under the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players, Senior Football in Northern Ireland holds Category 3 Status with all other levels below Senior Football being assigned Category 4 status. Training Compensation is not due if a player is transferred to a category 4 club.

There are 3 categories in Northern Ireland:

- i. Senior Football
- ii. Intermediate Football
- iii. Junior / Youth Football

The compensation types are as follows:

1. Basic Compensation – Upon the completion of the first professional registration of a player a basic initial compensation payment at a flat rate of £250 per full season is paid to all training clubs who have provided training during the training period.
2. Conditional Compensation – Conditional compensation payments shall be due to the training club or clubs upon the player reaching particular milestones as identified below:-
  - First competitive 1st team appearance – £100 per full season
  - 25 competitive 1st team appearances – £100 per full season
  - National U21 Team competitive debut – £100 per full season
  - National A Team competitive debut – £300 per full season
3. Solidarity Contribution - When a professional player transfers domestically for the first time before or during the season of his 23rd birthday and where a transfer fee of £20,000 or more has been paid for the player 5% of the transfer fee, not including training compensation paid to his former club, shall be identified as a solidarity contribution. 10% of the solidarity contribution shall be due to the clubs contributing to the training and development of the player during his amateur status for each full season that the player was registered and is payable from the season of the player's 12th birthday until the season of the player's 21st birthday.
- f. More information in respect of the application of the Domestic Training and Development Compensation regulations are provided in Annex 1.

### **18.0 Player Registrations Sub Committee**

A Sub Committee consisting of seven representatives of the Football Committee will meet as required to deal with the following:

- Registration disputes
  - o Transfer dispute involving an amateur player moving between clubs
  - o Contract disputes between a professional player and his club
  - o Priority of Registration Disputes
- Review and monitor implementation of regulations
- Impose sanctions on leagues for non-compliance

## **19.0 Leagues retain the Right**

Leagues retain the right to determine the criteria for the eligibility of players playing for clubs within their league and to impose sanctions where appropriate in accordance with their rules but must comply with the FIFA Regulations as adopted by the IFA.

# **ANNEX 1**

## **Domestic Training and Development Regulations**

### Adoption and Enforcement

The Irish FA Football Committee is the responsible body for overseeing the implementation of these regulations which were adopted by that committee on 12th March Football Committee Meeting. The regulations come into force from 1st August 2020 and will be reviewed every 3 years.

### Compensation Principles

Compensation to training clubs is activated upon the first professional registration of a player providing that such professional registration is confirmed prior to the conclusion of the season of the player's 21st birthday.

Compensation shall be payable to clubs who have contributed to the training and development of players prior to their first registration as a professional within the training period. The training period is recognised as the period from the season of the player's 12th birthday to the season of the player's 21st birthday.

The amount of compensation payable to clubs is calculated by multiplying the compensation type amount by the number of full seasons of training provided by that club or clubs within the training period.

There are 3 compensation types which are detailed below including the administrative procedures to be followed and the arrangements for processing payments and raising disputes.

### Compensation Types

#### **1. Basic Compensation**

Upon the completion of the first professional registration of a player a basic initial compensation payment at a flat rate of £250 per full season is paid to all training clubs who have provided training during the training period.

Payment of basic compensation will be calculated by Irish FA Player Registrations staff and communicated to all relevant clubs upon the completion of the first professional registration. Only the information included in the official player passport in the Irish FA Comet Football Management System will be considered to identify training clubs and to calculate the amount of basic compensation due.

The club registering the player for the first time as a professional will have 60 days from the date of the Irish FA communication to make payment to the training club or clubs. In the event of non-payment or a disagreement regarding the amount of compensation due the training club or clubs should submit a dispute to the IFA Football Committee by email via the Irish FA Registrations Department [registrations@irishfa.com](mailto:registrations@irishfa.com) providing full details of the dispute. If no dispute is submitted by the training club or clubs within 1 year of the original Irish FA communication any unpaid compensation will be forfeited.



## **2. Conditional Compensation**

Conditional compensation payments shall be due to the training club or clubs upon the player reaching particular milestones as identified below:-

- First competitive 1st team appearance – £100 per full season
- 25 competitive 1st team appearances – £100 per full season
- National U21 Team competitive debut – £100 per full season
- National A Team competitive debut – £300 per full season

Training clubs shall be responsible for tracking the career of their former player and should make a compensation claim by contacting the relevant professional club at the appropriate time to confirm that conditional payment/s are due. Thereafter the club who registered the player for the first time as a professional will have 60 days to make payment to the training club or clubs. Training clubs must request payment for conditional compensation in writing within 1 year of the relevant condition for the compensation being realized. After 1 year has lapsed any unclaimed conditional compensation shall be forfeited.

In the event of non-payment or a disagreement regarding the amount of conditional compensation due the training club or clubs should submit a dispute to the Irish FA Football Committee by email via the Irish FA Registrations Department ([registrations@irishfa.com](mailto:registrations@irishfa.com)) providing full details of the dispute. It shall be the responsibility of the claimant club to provide satisfactory evidence that the request has been submitted to the professional club in order and within the 1 year window.

For the avoidance of doubt conditional compensation payments are only due to the training club or clubs when the occurrence leading to the condition being realized happens after the player has registered as a professional.

The responsibility to pay conditional compensation to the training club or clubs ends when the player's professional contract with the club either expires naturally; or is terminated; or upon completion of the season of the player's 23rd birthday.

## **3. Solidarity Contribution**

When a professional player transfers domestically for the first time before or during the season of his 23rd birthday and where a transfer fee of £20,000 or more has been paid for the player 5% of the transfer fee, not including training compensation paid to his former club, shall be identified as a solidarity contribution. 10% of the solidarity contribution shall be due to the clubs contributing to the training and development of the player during his amateur status for each full season that the player was registered and is payable from the season of the player's 12th birthday until the season of the player's 21st birthday.

Solidarity contributions must be paid to the training club or clubs by the selling club within 60 days of the transfer fee being received.

In the event of non-payment or a disagreement regarding the amount of solidarity contribution due the training club or clubs should submit a dispute to the Irish FA Football Committee by email via the IFA Registrations Department [registrations@irishfa.com](mailto:registrations@irishfa.com) providing full details of the dispute. Any dispute must be submitted within 1 year following the date of the transfer.

### Subsequent Transfers

In the event of subsequent transfers of the professional player before the end of the season of the player's 23rd birthday (where the player is registered as a professional with the new club) compensation is only due to the player's former club.

In such cases when compensation is due it shall be payable at a rate of **£1500 per full season**.

Claimant clubs must request payment for such training compensation in writing within 1 year of the activation of the new professional registration.

In the event of non-payment or a disagreement regarding the amount of compensation due the claimant club should submit a dispute to the Irish FA Football Committee by email via the Irish FA Registrations Department [registrations@irishfa.com](mailto:registrations@irishfa.com) providing full details of the dispute and it shall be the responsibility of the claimant club to provide satisfactory evidence that the request has been submitted to the new club in order and within the 1 year window.

If the former club does not offer the professional player a contract, no training compensation is payable. The former club must offer the professional player a contract in writing via Special Delivery post at least 30 days before the expiry of his current contract. Such an offer shall furthermore be at least of an equivalent value to the current contract.

The only exception to this principle is in respect of pre-contract agreements. Where a professional player has signed a pre-contract agreement at least 30 days prior to the end of his current contract, his former club will retain their right to compensation without having to offer a contract in writing via Special Delivery post at least 30 days before the expiry of his current contract.

Any right to training compensation shall only be triggered with the activation (start date) of the professional contract with the new club, not the date of signing of any pre-contract agreement.

For the avoidance of doubt, where a club is no longer interested in the services of one of its professional players and does not seek to renew his contract, that club is deemed to have written off the investment made for his training and the player is free to move to another club without any compensation being payable. When a player moves for a transfer fee during his existing registration no training compensation shall be paid.

Instead the club losing the player should receive a transfer fee that should be equal to or greater than the amount set out in the training compensation scale above.

Training compensation is not due if a professional reacquires amateur status on being transferred.

However, if a player re-registers as a professional within 30 months of being reinstated as an amateur, training compensation will then be payable if applicable as per these regulations.



# AMATEUR GAME PLAYER REGISTRATION REGULATIONS



## SEASON 2021-2022

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## 1.0 Introduction

- a. Players participating in organised football are either amateurs or professionals. A professional is a player who has a written contract with a club and is paid more for his footballing activity than the expenses he effectively incurs. All other players are considered to be amateurs.
- b. Youth players shall not be subject to the Player Registration Regulations and may register freely until the season in which their 10th birthday occurs, subject to individual competition rules.
- c. **The following regulations shall apply for amateur players registering for their club to play in purely amateur competitions. Competition rules shall determine if a competition is to be purely amateur (for the avoidance of any doubt if a competition's rules do not explicitly exclude professional players from participating then it shall not be considered to be a purely amateur competition and the Professional Game regulations shall apply).**
- d. All amateur registrations shall be administered by Clubs/Leagues using the Comet FMS.
- e. All Club registrars shall act as agents for the Association and will be obliged to agree to the terms and conditions of the access to and use of the Comet FMS.
- f. Appointed league officials shall have full access to player registration records within their own league and will have full administrator rights to assist clubs as and when required. Such officials will be obliged to agree to the terms and conditions of the access to and use of the Comet FMS.
- g. A player not registered with the Association who appears for a club in any official match shall be considered to have played illegitimately. Without prejudice to any measure required to rectify the sporting consequences of such an appearance, sanctions may also be imposed on the player and/or the club by the organising body of the competition concerned.
- h. It shall be the responsibility of clubs playing in any match to be played under the jurisdiction of the Association to ensure that its players are eligible to play in such a match.
- i. Professionals who end their careers upon expiry of their contracts and amateurs who terminate their activity shall remain registered at the Association of their last club for a period of 30 months. This period begins on the day the player made his last appearance for the club in an official match.

## 2.0 Number of Registrations/Clubs

- a. Each association must have an electronic player registration system, which must assign each player a FIFA ID when the player is first registered. A player must be registered at an association to play for a club as either a professional or an amateur in accordance with the provisions of article 2 (FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players). Only electronically registered players identified with a FIFA ID are eligible to participate in organised football. By the act of registering, a player agrees to abide by the statutes and regulations of FIFA, the confederations and the associations.
- b. A player may only be registered with a club for the purpose of playing organised football. As an exception to this rule, a player may have to be registered with a club for mere technical reasons to secure transparency in consecutive individual transactions (cf. Annexe 3 of the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players).

- c. A player may only be registered with one club at a time.
- d. Players may be registered with a maximum of three clubs during one season (the period from 1st August to 31st May, and in the case of NIFL Women's Premiership and NIWFA from 1st March to 31st October). During this period, the player is only eligible to play in official matches for two clubs, subject to the temporary exception below. As an exception to this rule, a player moving between two clubs belonging to associations with overlapping seasons (i.e. start of the season in summer/autumn as opposed to winter/spring) may be eligible to play in official matches for a third club during the relevant season, provided he/she has fully complied with his/her contractual obligations towards his/her previous clubs. Equally, the provisions relating to the registration periods (article 6 – FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players) as well as to the minimum length of a contract (article 18 paragraph 2 – FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players) must be respected.
  - i. This exception may also apply to players moving between two clubs belonging to domestic leagues with overlapping seasons.
  - ii. In accordance with article 5.4.i – FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players), during the following period, players may be registered with a maximum of three clubs and are eligible to play official matches for three clubs during one season:
    - a. for associations following a dual-year calendar: the 2019/20 and 2020/21 seasons; and
    - b. for associations following a single-year calendar: the 2020 and 2021 season.
- e. Under all circumstances, due consideration must be given to the sporting integrity of the competition. In particular, a player may not play official matches for more than two clubs competing in the same national championship or cup during the same season, subject to stricter individual competition regulations of member associations. (FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players).
- f. Notwithstanding any of the above, a player may only register for any club twice in one season.
- g. In the event of the Association receiving formal notification, in writing, of a club ceasing to exist all amateur players registered with said club during the current season shall be immediately released from their registration and free to register with another club, subject to compliance with the relevant league's rules. For the avoidance of any doubt the club who cease to exist will not be counted in the number of clubs for which the player has been registered in the current season.

### **3.0 Registration Periods**

- a. Players may only be registered during the official registration period for purely amateur competitions which shall open on 4 July 2021 and close on 31 March 2022.
- b. Players participating in NIFL Women's Premiership organised competitions during 2021 may be registered during the following periods:
  - 1 March 2021 – 9 May 2021
  - 12 July 2021 – 31 July 2021
- c. Players participating in NIWFA organised competitions during 2021 may be registered during the period 1 March 2021 to 7 August 2021.

#### **4.0 Reacquisition of Amateur Status**

- a. A player registered as a professional may not re-register as an amateur until at least 30 days after his last match as a professional (and provided the previous registration has either expired or been cancelled).
- b. No compensation is payable upon reacquisition of amateur status. If a player re-registers as a professional within 30 months of being reinstated as an amateur, his new club shall pay training compensation in accordance with Article 20 of the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players.

#### **5.0 Amateur Registrations**

- a. All amateur registrations must be submitted via the Comet FMS by Club Registrars.
- b. All mandatory fields of the Comet FMS must be accurately completed in full before a registration is confirmed. The player shall be considered registered upon completion of the online procedure and an email confirming the player's registration will be automatically sent to the email address provided by the player to the club and entered in the Comet FMS. Any player who is under the age of 18 on the date of registration must have the email address of a parent or guardian entered in the Comet FMS. In the event that a player, or in the case of a player under the age of 18 their parent or guardian, does not consent to the registration of the player they should immediately contact the Irish Football Association who will investigate the matter and either confirm or terminate the registration as appropriate.
- c. The length of an amateur registration shall be from its effective date until 30 June 2022. Re-registration of players is available via Comet FMS from 9 June – 3 July. While players participating in NIFL Women's Premiership and NIWFA Leagues can be re-registered during 1 March – 30 April.
- d. Priority of registration shall determine the eligibility of a player to play for the club with which he was first registered.
- e. In the event of a team whose club participate in both professional and purely amateur competitions such clubs shall be permitted to register players outside the fixed registration periods for the professional game (but within the amateur game registration period (4 July – 31 March) but such players so registered shall be restricted to playing for the team who participates in purely amateur competitions. Such player will only become eligible to participate in a professional game competition at the commencement of the subsequent registration period.

#### **6.0 Transfers**

- a. Amateur players moving clubs will be required to complete a transfer. The transfer instruction must be submitted via the Comet FMS and approved by both clubs involved in the transfer.
- b. No club or player shall be involved in a bridge transfer.
- c. It shall be presumed, unless established to the contrary, that if two consecutive transfers, national or international, of the same player occur within a period of 16 weeks, the parties (clubs and player) involved in those two transfers have participated in a bridge transfer.
- d. The FIFA Disciplinary Committee, in accordance with the FIFA Disciplinary Code, will impose sanctions on any party subject to the FIFA Statutes and regulations involved in a bridge transfer.



## **7.0 International Transfer Certificates (ITC)**

- a. An amateur player whose last registration was held outside Northern Ireland may not be registered with a Club unless the Association has received an International Transfer Certificate (ITC) issued by the National Association which the player wishes to leave via FIFA TMS.
- b. A player shall not, under any circumstances, be authorised to play in official matches for his new Club until an ITC has been received by the Association.
- c. Instructions must be entered on to FIFA Transfer Matching System (TMS) by the club/s involved in accordance with FIFA TMS guidelines.
- d. The ITC may not be made subject to any conditions. In particular, the validity of an ITC shall not be restricted to a certain period and any clauses to this effect appended to the certificate shall be considered null and void.
- e. The registering association is obliged to provide the club with which the player is registered with a player passport containing the relevant details of the player. The player passport shall indicate the club(s) with which the player has been registered since the season of his 12th birthday. If a birthday falls between seasons, the player passport shall indicate the club with which he was registered during the season following his birthday.

## **8.0 Loan of Players**

The loan of amateur players is not permitted.

## **9.0 Cancellation of a Registration**

Cancellation of an amateur player shall only be administered by the Irish Football Association to cancel an amateur player's registration where he/she is moving to another national association.

## **10.0 Protection of Minors**

1. International transfers of players are only permitted if the player is over the age of 18.
2. The following five exceptions to this rule apply:
  - a. The player's parents move to the country in which the new club is located for reasons not linked to football.
  - b. The player is aged between 16 and 18 and:
    - i. the transfer takes place within the territory of the European Union (EU) or the European Economic Area (EEA); or
    - ii. The transfer takes place between two associations within the same country.

The new club must fulfil the following minimum obligations.

    - iii. It shall provide the player with an adequate football education and/or training in line with the highest national standards.
    - iv. It shall guarantee the player an academic and/or school and/or vocational education and/or training, in addition to his football education and/or training, which will allow the player to pursue a career other than football should he cease playing professional football.
    - v. It shall make all necessary arrangements to ensure that the player is looked after in the best possible way (optimum living standards with a host family or in club accommodation, appointment of a mentor at the club, etc.).

- vi. It shall, on registration of such a player, provide the relevant association with proof that it is complying with the aforementioned obligations.
  - c. The player lives no further than 50km from a national border and the club with which the player wishes to be registered in the neighbouring association is also within 50km of that border. The maximum distance between the player's domicile and the club's headquarters shall be 100km. In such cases, the player must continue to live at home and the two associations concerned must give their explicit consent.
  - d. The player flees his country of origin for humanitarian reasons, specifically related to his life or freedom being threatened on account of race, religion, nationality, belonging to a particular social group, or political opinion, without his parents and is therefore at least temporarily permitted to reside in the country of arrival.
  - e. The player is a student and moves without his parents to another country temporarily for academic reasons in order to undertake an exchange programme. The duration of the player's registration for the new club until he turns 18 or until the end of the academic or school programme cannot exceed one year. The player's new club may only be a purely amateur club without a professional team or without a legal, financial or de facto link to a professional club.
3. The conditions of this article shall also apply to any player who has never previously been registered with a club, is not a national of the country in which he wishes to be registered for the first time and has not lived continuously for at least five years in said country.
4. The following general principles shall apply:
- a. Every international transfer according to paragraph 2) and the first registration according to paragraph 3, as well as every first registration of a foreign minor player who has lived continuously for at least five years in the country in which he wishes to be registered, is subject to the approval of the sub-committee appointed by the FIFA Players' Status Committee for that purpose if the concerned minor player is at least ten years old. The application for approval shall be submitted by the association that wishes to register the player. The former association shall be given the opportunity to submit its position. The sub-committee's approval shall be obtained prior to any request from an association for an International Transfer Certificate and/or first registration.
  - b. If the minor player concerned is under the age of ten, it is the responsibility of the association that intends to register the player – as per the request of its affiliated club – to verify and ensure that the circumstances of the player fall, beyond all doubt, under one of the exceptions provided for in paragraph 2 above or the five-year rule (cf. paragraphs 3 and 4a)). Such verifications shall be made prior to any registration.
  - c. Under special circumstances, a member association may submit a written request through the Transfer Matching System (TMS) to the sub-committee, seeking a decision granting it a limited minor exemption ("LME"). The LME, if granted, relieves the member association, under specific terms and conditions and solely for amateur minor players who are to be registered with purely amateur clubs, from the obligation to

make a formal application for approval through TMS to the sub-committee in accordance with paragraph 4a) above and Annexe 2 of these regulations. In such a case, prior to any request for an ITC and/or a first registration, the association concerned is required to verify and ensure that the circumstances of the player fall, beyond all doubt, under one of the applicable exceptions provided for in paragraph 2 above or the five-year rule (cf. paragraphs 3 and 4 a) of FIFA Regulations of the Transfer and Status of Players).

- d. The Disciplinary Committee, in accordance with the FIFA Disciplinary Code, will impose sanctions for any violation of this provision. In addition, sanctions may also be imposed on the former association for issuing, when applicable, an ITC without the prior approval of the sub-committee, as well as on the clubs that were involved in the transfer of a minor.
5. The procedures for applying to the sub-committee for a first registration and an international transfer of a minor are contained in Annexe 2 of the FIFA regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players.

### **11.0 Transfer Disputes**

- a. Where a club has not responded to a transfer request for an amateur player within 7 days the League (if both clubs are in membership of the same League) or the IFA (if both clubs are in membership of different Leagues) shall terminate the former registration to enable the transfer to be completed unless 11b applies.
- b. Where a club objects to a transfer request for an amateur player they must notify their League / IFA within 7 days. Proceedings will be instigated to arrange a dispute resolution hearing.
  - i. If both clubs are in membership of the same League such hearing shall be considered by that League.
  - ii. If both clubs are in membership of different Leagues such hearing shall be considered by the IFA Player Registration Sub Committee.
- c. All registration disputes will be dealt with on a case by case basis.
- d. Any club who rejects the transfer of an amateur player within 7 days, without just cause, shall be fined a minimum sum of £100.
- e. In the event of any transfer dispute being officially reported to the Association less than 7 days before the expiry of a registration period the Player Registration Sub Committee shall have discretionary powers on a case by case basis to approve such registration.

### **12.0 Domestic Training and Development Compensation Regulations**

- a. A player's training and education takes place between the ages of 12 and 23. Training compensation shall be payable, as a general rule, up to the age of 23 for training incurred up to the age of 21.
- b. Domestic Training and Development Compensation shall only be paid when a player moves between clubs in membership of the Irish Football Association.
- c. Training compensation is due when:
  - i. a player is registered for the first time as a professional; or
  - ii. a professional is transferred between clubs before the end of the season of his 21st birthday.

- d. Compensation will only be claimable from the start of the season of the players 12th birthday up to the end of the season of the players 21st birthday. Training compensation shall be payable until the end of the season of the player's 23rd birthday.
- e. In order for compensation to be due the player must be registered as a professional player with the new club, regardless of his status with the former club.

#### Categorisation

Under the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players, Senior Football in Northern Ireland holds Category 3 Status with all other levels below Senior Football being assigned Category 4 status. Training Compensation is not due if a player is transferred to a category 4 club.

There are 3 categories in Northern Ireland:

- i. Senior Football
- ii. Intermediate Football
- iii. Junior / Youth Football

The compensation types are as follows;

1. Basic Compensation – Upon the completion of the first professional registration of a player a basic initial compensation payment at a flat rate of £250 per full season is paid to all training clubs who have provided training during the training period.
2. Conditional Compensation – Conditional compensation payments shall be due to the training club or clubs upon the player reaching particular milestones as identified below:-
  - First competitive 1st team appearance – £100 per full season
  - 25 competitive 1st team appearances – £100 per full season
  - National U21 Team competitive debut – £100 per full season
  - National A Team competitive debut – £300 per full season
3. Solidarity Contribution - When a professional player transfers domestically for the first time before or during the season of his 23rd birthday and where a transfer fee of £20,000 or more has been paid for the player 5% of the transfer fee, not including training compensation paid to his former club, shall be identified as a solidarity contribution. 10% of the solidarity contribution shall be due to the clubs contributing to the training and development of the player during his amateur status for each full season that the player was registered and is payable from the season of the player's 12th birthday until the season of the player's 21st birthday.
- f. More information in respect of the application of the Domestic Training and Development Compensation regulations are provided in Annex 1.

### **13.0 Player Registrations Sub Committee**

A Sub Committee consisting of seven representatives of the Football Committee will meet as required to deal with the following:

- Registration disputes
  - o Transfer dispute involving an amateur player moving between clubs participating in different leagues.
  - o Contract disputes between a professional player and his club
  - o Priority of Registration Disputes
- Review and monitor implementation of regulations
- Impose sanctions on leagues for non-compliance

## **14.0 Leagues retain the Right**

Leagues retain the right to determine the criteria for the eligibility of players playing for clubs within their league and to impose sanctions where appropriate in accordance with their rules but must comply with the FIFA Regulations as adopted by the IFA.

# **ANNEX 1**

## **Domestic Training and Development Regulations**

### Adoption and Enforcement

The Irish FA Football Committee is the responsible body for overseeing the implementation of these regulations which were adopted by that committee on 12th March Football Committee Meeting. The regulations come into force from 1st August 2020 and will be reviewed every 3 years.

### Compensation Principles

Compensation to training clubs is activated upon the first professional registration of a player providing that such professional registration is confirmed prior to the conclusion of the season of the player's 21st birthday.

Compensation shall be payable to clubs who have contributed to the training and development of players prior to their first registration as a professional within the training period. The training period is recognised as the period from the season of the player's 12th birthday to the season of the player's 21st birthday.

The amount of compensation payable to clubs is calculated by multiplying the compensation type amount by the number of full seasons of training provided by that club or clubs within the training period.

There are 3 compensation types which are detailed below including the administrative procedures to be followed and the arrangements for processing payments and raising disputes.

### Compensation Types

#### **1. Basic Compensation**

Upon the completion of the first professional registration of a player a basic initial compensation payment at a flat rate of £250 per full season is paid to all training clubs who have provided training during the training period.

Payment of basic compensation will be calculated by Irish FA Player Registrations staff and communicated to all relevant clubs upon the completion of the first professional registration. Only the information included in the official player passport in the Irish FA Comet Football Management System will be considered to identify training clubs and to calculate the amount of basic compensation due. The club registering the player for the first time as a professional will have 60 days from the date of the Irish FA communication to make payment to the training club or clubs. In the event of non-payment or a disagreement regarding the amount of compensation due the training club or clubs should submit a dispute to the IFA Football Committee by email via the Irish FA Registrations Department [registrations@irishfa.com](mailto:registrations@irishfa.com) providing full details of the dispute. If no dispute is submitted by the training club or clubs within 1 year of the original Irish FA communication any unpaid compensation will be forfeited.

## **2. Conditional Compensation**

Conditional compensation payments shall be due to the training club or clubs upon the player reaching particular milestones as identified below:-

- First competitive 1st team appearance – £100 per full season
- 25 competitive 1st team appearances – £100 per full season
- National U21 Team competitive debut – £100 per full season
- National A Team competitive debut – £300 per full season

Training clubs shall be responsible for tracking the career of their former player and should make a compensation claim by contacting the relevant professional club at the appropriate time to confirm that conditional payment/s are due. Thereafter the club who registered the player for the first time as a professional will have 60 days to make payment to the training club or clubs. Training clubs must request payment for conditional compensation in writing within 1 year of the relevant condition for the compensation being realised. After 1 year has lapsed any unclaimed conditional compensation shall be forfeited.

In the event of non-payment or a disagreement regarding the amount of conditional compensation due the training club or clubs should submit a dispute to the Irish FA Football Committee by email via the Irish FA Registrations Department [registrations@irishfa.com](mailto:registrations@irishfa.com) providing full details of the dispute. It shall be the responsibility of the claimant club to provide satisfactory evidence that the request has been submitted to the professional club in order and within the 1 year window.

For the avoidance of doubt conditional compensation payments are only due to the training club or clubs when the occurrence leading to the condition being realised happens after the player has registered as a professional.

The responsibility to pay conditional compensation to the training club or clubs ends when the player's professional contract with the club either expires naturally; or is terminated; or upon completion of the season of the player's 23rd birthday.

## **3. Solidarity Contribution**

When a professional player transfers domestically for the first time before or during the season of his 23rd birthday and where a transfer fee of £20,000 or more has been paid for the player 5% of the transfer fee, not including training compensation paid to his former club, shall be identified as a solidarity contribution. 10% of the solidarity contribution shall be due to the clubs contributing to the training and development of the player during his amateur status for each full season that the player was registered and is payable from the season of the player's 12th birthday until the season of the player's 21st birthday.

Solidarity contributions must be paid to the training club or clubs by the selling club within 60 days of the transfer fee being received.

In the event of non-payment or a disagreement regarding the amount of solidarity contribution due the training club or clubs should submit a dispute to the Irish FA Football Committee by email via the IFA Registrations Department [registrations@irishfa.com](mailto:registrations@irishfa.com) providing full details of the dispute. Any dispute must be submitted within 1 year following the date of the transfer.

### Subsequent Transfers

In the event of subsequent transfers of the professional player before the end of the season of the player's 23rd birthday (where the player is registered as a professional with the new club) compensation is only due to the player's former club.

In such cases when compensation is due it shall be payable at a rate of **£1500 per full season**.

Claimant clubs must request payment for such training compensation in writing within 1 year of the activation of the new professional registration.

In the event of non-payment or a disagreement regarding the amount of compensation due the claimant club should submit a dispute to the Irish FA Football Committee by email via the Irish FA Registrations Department [registrations@irishfa.com](mailto:registrations@irishfa.com) providing full details of the dispute and it shall be the responsibility of the claimant club to provide satisfactory evidence that the request has been submitted to the new club in order and within the 1 year window.

If the former club does not offer the professional player a contract, no training compensation is payable. The former club must offer the professional player a contract in writing via Special Delivery post at least 30 days before the expiry of his current contract. Such an offer shall furthermore be at least of an equivalent value to the current contract.

The only exception to this principle is in respect of pre-contract agreements. Where a professional player has signed a pre-contract agreement at least 30 days prior to the end of his current contract, his former club will retain their right to compensation without having to offer a contract in writing via Special Delivery post at least 30 days before the expiry of his current contract.

Any right to training compensation shall only be triggered with the activation (start date) of the professional contract with the new club, not the date of signing of any pre-contract agreement.

For the avoidance of doubt, where a club is no longer interested in the services of one of its professional players and does not seek to renew his contract, that club is deemed to have written off the investment made for his training and the player is free to move to another club without any compensation being payable. When a player moves for a transfer fee during his existing registration no training compensation shall be paid. Instead the club losing the player should receive a transfer fee that should be equal to or greater than the amount set out in the training compensation scale above.

Training compensation is not due if a professional reacquires amateur status on being transferred. However, if a player re-registers as a professional within 30 months of being reinstated as an amateur, training compensation will then be payable if applicable as per these regulations.

# **IFA DISCIPLINARY CODE SEASON 2021/2022**





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*The IFA Disciplinary Code is operating within the guidelines of the FIFA Disciplinary Code.*

## **Article 1 Adoption and Enforcement**

- 1.1 The IFA Disciplinary Committee (the Committee) adopted this code on 1 August 2021.
- 1.2 This code comes into force on 1 August 2021 and applies to all disciplinary matters arising from and concerning football under the jurisdiction of the IFA.
- 1.3 Save where expressly set out to the contrary, words and phrases as defined in the Articles of Association of the Irish Football Association shall have the same meaning in this code.
- 1.4 The following are subject to this code:
  1. members;
  2. associate members;
  3. officials;
  4. players;
  5. match officials;
  6. licensed intermediaries;
  7. anyone with an authorisation from the IFA, in particular with regard to a match, competition or other event organised by the IFA.
- 1.5 Each person or entity who is or is deemed subject to this code is required to cooperate with an IFA (or a Divisional Association of the IFA) investigation or disciplinary proceedings. Each club is further required to identify to the Association a Club Disciplinary Officer (who may hold another office within the Club, such as Club Secretary) responsible for investigating and taking appropriate action in relation to disciplinary matters and the conduct of its members. The Club Disciplinary Officer will be the principal point of contact between the Disciplinary Committee and the Club in respect of all disciplinary matters. The Club must inform the Committee Secretary of the name, telephone number and email address of the Club Disciplinary Officer at the commencement of the season. In the event that the Committee is not notified of a Disciplinary Officer any communications will be sent via the Club Secretary. Notifications via the Comet system will be sent to the appointed Club Manager. It is the responsibility of the Club Manager to ensure that the Disciplinary Officer is made aware of any matters relating to discipline.
- 1.6 The overriding objective of the Code is to maintain and promote fair play, protect the health and welfare of Players (and others involved in the Game), ensure that acts of indiscipline (on and off the field of play) or breaches of this code are dealt with expeditiously and fairly and that the image and reputation of association football and the Irish Football Association are not adversely affected.
- 1.7 Disciplinary hearings shall be conducted in a fair and just manner and in accordance with the fundamental principles of natural justice. Procedural and technical considerations shall take second place to the overriding objective of being just and fair to the parties. Proceedings, findings or decisions of the Committee shall not be invalidated by reason of any procedural defect, irregularity, omission or technicality unless such defect, irregularity, omission or technicality raises a material doubt as to the reliability of the proceedings, findings or decisions.
- 1.8 In the event that a particular incident takes place for which there is no provision in this Code including (but not limited to) procedure, jurisdiction or sanction then the Committee may take such action that it considers appropriate in the circumstances in accordance with general principles of natural justice and fairness.
- 1.9 Without prejudice to the overriding objective set out in clause 1.6, the Committee shall have the power:-
  1. to sanction serious disciplinary infringements which have escaped a match official's attention;
  2. to rectify obvious errors of judgement in the referee's disciplinary decision;
  3. to extend the duration of a match suspension or any other penalty incurred automatically by an expulsion;
  4. to impose sanctions including:
    - A fine
    - A suspension;

- An interim suspension;
  - A transfer ban;
  - Playing a match without spectators;
  - Playing a match on neutral territory;
  - Ban on playing in a particular stadium;
  - Ban from dressing room and/or substitutes' bench;
  - Ban on taking part in any football related activity;
  - Annulment of the result of a match;
  - Expulsion from a competition;
  - Defeat by forfeit;
  - Deduction of points;
  - Demotion to a lower division;
  - Ban on spectators attending a match;
  - Ban prohibiting someone from entering the confines of one or several stadiums ("Stadium Ban");
  - Replay of a match;
  - A reprimand being an official written pronouncement of disapproval sent to the perpetrator of an infringement of the Code.
- 1.10 The Committee may recognise the disciplinary sanctions of any other sporting body. Any person suspended or banned by any other sporting body may be suspended or banned concurrently by the Committee.
- 1.11 Whilst the Committee shall at all times strive to act consistently, the Committee shall not have a doctrine of binding precedent, that is to say it is not formally bound by prior decisions of the Committee. Each case will be looked at and determined on its own merits.
- 1.12 If several offences are carried out by an individual simultaneously, the Committee shall base the fine on what it considers to be the most serious offence committed and depending on the circumstances, may increase the sanction by up to fifty per cent of the maximum sanction specified for that offence. The same applies if a person incurs several time sanctions of a similar nature (two or more match suspensions, two or more stadium bans etc) as the result of one or several offences.
- 1.13 Any clerical mistakes or accidental omissions in any written decision or correspondence on behalf of the Committee may be corrected by the Committee at any time.

## **Article 2 Definitions**

- 2.1 IFA: The Irish Football Association.
- 2.2 Player: A person whose name appears on the match card for the relevant match. This includes Player Managers or an Official who is also a Player.
- 2.3 Official: A person, with the exception of Players (See Article 2.2 of this Code) who is connected to a football club.
- 2.4 Match Official: The Referee, Assistant Referees, 4th Official, Match Observer or any other person appointed by the IFA, Divisional Association or League in connection with a match.
- 2.5 Match Official's Report: A report made individually or collectively by match officials and agreed by them, supplied where practicable, to the Committee and through the referee.
- 2.6 Designated Holiday: A public holiday or bank holiday in Northern Ireland.
- 2.7 Disciplinary Officer: A person appointed by a club who shall be responsible for investigating and taking appropriate action in relation to disciplinary matters and the conduct of its members. It is the responsibility of the Club to ensure disciplinary matters are maintained in the event of the Club Disciplinary Officer's absence by ensuring another individual or individuals deal with any such matters during that period of absence.
- 2.8 Disciplinary Committee: The committee convened pursuant to Article 13 of the Irish Football Association Articles of Association to deal with all football related disciplinary matters.

- 2.9 Disciplinary Committee Secretary: The official appointed by the Irish Football Association to service the Disciplinary Committee.
- 2.10 Disciplinary Department: the members of the IFA staff authorised by the Football Committee to deal with certain routine disciplinary matters.
- 2.11 Appeals Committee: The committee appointed pursuant to Article 14 of the Irish Football Association Articles of Association to deal with all appeals.
- 2.12 Members: Members and Associate Members of the Irish Football Association.
- 2.13 Comet System: means the football management system adopted by the IFA for the administration of football in Northern Ireland.
- 2.14 Disciplinary Challenge: means a Mistaken Identity Challenge, an Obvious Error Challenge or a General Disciplinary Challenge pursuant to Article 35 of this Code.

### **Article 3 Gender and number**

- 3.1 Terms within the IFA Disciplinary Code referring to the players, officials or match officials are applicable to both genders. Any term in the singular applies to the plural and vice-versa.

### **Article 4 Culpability**

- 4.1 Unless otherwise specified, infringements are punishable regardless of whether they have been committed deliberately or negligently.

### **Article 5 Acts amounting to attempt**

- 5.1 Attempts: If, with intent to do an act in breach of this Code, a person or entity who is subject to the provisions of the code, does an act which is more than just preparing to commit a breach, he shall be found to have breached the relevant section of the Code.
- 5.2 A person or entity who is subject to the provisions of the code, may be in breach of the Code by attempting to commit a breach of the Code (as described at article 5.1) even if it would have been impossible to complete the act in breach of the Code.
- 5.3 A person or entity who is subject to the provisions of the code, found to have attempted to breach the code pursuant to Article 5.1 will be liable to the same sanction as where the breach of the Code is completed. The Committee may, but is not bound to, reduce the sanction where an attempt is proved. It will determine the extent of the mitigation as it sees fit.

### **Article 6 Involvement**

- 6.1 Anyone who intentionally takes part in committing an infringement, either as an instigator or accomplice, is also subject to the provisions of this code.
- 6.2 The Committee will take account of the degree of guilt of the party involved when deciding upon the sanction

### **Article 7 Failure to Reply to Correspondence**

- 7.1 Any failure to reply, within the specified timescale, (without just or reasonable cause) to correspondence sent by the Committee, either by letter, email or via the Comet system in pursuance of its obligations under this Code, will render the person to whom such correspondence is sent to be in breach of this code and render such person liable to such penalties as the Committee shall deem fit to impose.

### **Article 8 Fines**

- 8.1 Clubs are liable for fines imposed on their players or officials. Subject to the Committee's discretion pursuant to the overriding objective, the fact that a person has left a club does not cancel out liability and therefore does not negate the responsibility of the club to pay a fine.
- 8.2 All fines, unless challenged or appealed against, must be paid within 14 days from the date of the letter or email imposing the fine unless a payment plan has been agreed with the club. Failure by a club to pay a fine within the specified timeframe may result in the

club being fined an additional £25 and suspended from all affiliated football with immediate effect from the point of notification. In the case of a Designated Holiday, the time limit for paying the fine will expire the following day.

- 8.3 Should a suspension be imposed on a club due to failure by that club to pay a fine, the suspension will remain in effect until the Monday following receipt of payment.
- 8.4 Match Officials will be fined £10 for late submission of Disciplinary Reports.
- 8.5 Disciplinary Reports must be submitted by Match Officials via the Comet System within 24 hours of the commencement of the match taking place.

#### **Article 9 Caution and Dismissal Fines**

- 9.1 Where a disciplinary report has been issued and the person or entity who is subject to the provisions of this Code is found to be at fault, the person or entity shall in addition to any punishment or recommendation made in that report incur a fine as set out below:
  - Players
    - Senior and Intermediate matches (cautions and dismissals): £5
    - Junior matches (cautions and dismissals): £3
  - Officials
    - Senior, Intermediate and Junior matches (cautions): £25
    - Senior, Intermediate and Junior matches (dismissals): £100
- 9.2 Clubs will be charged periodically throughout the playing season for their accrued cautions and dismissals. Notification will be sent to clubs no later than 31 January and 31 May (men's season) and 31 October (women's season)
- 9.3 No refunds of cautions and dismissal fines or part thereof shall be made except where a caution or dismissal has been proven to be wrongfully applied.

#### **Article 10 Warning**

- 10.1 A warning is a reminder of the substance of a disciplinary rule allied with the threat of a sanction in the event of a further infringement.

#### **Article 11 Reprimand**

- 11.1 A reprimand is a pronouncement of disapproval by the Committee. Where the Committee determines to issue a reprimand, it shall be communicated to the person or entity who has breached the Code in writing or, at the option of the Committee, by email.

#### **Article 12 Return of Awards**

- 12.1 When a person is required to return an award, the person shall return the benefits which that person has received as part of winning that award.

#### **Article 13 Cautions for players and officials**

- 13.1 A caution is a warning from the referee to a player or official during a match to sanction minor infringements (See Law 12 of the Laws of the Game).
- 13.2 A player or official who receives 2 cautions during the same match will incur a dismissal and, consequently, an automatic suspension from the next match. The 2 cautions that incurred the dismissal will not be included in any total as outlined in Article 13.3, 13.4 or 13.5 of this Code.
- 13.3 A player or official who accumulates 5 cautions in the same playing season will be suspended for 1 match.
- 13.4 A player or official who accumulates 10 cautions in the same playing season will be suspended for 2 matches.
- 13.5 For every further 5 cautions a player or official accumulates in the same playing season a 3- match suspension will be imposed.
- 13.6 In the case of a player manager, all cautions received (either as a player or a manager) will accumulate.
- 13.7 A player who is cautioned after the final whistle and before he leaves the field of play will be dealt with as a field offence. (See Article 13.1 of this Code)

- 13.8 An official who is cautioned after the final whistle and before he leaves the technical area and its immediate surrounds will be dealt with as a field offence. (See Article 13.1 of this Code)
- 13.9 In respect of an official, if an offence has occurred and the offender cannot be identified, the senior coach who is present in the technical area at the time will receive the caution as the person responsible for the other team officials.
- 13.10 Cautions received during one season are cancelled at the conclusion of that season and are not carried over to the next season.
- 13.11 If an abandoned match is to be replayed, any caution issued during that match shall be annulled. If the match is not to be replayed, the cautions received during the match shall stand.
- 13.12 Cautions issued in a match that is subsequently forfeited shall not be annulled.
- 13.13 In respect of the men's game, a cautions amnesty will be applied to players from and including 1 April in any season. The cautions accumulated by players prior to 1 April in that season will not be taken into account in calculating the total number of cautions as outlined in Articles 13.3, 13.4 or 13.5 of this code for the remaining part of the season from and including 1 April onwards. For the avoidance of doubt, the amnesty will not apply to officials.
- 13.14 In respect of the women's game, a cautions amnesty will be applied to players from and including 1 September in any season. The cautions accumulated by players prior to 1 September in that season will not be taken into account in calculating the total number of cautions as outlined in Articles 13.3, 13.4 and/or 13.5 of this code for the remaining part of that season from and including 1 September onwards. For the avoidance of doubt, the amnesty will not apply to officials.

#### **Article 14 Dismissals for players and officials**

- 14.1 A dismissal is the order given by the referee to someone to leave, at any time before, during or after the game, the field of play and its surroundings, including the technical area and the substitute's bench as outlined in Law 5 of the Laws of the Game.
- 14.2 Dismissal takes the form of a red card for players and officials. The red card is regarded as direct if it sanctions serious unsporting behaviour as defined by Law 12 of the Laws of the Game. It is regarded as indirect if it is the result of an accumulation of two yellow cards.
- 14.3 An official who has been sent off may give instructions to the person replacing him on the substitutes' bench. The official shall, however, ensure that he does not disturb the spectators or disrupt the flow of play.
- 14.4 A dismissal for a player or official automatically incurs a suspension from the subsequent match even if imposed in a match that is later abandoned, annulled and/or forfeited. The Committee may extend the duration of the suspension.

#### **Player sanctions**

- 14.5 A player who is dismissed from the field of play and its surroundings, including the technical area and the substitutes bench for any offence (other than for receiving a 2nd caution) having previously received a caution in the same match will have the caution upheld.
- 14.6 A player who is dismissed from the field of play and its surroundings, including the technical area and the substitutes bench for using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures will be suspended for an additional 1 match.
- 14.7 A player who is dismissed from the field of play and its surroundings, including the technical area and the substitutes bench for serious foul play or for violent conduct will be suspended for an additional 2 matches.
- 14.8 A player who is dismissed from the field of play and its surroundings, including the technical area and the substitutes bench for biting, head-butting or for spitting at an opponent or any other person other than a match official will be suspended for an additional 6 matches.

- 14.9 A player who is dismissed from the field of play and its surroundings, including the technical area and the substitutes bench for assaulting (e.g. elbowing, punching, kicking etc) a match official will be suspended for a minimum of 15 matches.
- 14.10 A player who is dismissed from the field of play and its surroundings, including the technical area and the substitutes bench for spitting at a match official will be suspended for a minimum of 12 months.
- 14.11 A player who is dismissed from the field of play and its surroundings after the final whistle and before he leaves the field of play will be dealt with as a field offence. (See Article 14.1 of this Code).

#### **Official sanctions**

- 14.12 An official who is dismissed from the technical area and its immediate surrounds for any offence (other than for receiving a 2nd caution) having previously received a caution in the same match will have the caution upheld.
- 14.13 An official who is dismissed from the technical area and its immediate surrounds for use of offensive, insulting or abusive language and/ or gestures will be suspended for an additional 1 match.
- 14.14 An official who is dismissed from the technical area and its immediate surrounds for violent conduct will be suspended for an additional 2 matches.
- 14.15 An official who is dismissed from the technical area and its immediate surrounds for biting, head-butting or spitting at an opposing player or any other person other than a match official will be suspended for an additional 6 matches.
- 14.16 An official who is dismissed from the technical area and its immediate surrounds for delaying the restart of play by the opposing team (eg holding onto the ball, kicking the ball away, obstructing the movement of a player etc) will be suspended for an additional 1 match.
- 14.17 An official who is dismissed from the technical area and its immediate surrounds for deliberately leaving the technical area to show a) dissent towards or remonstrate with a match official, b) act in a provocative or inflammatory manner or c) enter the opposing technical area in an aggressive or confrontational manner will be suspended for an additional 1 match.
- 14.18 An official who is dismissed from the technical area and its immediate surrounds for entering the field of play to a) confront a match official (including at half time and full time), b) interfere with play, an opposing player or match official will be suspended for an additional 2 matches.
- 14.19 An official who is dismissed from the technical area and its immediate surrounds for deliberately throwing/ kicking an object onto the field of play will be suspended for an additional 2 matches.
- 14.20 An official who is dismissed from the technical area and its immediate surrounds for using unauthorised electronic or communication equipment and/or behaving in an inappropriate manner as the result of using electronic or communication equipment will be suspended for an additional 1 match.
- 14.21 An official who is dismissed after the final whistle and before he leaves the technical area and its immediate surrounds will be dealt with as a field offence. (See Article 14.1 of this Code)

#### **Article 15 Suspension**

- 15.1 All suspensions must be served with the team at which the player or official received the suspension and must be served consecutively with any other suspensions that may have been issued. Any automatic suspension pursuant to Article 14 must be served prior to any other notified suspension. On request, special dispensation may be given to a player or official if the club (of which his team forms a part) folds during the serving of his suspension or if the team he received his suspension with does not commence their competitive season until after the last day of August in any season. Special dispensation may also be applied in the case of an official who has involvement in a coaching capacity

- in both a men's and women's club and who concludes the season with an outstanding suspension. Special dispensation may also be given in exceptional circumstances which shall be at the sole discretion of the Committee. Should the Committee consider any application for dispensation to be of a frivolous nature or merely to release a player or official from suspension to enable them to participate in a match, they shall have power to deal with the player and official and or club as it deems appropriate.
- 15.2 A player who receives cautions for more than one team within his club (i.e. 1st team, 2nd team, youth team, etc.) will have his cautions aggregated and must serve any suspension he may receive from the accumulation of cautions with the most senior team he has played for within the Club when he received a caution.
- 15.3 Suspensions shall cover all domestic league and cup matches until such time as the team at which the player or official received the suspension has completed the required number of matches to enable the suspension to be served. A suspension (or part thereof) which has been imposed on a player or official will not be considered to have been served by a match that is abandoned, cancelled or forfeited. Unless, the cause of the abandonment, cancellation or forfeiture of the aforementioned match has been determined prior to the player or official's next game and it is found that the team to which the player or official belongs is not responsible for the facts that led to abandonment, cancellation or forfeit of the match. A suspension from playing in a domestic league or cup match shall preclude the person so suspended from being present in or at the field of play and the areas immediately surrounding the same. The Committee shall have the power to determine where those areas are.
- 15.4 If a suspension is combined with a fine, the suspension may, at the discretion of the Committee, be prolonged until the fine has been paid in full.
- 15.5 Clubs shall be wholly responsible for ensuring that suspensions are served. It is each club's responsibility to ensure the eligibility of their players for any match.
- 15.6 Any period of suspension arising from the accumulation of cautions or additional suspensions in respect of a dismissal will commence from the date of communication from the Disciplinary Department/ Comet System.
- 15.7 Any period of suspension arising from the acceptance of a sanction offer made via a Disciplinary Charge to a player, official, match official, club or league will commence on the Monday following the date of the Disciplinary Charge letter (such date will be confirmed in said letter) sent to the player, official, match official, club or league concerned in writing, by email or via the Comet system. If a sanction offer is not accepted, a Disciplinary Challenge may be submitted as outlined in Article 35.3.
- 15.8 Suspensions imposed by the Committee following a Disciplinary Hearing will be imposed from the Monday after the date of the Disciplinary Hearing. Suspensions imposed by the Committee in circumstances when no Disciplinary Hearing has taken place will be imposed from the Monday after the date on which the decision was made by the Committee. Details of the suspension will be communicated in writing, by email or via the Comet system.
- 15.9 During a standard suspension, a player or official is not permitted to enter the dressing room area, the player's tunnel, the technical area, the substitute's bench, the area immediately surrounding the field of play or the playing surface at any match played under the jurisdiction of the Association until the expiry of the suspension. The terms of the suspension apply from one hour prior to the scheduled time of kick-off of a match and until 5 minutes following the referee having signalled the end of the match.
- 15.10 During a touchline suspension, an official is not permitted to enter the technical area, the substitute's bench, the area immediately surrounding the field of play or the playing surface at any match under the jurisdiction of the Association until the expiry of the suspension. The terms of the suspension apply from one hour prior to the scheduled time of kick-off of a match and until 5 minutes following the referee having signalled the end of the match. A touchline suspension may only be imposed on individuals deemed as officials by the Committee.



- 15.11 On request, an official who is suspended for a cup final in which his club are involved following his 1st or 2nd sanction in the current playing season may be permitted to lead his club onto the pitch prior to the match and to return to the pitch for the post-match presentation.
- 15.12 A player who is not eligible to participate in a particular match due to the competition rules may not use that match to serve the suspension or part thereof.
- 15.13 Any period of suspension which remains outstanding at the end of the playing season must be served at the commencement of the next playing season.
- 15.14 A player, official, match official, club or league serving any suspension is suspended from all affiliated football including NIBFA.
- 15.15 In the event of the Committee determining that a Match Official be suspended, the Match Official shall be suspended from refereeing or officiating at any domestic league or cup match for a period to be expressed in terms of weeks, months or an indefinite period. All matters of alleged misconduct by referees shall be referred to the Committee and shall not be dealt with by any Divisional Association.
- 15.16 No sanction prescribed in this Code shall prevent the Committee from determining that a person may be banned from taking part in any kind of affiliated football-related activity, as determined by the Committee, where it is deemed reasonable and proportionate to do so.

## **Article 16 Interim Suspension & Partial Suspension**

### **Interim**

- 16.1 The Committee shall have the power by way of unanimous vote, to issue an Interim Suspension against any person against whom an allegation of misconduct has been made and is being investigated or against someone who has been convicted of a criminal offence. The imposition of an interim suspension order shall be notified to any such person in writing, signed by the IFA Disciplinary Committee Chairman, Vice- Chairman or Disciplinary Department. Details of the suspension will be communicated in writing, by email or via the Comet system.
- 16.2 Following the imposition of a suspension, the person suspended shall have the right of appeal within 14 days of notification of the decision to the Committee at a hearing to be convened as soon as is reasonably practicable. The procedure for the disciplinary hearing shall be determined by the Chairman of the Committee.
- 16.3 The interim suspension shall automatically cease:
- 16.4 When the matter has been dealt with at a disciplinary hearing; or
- 16.5 When the allegation is withdrawn and no further disciplinary action is taken; or
- 16.6 After 120 days from its issue, unless the Committee determines that it is in the interests of the Association that it should be extended for a further period or periods of not more than 120 days.

### **Partial**

- 16.7 The Committee in imposing a match suspension, a ban on access to dressing rooms and/or the substitutes bench, a ban on taking part in any affiliated football-related activity, the obligation to play a match without spectators, the obligation to play a match on neutral ground, or a ban on playing in a certain stadium, may examine whether it is possible to suspend the implementation of the sanction partially. The imposition of a partial suspension order shall be notified to any such person in writing, signed by the IFA Disciplinary Committee Chairman, Vice- Chairman or Disciplinary Department. Details of the suspension will be communicated in writing, by email or via Comet system.
- 16.8 Partial suspension is permissible only if the duration of the sanction does not exceed six matches or six months and if the relevant circumstances allow it, in particular the previous record of the person sanctioned.
- 16.9 The Committee shall decide which part of the sanction may be suspended. In any case, half of the sanction is definite.

- 16.10 By suspending implementation of the sanction, the Committee, at their own discretion, subjects the person sanctioned to a probationary period of anything from six months to two years.
- 16.11 If the person benefiting from a suspended sanction commits another infringement of a similar nature and gravity during the probationary period, the suspension is automatically revoked and the sanction applied; it is added to the sanction pronounced for the new infringement.
- 16.12 Special provisions may apply in certain circumstances. In the case of anti- doping rule violations, this article is not applicable.

#### **Article 17 Disciplinary Charge**

- 17.1 The Committee may charge a player, official, match official, club and/or league who is in breach of this Code. The Committee may also charge a player, official, match official, club and/or league pursuant to Article 17 of the Articles of Association or with any matter deemed to be in breach of the spirit of the Code.
- 17.2 A charge may be accompanied by a sanction offer that would apply to the offence which is detailed in each Article. Any sanction offer will be determined based on the facts and circumstances of the particular incident. Where the Committee is satisfied that the particular facts and circumstances of the incident necessitate a hearing, no sanction offer will be made in the charge letter.
- 17.3 A charge under this Article should be issued within 21 days (or in the case of Divisional Associations within 28 days) from the time the incident is reported to the Secretary of the Committee or as may be extended by the Committee in its absolute discretion. The charge will be accompanied by all relevant evidence, documents and written submissions (including where appropriate the match official's report) that are available to the Association at the time that the charge is issued. In any event the player, official, match official, club and/ or league should be notified within 21 days (or in the case of Divisional Associations within 28 days) of the incident being reported to the Secretary of the Committee of the nature of any incident under investigation.
- 17.4 Where a charge is issued the player, official, match official, club and/or league who is charged may accept or deny the charge.
- 17.5 Where a player, official, match official, club and/ or league accepts the charge and a sanction has been offered the relevant party may accept the sanction; in those circumstances a hearing will not be required. Where the player, official, match official, club and/or league club rejects the sanction they should make representations as to the sanction in writing or at an oral hearing at the discretion of the committee if it is deemed that written submissions would not suffice.
- 17.6 Where a player, official, match official, club and/or league notifies the committee that they deny the charge the relevant party is required to submit a Disciplinary Challenge as directed in Article 35 of this Code.
- 17.7 In any circumstances where a sanction has been proposed by the Committee at the point of charge and within the relevant period the player, official, match official, club and/or league notifies the Committee that they do not accept the sanction offer, the committee shall not be bound by the proposed sanction. However, at the point of charge the Committee must have advised clubs of all potential charges being brought against them.
- 17.8 At all times the Committee shall have the discretion to require the player, official, match official, club and/or league who is the subject of a charge to attend a hearing.
- 17.9 In determining the appropriate sanction in any case, including at a hearing, the Committee will take into account the particular circumstances of the infringement, the conduct of the player, official, match official and/or club within the previous 3 seasons and any other matter which appears to the Committee to be relevant pursuant to the overriding objective.
- 17.10 For the purpose of determining the appropriate charge and sanction at the point of charge the facts contained in the Match Official's reports will be presumed to be accurate.

- 17.11 Infringements committed during a match may no longer be prosecuted after a lapse of two years. As a general rule, other infringements may not be prosecuted after a lapse of ten years.
- 17.12 Anti-doping rule violations may not be prosecuted after eight years have elapsed.
- 17.13 Prosecution for corruption is not subject to a limitation period.

#### **Article 18 Misconduct by Players, Officials or Match Officials (Outside Law 12 of the Laws of the Game)**

- 18.1 Any player or official who is dismissed will automatically incur a suspension from the subsequent match even if imposed in a match that is later abandoned, annulled and/or forfeited. Any automatic suspension will be in addition to suspensions imposed under Article 18.
- 18.2 Where a player, official or match official is found to be guilty of any of the charges specified in Article 18.3 to Article 18.9 (inclusive) it is recommended that such player, official or match official (a match official may only be sanctioned by the Disciplinary Committee) will be sanctioned in the terms set out in Article 18.3 to Article 18.9 (inclusive) and where a player, official or match official is found to be guilty of any of the charges specified in Articles 18.10 to 18.19 (inclusive) such player, official or match official (a match official may only be sanctioned by the Disciplinary Committee) will be sanctioned in the terms set out in Articles 18.10 to 18.19 (inclusive).
- 18.3 A player who is reported for the 1st occasion for misconduct will be sanctioned with a minimum 1 match standard suspension and a £100 fine imposed on the player's club.
- 18.4 A player who is reported for the 2nd occasion in the playing season for misconduct will be sanctioned with a minimum 2 match standard suspension and a £100 fine imposed on the player's club.
- 18.5 A player who is reported for a 3rd or subsequent occasion in the playing season for misconduct will be sanctioned with a minimum 4 match standard suspension and a £100 fine imposed on the player's club.
- 18.6 If part of the report relates to cautions or dismissals of players or officials, that part will be dealt with in accordance with Article 13 and 14 of the IFA Disciplinary Code.
- 18.7 An official who is reported for the 1st occasion in the playing season for misconduct will be sanctioned with a minimum 1 match touchline suspension and a £100 fine imposed on the official's club or in the case of a match official a fine of £100 and may be suspended pursuant to Article 15.15
- 18.8 An official who is reported for the 2nd occasion in the playing season for misconduct will be sanctioned with a minimum 2 match touchline suspension and a £100 fine imposed on the official's club or in the case of a match official a fine of £200 and they may be suspended pursuant to Article 15.15
- 18.9 An official who is reported for a 3rd or subsequent occasion in the playing season for misconduct will be sanctioned with a minimum 4 match standard suspension and a £100 fine imposed on the official's club or in the case of a match official a fine of £500 and they may be suspended pursuant to Article 15.15
- 18.10 A player or official who is reported for unsporting conduct towards an opponent or any other person other than a match official will be sanctioned with a minimum 1 match standard suspension and a £100 fine imposed on their club.
- 18.11 A player or official who is reported for deliberately receiving a yellow or red card (in order to be suspended for an upcoming match and to ultimately have a clean record) will be sanctioned with a minimum 1 match standard suspension and £100 imposed on their club.
- 18.12 A player or official who acts with obvious intent to cause a match official to make an incorrect decision or supporting his error of judgement and thereby causing him to make an incorrect decision will be sanctioned with a minimum 2 match standard suspension and £100 imposed on their club.
- 18.13 A player or official who is reported for assault (elbowing, punching and kicking etc) or battery of an opponent or any other person other than a match official will be sanctioned with a minimum 3 match standard suspension and a £100 fine imposed on their club.

- 18.14 A player or official who is reported for biting, head-butting or spitting at an opponent or any other person other than a match official will be sanctioned with a minimum 6 match standard suspension and a £100 fine imposed on their club.
- 18.15 A player or official who is reported for unsporting conduct towards a match official will be sanctioned with a minimum 4 match standard suspension and a £100 fine imposed on their club.
- 18.16 A player or official who is reported for assaulting (elbowing, punching, kicking etc) a match official will be sanctioned with a minimum 15 match standard suspension and a £100 fine imposed on their club.
- 18.17 A player or official who is reported for biting, head-butting or spitting at a match official will be sanctioned with a minimum 12- month standard suspension and a £100 fine imposed on their club.
- 18.18 The sanctions described in Article 18.13, 18.14 and 18.15 may also apply in cases of misconduct against officials of clubs, leagues, divisional associations or the IFA.
- 18.19 A match official who is reported for assaulting any person shall be sanctioned with a minimum fine of £100 and may be suspended in accordance with Article 15.15.
- 18.20 A match official who is reported for misconduct or reported for unsporting conduct towards a player, official or any other person may be suspended by the Committee in accordance with this Code.

#### **Article 19 Media & Social Media Comments/ Content**

- 19.1 A reprimand, suspension or fine may be issued to leagues, clubs, players, officials and match officials in the case of inappropriate comments or content in the media or social media.
- 19.2 If a player or official makes comments or posts content in the media or social media in which (a) they imply bias, question integrity and/or bring the game into disrepute or (b) are abusive, offensive and/or insulting and such comments are considered to be football related, they will be sanctioned with a minimum 1 match suspension and a minimum fine of £100 which will be imposed on their club.
- 19.3 If a match official makes comments or posts content in the media or social media in which they (a) bring the game into disrepute or (b) are abusive, offensive and/or insulting and such comments are considered to be football related they will be sanctioned with a minimum fine of £100 and may be suspended pursuant to Article 15.15
- 19.4 The Committee may issue a sanction in the case of repeat offences by players, officials or match officials.

#### **Article 20 Inciting hatred and violence**

- 20.1 A player or official who publicly incites others to hatred or violence will be sanctioned with a minimum 6- month standard suspension and a minimum fine of £250 which will be imposed on their club.
- 20.2 In serious cases, in particular when the infringement is committed using the mass media (such as the press, radio or television) or if it takes place on a match day in or around a stadium, the minimum fine will be £1000 which will be imposed on their club. A minimum 6- month standard suspension will also be imposed.

#### **Article 21 Provoking the general public**

- 21.1 A player or official who provokes the general public during a match will be sanctioned with a minimum 2 match standard suspension and a minimum fine of £250 which will be imposed on their club.

#### **Article 22 Ineligibility through suspension**

- 22.1 If any player participates in a match whilst being suspended or if any player breaches the terms of his suspension his club will be sanctioned with a minimum fine of £600 (imposed on Senior Clubs), £450 (imposed on Intermediate Clubs) and £350 (imposed on Junior Clubs). Additionally, the Club will forfeit the match by the score 3-0. If the goal

difference at the end of the match is greater than three in favour of the club who is not to forfeit the match, the result on the pitch is upheld.

- 22.2 A match suspension is regarded as no longer pending if a match is retroactively forfeited because a player took part in a match despite being ineligible. This also applies to the match suspension imposed on the player who took part in the match despite being ineligible.
- 22.3 If any official who participates in a match whilst being suspended or if the official breaches the terms of his suspension his club will be sanctioned with a minimum fine of £600 (imposed on Senior Clubs), £450 (imposed on Intermediate Clubs) and £350 (imposed on Junior Clubs) and/ or a further period of suspension.
- 22.4 The timeframe for payment of a fine may be extended if a club can produce to the Committee evidence of severe financial hardship. A payment plan may be agreed with the Committee pursuant to Article 8.2.

### **Article 23 Abandonment**

- 23.1 If a club is found to have caused the abandonment of a match it will be sanctioned with a minimum fine of £200. The competition organiser will decide on the outcome of the match following the outcome of any disciplinary inquiry into the abandonment. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, if a match is abandoned by the referee because of racist and/or discriminatory conduct in line with the UEFA three- step procedure, the match shall be declared forfeited. Such abandonments shall be referred to the Committee and shall not be dealt with by the Divisional Associations.

### **Article 24 Brawl**

- 24.1 A brawl is defined as three or more people who participate in serious Violent Conduct. Anyone who participates in a brawl will be sanctioned with a minimum 6 match suspension and a £100 fine imposed on their club.
- 24.2 Anyone who tried merely to prevent a fight, shield others or separate those involved in a brawl is not subject to punishment.

### **Article 25 Unidentified aggressors**

- 25.1 If, in the case of an act of violence or threat of violence (physical or verbal), it is not possible to identify the perpetrator(s), the Committee may sanction the club to which the aggressors are deemed to belong.

### **Article 26 Team misconduct**

- 26.1 Disciplinary measures may be imposed on clubs where a team fails to conduct itself properly (for example, if individual disciplinary sanctions are imposed by the referee on five or more players during a match). Further sanctions may be imposed in the case of serious offences.

### **Article 27 Discrimination**

- 27.1 Anyone who offends the dignity of a person or group of persons through contemptuous, discriminatory or denigratory words or actions concerning race, colour, language, religion or origin shall be suspended for a minimum of 10 matches. Furthermore, a fine shall be imposed. Where the perpetrator is a player a minimum fine of £500 will be imposed on senior clubs, £250 imposed on intermediate clubs and £150 imposed on junior clubs. If the perpetrator is an official, the fine imposed shall be a minimum of £1000 on senior clubs, £450 on intermediate clubs and £250 on junior clubs.
- 27.2 Anyone who offends the dignity of a person or group of persons through contemptuous, discriminatory or denigratory words or actions concerning disability, gender or sexual orientation shall be suspended for a minimum of 10 matches. Furthermore, a fine shall be imposed. Where the perpetrator is a player a minimum fine of £500 will be imposed on senior clubs, £250 imposed on intermediate clubs and £150 imposed on junior clubs. If the perpetrator is an official, the fine imposed shall be a minimum of £1000 on senior clubs, £450 on intermediate clubs and £250 on junior clubs.

- 27.3 In determining whether the dignity of a person or group of persons has been offended, the Committee will be entitled to draw reasonable inferences, that is to say, there is no requirement to identify an individual who was offended at the time the comment was made or published. In finding a matter to be proved, it will open to the Committee to conclude that by their very nature, the comments made offend the dignity of a person or group of persons. In the event that an individual is identified as a direct addressee of potential discriminatory behaviour, he or she may be invited by the committee to make an oral or written victim impact statement.
- 27.4 Where several persons (officials and/ or players) from the same Club or association simultaneously breach Article 27.1 or 27.2 or there are other aggravating circumstances, the team concerned may be deducted three points for a first offence and six points for a second offence; a further offence may result in relegation to a lower division. In the case of matches in which no points are awarded, the team may be disqualified from the competition.
- 27.5 Where supporters of a team breach Article 27.1 or Article 27.2 at a match, a minimum fine of £1000 shall be imposed on senior clubs, £450 on intermediate clubs and £250 on junior clubs regardless of the question of culpable conduct or culpable oversight unless the club proves to the Committee that exceptional circumstances exist in which case the fine may be reduced. In determining the appropriate sanction, the Committee will be entitled to take into account actions taken by the club to prevent such behaviour occurring in addition to previous occurrences of such behaviour which have at any time come to the attention of the Committee. Nothing contained in this paragraph shall interfere with the Committee's power to impose any of the sanctions outlined in paragraph 1.9 of this Code.
- 27.6 The Committee will be guided by the terms of Article 33 of this Code in determining whether supporters have acted in a manner in contravention of this Article.
- 27.7 The offences and fines referred to in these clauses are not exhaustive and the Committee is empowered to levy additional sanctions after taking into account the seriousness of the offences. Without prejudice to the generality of this, these additional sanctions could include, an order to play a match behind closed doors, playing a match with a limited number of spectators, the forfeit of a match, a point's deduction or disqualification from the competition.
- 27.8 Spectators who breach Article 27.1 or 27.2 shall receive a stadium ban of a minimum of 2 years.
- 27.9 Unless there are exceptional circumstances, if a match is abandoned by the referee because of racist and/or discriminatory conduct in line with UEFA's three step procedure, the match shall be declared forfeited.

#### **Article 28 Threats**

- 28.1 A player or official who intimidates a match official with serious threats will be sanctioned with a minimum 10 match standard suspension and with a minimum fine of £150 which will be imposed on their club.

#### **Article 29 Coercion or Undue Influence**

- 29.1 A player or official who uses violence or threats to pressurise a match official into taking certain action or to hinder him in any other way from acting freely will be sanctioned with a minimum 4 match standard suspension and a minimum fine of £150 which will be imposed on their club.
- 29.2 A player or official who unduly seeks to influence or pressurise a match official to review match footage before submitting a Disciplinary Challenge pursuant to Article 35, will be sanctioned with a minimum 4 match standard suspension and a minimum fine of £150 which will be imposed upon their Club.

#### **Article 30 Forgery and Falsification**

- 30.1 Anyone who, in football-related activities, forges a document, falsifies an authentic document or uses a forged or falsified document may be sanctioned with a fine as determined by the Committee.

- 30.2 If the perpetrator is a player, that player in addition to any other sanction imposed by the Committee, may be suspended for a minimum of 6 matches.
- 30.3 If the perpetrator is an official, a player's agent or an intermediary, that official, player's agent or intermediary may in addition to any other sanction imposed by the committee be subject to a ban on taking part in any football- related activity for a minimum period of 12 months.
- 30.4 If the perpetrator is an association or a club, that association or club may in addition to any other sanction imposed by the Committee, be subject to an expulsion from a competition or a fine.
- 30.5 A club may be held liable for an infringement as defined in Article 30.1 committed by one of its officials and/or players. In such a case, an expulsion from a competition and/or a transfer ban may be pronounced in addition to a fine for the club concerned.

### **Article 31 Corruption**

- 31.1 Anyone who offers, promises or grants an unjustified advantage to a body of FIFA, a match official, a player or an official on behalf of himself or a third party in an attempt to incite it or him to violate the regulations of FIFA, will be sanctioned with a minimum fine of £1,500, a ban on taking part in any football related activity for a maximum of 2 years and a ban on entering any stadium for a maximum of 2 years
- 31.2 Passive corruption (soliciting, being promised or accepting an unjustified advantage) will be sanctioned in the same manner.

### **Article 32 Unlawfully influencing match results**

- 32.1 Anyone who conspires or attempts to influence the result of a match in a manner contrary to sporting ethics will be sanctioned with a maximum suspension of 2 years and a fine of £1,500. In serious cases a lifetime ban on taking part in any football related activity may be imposed.
- 32.2 In the case of a player or official unlawfully influencing the result of a match, the club or association to which the player or official belongs may be fined. Serious offence may be sanctioned with expulsion from a competition, relegation to a lower division, a point's deduction and the return of awards.

### **Article 33 Liability for spectator conduct**

- 33.1 The home club is liable for any improper conduct among spectators, regardless of the question of culpable conduct or culpable oversight and depending on the circumstances, may be fined. Further sanctions outlined in Article 1.9 of this code may be imposed in the case of serious disturbances.
- 33.2 The visiting club is liable for improper conduct among its own group of spectators, regardless of the question of culpable conduct or culpable oversight and depending on the circumstances, may be fined. Further sanctions outlined in Article 1.9 of this Code may be imposed. Spectators occupying the away sector of a ground are regarded as the visiting club's supporters, unless proven by the club to the contrary.
- 33.3 Improper conduct includes, but is not limited to, violence towards persons or objects, letting off incendiary devices or causing explosions, throwing missiles, the use of laser pens, displaying insulting slogans in any form, uttering insulting word(s) or sound(s), using offensive gestures or invading the pitch.
- 33.4 The liability described in article 33.1 and 33.2 also includes matches played on neutral grounds, especially during the semi-final or final of a competition. Should a semi-final or final of a competition be played at the stadium of one of the competing clubs, the club playing at their own stadium will be considered the home club.
- 33.5 The Committee may determine that repeated infringements of Articles 33.1 and 33.2 will attract further sanctions.



## **Article 34 Anti Doping**

- 34.1 Doping is prohibited. Doping and anti-doping rule violations are defined in the FIFA Anti-Doping Regulations and sanctioned in accordance with the FIFA Anti- Doping Regulations and the FIFA Disciplinary Code.

## **Article 35 Disciplinary Challenges**

### **35.1 Mistaken Identity Challenge**

- In the case of a purported mistaken identity where a player or official is cautioned or dismissed in a match or reported as being cautioned or dismissed in a match, a player, official or club may submit a Mistaken Identity Challenge on Form DCC2 annexed to this Code. The Mistaken Identity Challenge must be in the prescribed form and submitted via the Comet system within four days after the date of communication from the IFA Disciplinary Department/ Comet System. In the case where the deadline for submission of the Mistaken Identity Challenge expires on a Designated Holiday the time period specified above will be extended to the day immediately following the said Designated Holiday. Where a Mistaken Identity Challenge is submitted in these circumstances the Committee will deal with each Mistaken Identity Challenge as it considers appropriate in the circumstances. In any event the club should make available to the Committee evidence that a mistaken identity has been established. At any hearing, the Committee will require the attendance of both the player reported as having been cautioned or dismissed by a match official and the player, the club allege ought to have been cautioned or dismissed. The player whom it is said ought to have been cautioned or dismissed should be on notice that the Committee may, if proven that mistaken identity has occurred, take action in relation to that player at the hearing and therefore be provided with all relevant documentation in the possession of the club.
- Where a player, official or club wish to submit a Mistaken Identity Challenge a deposit of £100 must be lodged with the IFA no later than seven days after the date of communication from the IFA Disciplinary Department/ Comet System. This sum shall be returnable only where a Mistaken Identity Challenge is either successful or not heard. The Committee reserves the right to retain the deposit where the club is found to have caused the mistaken identity.

### **35.2 Obvious Error Challenge**

- In the circumstances that a player or a club consider that the player or official has been wrongfully dismissed from the field of play on the basis of an obvious error of judgment in the referee's disciplinary decision, a player, official or club may submit an Obvious Error Challenge on form DCC3 annexed to this code. For the avoidance of doubt, a player, official or club may only challenge a direct red card. The Disciplinary Challenge must be in the prescribed form and submitted via the Comet system within two days after the date on which the error allegedly occurred took place. In the case where the deadline for submission of the Disciplinary Challenge expires on the Designated Holiday the time period specified above will be extended to the day immediately following the said Designated Holiday. Where an Obvious Error Challenge is submitted in these circumstances, the Committee will deal with each challenge as it considers appropriate in the circumstances. In any event the club must make available to the Committee all evidence on which it seeks to rely that there has been an obvious error in the referee's disciplinary decision. The Committee will initially consider the Challenge on the basis of the papers that have been submitted to the Committee by the Club to determine if it has merit. If the Committee determines that the challenge has no merit or that there is insufficient evidence, the challenge will be rejected. Other than in exceptional circumstances, video evidence must be made available to the Committee. If the Challenge proceeds to a hearing, the Committee will require the attendance of both the player or official reported as having been dismissed by the match official and all witnesses on behalf of the club.



- Where a player, official or club wish to submit an Obvious Error Challenge a deposit of £500 for Senior Clubs, £350 for Intermediate Clubs or £250 for Junior Clubs must be lodged with the IFA with the DCC3 form no later than two days after the date of the match on which the alleged error took place. This sum shall be returnable only where the Obvious Error Challenge is either successful or not heard. If an Obvious Error Challenge is accepted by the Committee and subsequently withdrawn, the deposit will not be returned.
- On receipt of an Obvious Error Challenge and providing that it is in order, any sanction offered or issued in respect of the challenge decision including for the avoidance of doubt any automatic suspension that would normally follow, that decision, will be suspended pending the determination of the Challenge.
- If the Committee's decision is to reject the Obvious Error Challenge, it will, in every case go on to consider whether or not the player's punishment should be increased. In addition, if an Obvious Error Challenge is unsuccessful, the player and his club may be held liable for all or part of the expenses of the procedure. Should the Committee consider any Obvious Error Challenge to be of a frivolous nature or merely to release a player or official from suspension to enable them to participate in a match they shall have power to deal with the player and official and or club as it deems appropriate.
- There shall be no right to an appeal in respect of a decision of the Committee to reject an Obvious Error Challenge.

### **35.3 General Disciplinary Challenge**

- A player, official, match official or club may submit a General Disciplinary Challenge on form DCC1 annexed to this Code in the case of any Disciplinary Charge having been issued against him or it by the Committee pursuant to Article 17 of this Code. The General Disciplinary Challenge must be made in the prescribed form and submitted via the Comet system within four days after the date the Disciplinary Charge has been issued by the IFA Disciplinary Department/ Comet System to the person or club concerned. In the case where the deadline for submission of the General Disciplinary Challenge expires on a Designated Holiday the time period specified above will be extended to the day immediately following the said Designated Holiday.
- A deposit of £100 must be lodged with the IFA no later than seven days after the date the Disciplinary Charge has been issued where the Disciplinary Charge or sanction is challenged. This sum shall be returnable only where the General Disciplinary Challenge is either successful or not heard.
- In lodging a General Disciplinary Challenge, the player, official, match official or club must state fully in writing the grounds for the challenge and provide the Committee with copies of all evidence, documents and written submissions which the player, official and or club intends to rely on along with the reply to the Disciplinary Charge within the timeframe required. Additional evidence may also be considered by the Committee provided that such evidence is submitted as soon as reasonably practicable.

### **35.4 Provisions in relation to all Disciplinary Challenges**

- On receipt of a Disciplinary Challenge and providing that the player, official or club have received written notification from the Committee that the Disciplinary Challenge is in order, any sanction (including for the avoidance of doubt any automatic suspension) offered or issued will be suspended pending the determination of the Disciplinary Challenge.
- Any suspensions that may be the subject of a Disciplinary Challenge shall not be suspended until the Disciplinary Challenge lodged as directed in accordance with this Article (including the payment of the appropriate deposit) and the player, official or match official or club concerned have received written notification from the Committee that the Disciplinary Challenge is in order. When a player, official or match official facing a suspension participates or officiates at a match without such written notification from the Committee, the Committee will issue the appropriate

charge against the player, official or match official concerned for participating or officiating in a match whilst being ineligible.

- Disciplinary Challenges must meet the requirements of this Article to be considered by the Committee.
- No Disciplinary Challenges will be heard against cautions or dismissals except in the case of a Mistaken Identity Challenge (cautions and dismissals) or an Obvious Error Challenge (direct red cards only).
- If the Disciplinary Challenge is unsuccessful, the player, match official, official and or his club may be held liable in all, or in part of the expenses of the Disciplinary Challenge procedure. Should the Committee consider any Disciplinary Challenge to be of a frivolous nature or merely to release a player or official or match official from suspension to enable them to participate or officiate in a match it shall have the power to deal with the player, the match official, the official and/or club as it deems appropriate.
- In the case that a sanction has been issued, a Disciplinary Challenge may be withdrawn by a player, official, match official or club prior to any hearing provided the suspension timeframe (detailed in Article 15.7 of this Code) has not passed. Should a player, official or a club wish to withdraw a Disciplinary Challenge they must notify the Disciplinary Committee Secretary of such withdrawal in writing. Upon receipt of such notification, the Disciplinary Challenge will be deemed to be abandoned and the sanction offer against which the player, official, match official or club had challenged will be imposed from the following Monday, subject to the overriding objective. The player or official's club may be held liable in all or in part for the expenses of the Disciplinary Challenge procedure.
- All Disciplinary Challenges must be submitted with the relevant disciplinary authority of the Divisional Associations which issued the sanction or charge in question.
- The Disciplinary Committee reserves the right to deal with any issues that arise outside of the referee's attention.

### **Article 36 Hearings**

- 36.1 The Committee shall have the power to conduct a hearing in the following circumstances:
- When a player, official, match official or club lodges a Disciplinary Challenge (ie. A Mistaken Identity Challenge, an Obvious Error Challenge or a General Disciplinary Challenge)
  - When the Committee otherwise deems appropriate to do so pursuant to the over-riding objective.
- 36.2 The Committee shall have the power to direct the attendance of any player, official, match official or representatives of any club to attend at a hearing convened pursuant to this Article. The Committee shall notify any person directed to attend of the date, time and place of the hearing if their attendance is required. It shall be the duty of the persons whose attendance is directed to inform the Committee immediately of any difficulty in attending a hearing. The Committee will be guided by the requirement to have the matters dealt with in accordance with the overriding objective. In the event of a person or club whose attendance has been directed does not attend, the Committee will be entitled to draw any inference it deems appropriate by their failure to attend when reasonable notice has been provided and / or to issue a charge against that person or club pursuant to Article 36.11.
- 36.3 Should a referee fail to attend a hearing without just or reasonable cause, the Committee has the discretion to report the individual to the referee's committee to take whatever action they feel appropriate in the circumstances.
- 36.4 The Committee shall have the power to direct that any person required to attend, produce documentation or items which in the opinion of the Committee would assist them in their determination of any issue at the hearing. In the case of a match official, it will be incumbent upon the match official to provide a full and comprehensive match report, in every case which requires a hearing, no later than seven days before the hearing. The

Committee will be entitled to draw any inference it deems appropriate by the failure of any person or club to produce any such documentation or item, or if the documentation or item is materially incomplete, when reasonable notice to produce the same has been provided, or when in the opinion of the Committee it would have been obvious to the relevant party that such material should have been produced to assist the Committee with its deliberations. Furthermore, the Committee may issue a charge against that person or club pursuant to Article 35.4(vi) arising from a player, official, match official or club's failure to produce any documentation or item when reasonable notice to do so has been provided.

- 36.5 It shall be the duty of anybody or anyone facing any complaint to notify the Committee no less than 48 hours before a hearing of the attendance of any person (including representatives) attending the hearing together with the details of any witness they may wish to call. A club is responsible for ensuring that its players or officials attend a hearing. Failure to notify the Committee will entitle the Committee to exclude any person from the hearing.
- 36.6 The Committee shall be entitled to deal with any hearing if a person or club, including those who are the subject of any charge fails to attend the hearing, if satisfied that it is pursuant to the overriding objective to do so.
- 36.7 In advance of the hearing, any person or club appearing before the Committee to answer any charge must be given copies of any documentation relevant to the facts of the charge which is already in the possession of the Committee and upon which the Committee may rely. Where documentation is received for the first time in the course of any hearing, the Committee will determine, following enquiry of any person or club answering a charge, whether in the interests of fairness time should be afforded to any party to consider such documentation.
- 36.8 If before a hearing it becomes apparent to the Committee that the case will involve specialist (including medical) evidence, or has elements which are unusual or difficult, the Committee may direct that such evidence be served in such a manner that the hearing of the case may be properly and fairly conducted.
- 36.9 The Committee shall be entitled to rely upon audio or video footage, including but not limited to television evidence when considering any case before it. The Committee should, where practicable, identify to any person or club charged of the existence of such footage it intends to rely upon and where the material is not publicly available invite the person or club charged to attend the offices of this Association in advance of any hearing to be afforded an opportunity to inspect this material. The existence of such material having been identified, it will be incumbent upon the person or club charged to make arrangements through the Secretary to the Committee to inspect the material. Where a person or club who is the subject of a charge intends to rely on such material, it will be the responsibility of that person or club to provide copies of the footage which the Committee is capable of viewing no later than 48 hours in advance of the hearing.
- 36.10 The Committee shall be entitled to rely upon any evidence or material which it deems capable of being relevant to the issues before the Committee giving such weight as it deems fit to the evidence, dependent upon its source and its content. It will be for the Committee to determine what evidence it hears and considers.
- 36.11 Where it appears to the Committee that a player, official, match official or club has acted in a manner intended to frustrate the process of conducting an effective hearing, the Committee shall have the power to charge that person or club pursuant to Article 37.13.
- 36.12 If the circumstances so require, the Committee may arrange for a hearing to be conducted by video conference or any other similar method.

## **Article 37 Procedures for the Conducting of Hearings**

### **Principles**

- 37.1 Hearings before the Committee are disciplinary proceedings; the Committee is not a court of law. The Committee shall endeavour, where possible, to abide by the provisions under this Article; however, it shall retain an overriding discretion to act in accordance with the

- overriding objective.
- 37.2 The burden of proof regarding disciplinary infringements rests on the Association. It is for the Association through the process set out in this Code to present evidence to the Committee and establish a case against a person or club charged. Where it appears to the Committee that the Association has failed to discharge that burden, the Committee shall be entitled to discontinue charge proceedings. In cases of mistaken identity pursuant to Article 35.1, whilst the burden of proof is on the Association, the Committee will be entitled to assume that the relevant match official's identification was correct and best placed to act as they did until such time as evidence is produced by the person or club challenging the decision to displace that assumption. In the case of an anti-doping rule violation, it is incumbent upon the suspect to produce the proof necessary to reduce or cancel a sanction. For sanctions to be reduced, the suspect must also prove how the prohibited substance entered his body.
- 37.3 The standard of proof in all disciplinary cases is on the balance of probabilities. For the avoidance of doubt, there is no sliding scale.
- 37.4 The IFA Disciplinary Committee comprises 9 members. The quorum for the Committee is 3 members, one of whom shall have a legal background. The Committee shall have the power to appoint Sub-Committees as they see fit to deal with all disciplinary matters including hearings. Each Sub-Committee shall comprise of no fewer than 3 members, one of whom should be from a legal background.
- 37.5 During the course of any hearing, all submissions and questioning must be directed through the appointed Chairman of the Committee. During the course of any hearing, the Chairman of the Committee shall, in his discretion, direct the parties on how proceedings are to be conducted.
- 37.6 Where a hearing is convened, all members of the Committee must avoid a situation in which they or any Club that they represent or are associated with has, or may have, a direct or indirect interest that conflicts, or possibly may conflict, with the interests of the Committee or the overriding objective. In particular, no member of the Committee shall be entitled to vote on any matter directly related to or involving the Club that they so represent or are associated with. Members of the Committee must declare any such conflict of interest to the Committee as soon as they become aware of it. It shall be incumbent upon any person or club appearing at a hearing before the Committee to identify at the outset of proceedings whether they believe any such conflict of interest arises. If required, the Chairman of the Committee will determine whether a conflict of interest has arisen and take what steps are necessary to ensure that a fair hearing results pursuant to the overriding objective.
- 37.7 Any person or club charged in proceedings and appearing before the Committee who is of the opinion that they have not been given reasonable notice of the charges or the evidence to be relied upon during the course of any hearing shall be entitled to invite the Committee to consider whether an adjournment should be granted. The Committee will determine whether any adjournment is required pursuant to the overriding objective.
- 37.8 Where notice has been given of a hearing to any person or club charged pursuant to Article 17 the Committee shall have the power to proceed to a hearing in the absence of the person or club charged if they fail to attend at the date and time notified without providing a reasonable excuse. Where the Committee find that the attendance of any person or club charged or required to attend is necessary to properly determine any issue before them, the Committee shall have the power to suspend any such person or club until such time as they appear before the Committee, in which event every reasonable attempt will be made to agree with the person the date for a further hearing.
- 37.9 Any player, official, match official club or league charged will be entitled to be represented at a hearing by a nominee or representative providing notice of the attendance of such persons (including the name, contact details and profession of such a person) has been given to the Committee no later than 48 hours before the hearing. In the event that such notice has not been given, it shall be at the discretion of the Committee to refuse such a person entry to the hearing.

- 37.10 The player, official, match official and/or representatives of the club or league charged shall be admitted to the hearing, together with the relevant match official(s) or other such person who submitted a report or evidence in relation to the charge(s) before the Committee, including evidence relied upon by the person or club charged. It shall be at the discretion of the Committee to refuse any such person entry to the hearing where there has been inadequate notice as directed in this Code.
- 37.11 The Committee shall have the power to require the attendance at the hearing of any witness who is capable of giving relevant evidence on the issues before the Committee. In any case where a witness required by the Committee to attend the hearing refuses or fails to attend, the Committee shall be entitled to take account of any written evidence available from that witness and determine what weight can be attributed to that evidence in the absence of their attendance.
- 37.12 Persons or clubs charged shall be entitled at a hearing to call relevant evidence from any person. Clubs must give notice in writing or by email to the Committee of the name and contact details of any such witness together with details of the nature of any such evidence, including a written account of that person's evidence no later than 48 hours before any hearing. The Committee shall determine whether such evidence is relevant for the purpose of any hearing and direct whether such evidence may be relied upon pursuant to the overriding objective.

### **Contempt of the IFA Disciplinary Code**

- 37.13 Where it appears to the Committee that, during any charge procedure, hearing, or in the aftermath of any such procedure or hearing, any party has sought to deliberately mislead the Committee or endeavoured by any means to frustrate the due process of proceedings pursuant to this Code, the Committee shall be entitled to charge any such persons with being in Contempt of the IFA Disciplinary Code. In such circumstances, the Committee will determine whether to deal with such matters summarily as they arise or whether to adjourn pursuant to the overriding objective. The Committee shall have the power to sanction any party found to have been in breach of these provisions by way of suspension or fine.

### **Proceedings at Hearings**

- 37.14 At the commencement of a hearing, the Chairman shall confirm the identities of the persons admitted to the hearing and introduce the Committee members.
- 37.15 Before hearing evidence, the Committee shall satisfy itself that the player, official and/or club is aware of the reasons for their presence at the hearing and the nature of the allegations made against them.
- 37.16 The Committee (only) shall have the power to appoint a Case Presenter to assist the Committee at a hearing when it is deemed appropriate to do so. Such a person must be legally qualified and shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Committee. The case presenter shall have the role of outlining the case, presenting the evidence defined at paragraph 37.18 to the Committee and, at the discretion of the Chairman of the Committee, challenging the evidence as defined at paragraph 37.19. The Case Presenter will be excluded from any aspect of a hearing which does not involve the presentation of evidence, submissions on the facts or the Committee's determination. In cases where a Case Presenter is appointed, supplementary questions from the Committee shall only be asked by the Chairman of the Committee. As a person appointed by the Committee, the Case Presenter shall be treated by all parties involved in the hearing with the same degree of respect to be afforded any member of the Committee. The Chairman may disengage or direct the Case Presenter as appropriate pursuant to the overriding objective. Any person charged in relation to a case where a Case Presenter is to be used shall be notified of this no later than seven days before the Hearing.

### **Sanction Only Hearings**

- 37.17 Where in advance of a hearing, the person or club charged has indicated that they accept the charge(s) alleged but wish to make representations in respect of the appropriate sanction, the person or club charged or the representative (but not both) may, at the discretion of the Committee be invited to attend a hearing to make relevant representations to the Committee; the Committee shall be guided by Article 37.23 in terms of the receipt of such representations. Where the person or club charged wishes to call evidence in these circumstances, the Committee will be guided by the principles set out at Articles 37.18 - 37.23. All deliberations and decisions of the Committee shall be guided by Articles 37.24 - 37.30 of this Code. The Committee has the right to hold a hearing in any circumstance that it feels necessary, regardless of whether the person or club charged wishes to make representations in terms of sanction. Parties are encouraged to attend in order that the matter may be dealt with in accordance with the principles overriding objective set out in clause 1.6.

### **Charge & Sanction Hearings**

- 37.18 The Committee shall first hear and/or consider the evidence available to the Committee including (but not limited to) the evidence upon which a charge has been issued. The player, official, match official, club or league charged or their representative (but not both) shall be given the opportunity through the Chairman to challenge any such evidence. The Chairman of the Committee shall have discretion to restrict questioning pursuant to the overriding objective.
- 37.19 The Committee shall then hear and/or consider any relevant evidence called on behalf of the player, official, match official club or league charged. The Committee and/or any person appointed by the Committee for the purpose of presenting a charge to the Committee shall be entitled, through the Chairman of the Committee to challenge any such evidence.
- 37.20 The Committee may draw such inferences as it considers appropriate from the failure of any person concerned with any charge to give evidence in accordance with this Code or to answer a question put to them during the course of a hearing. Nothing in this article should be regarded as conflicting with the presumption of innocence in favour of the person or club charged and the burden of proof upon the Association to prove a charge is made out.
- 37.21 The Committee shall be entitled to consider any relevant disciplinary record of any person or Club as part of the evidence in the case. However, the Committee must not come to any finding of fact which is founded singularly or significantly on any previous adverse disciplinary finding. Previous disciplinary findings must not be used to bolster the evidence against a person or club charged when the other evidence is weak or tenuous.
- 37.22 The Committee shall be entitled to receive and consider all relevant evidence including (but not limited to) oral evidence, written statements, television and radio evidence, extracts from social media and other internet- based material. Where a witness purports to give relevant evidence, that person should attend to give live oral evidence. Any statement or letter submitted in the name of any person will be deemed to be from the purported author of such material unless proven to the contrary and can be used against that person by the Committee for any other relevant purpose including separate disciplinary proceedings. Where evidence is not first- hand, such evidence will be given such weight as the Committee deems fit.
- 37.23 At the discretion of the Chairman, following the conclusion of the evidence at a hearing, the player, official, match official, club or league and/or their representative(s) (but not both) shall be given the opportunity to supplement any written submission to the Committee and make limited representations on the evidence before the Committee and in respect of the sanction which would be imposed were the charge to be proved. The Chairman of the Committee shall have a discretion to restrict any representations including placing a time limit upon them.

## **Deliberations**

- 37.24 Having heard the evidence and any submissions, the Chairman shall invite all persons other than the members of the Committee to retire whilst the Committee considers its decision in private.
- 37.25 When coming to their determination, the Committee shall do so only on the evidence which has been called, referred to or presented before the Committee at hearing. At the Chairman's discretion, following retirement the Committee may recall the parties to deal with any issue concerning their deliberations.
- 37.26 The Committee shall come to its determination in respect of the charge and any sanction on the basis of a straightforward majority. Where required, the Chairman shall have a casting vote.

## **Decisions**

- 37.27 Following their deliberations, the person or club charged and/or their representatives shall be invited to return before the Committee for the delivery of the Committee's determination. The Disciplinary Committee pass their decisions entirely independently; in particular, they shall not receive instructions from any other body. The person or club charged shall be informed of the Committee's determination, that is to say:
- What charge(s), if any, have been proved
  - What charge(s), if any, have not been proved
  - If proved, what core findings of fact the Committee have reached in coming to their determination on the charge
  - What sanction has been imposed in respect of any charge proved
  - What factors have been taken into account in determining any sanction imposed.
- 37.28 Any person or club against whom, following a hearing, a charge has been proved, shall be notified by the Committee that confirmation of the decision will be given in writing by email to the email address previously provided during the charging procedure. They shall be reminded of their right of appeal pursuant to Article 14 of the Articles of Association both at the conclusion of the hearing and subsequently in writing.
- 37.29 If an appeal has not been lodged by the specified deadline, doping decisions passed by the Disciplinary Committee shall be notified to the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA). Doping decisions passed by the Appeals Board shall be notified simultaneously to the parties and the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA). FIFA will announce anti-doping rule violations within 30 days.
- 37.30 The deliberations of the Committee are private and shall not be divulged to any person who was not present during the course of the Committee's retirement. The deliberations of the Committee, including the opinions or votes of any of its members shall not be disclosed. Nothing in this Article shall prevent the Committee from making representations to the Appeals Board if called upon following the submission of an Appeal by any person or club found to have breached this Code setting out the factual findings of the Committee in respect of any case.
- 37.31 Where it is not proved to the satisfaction of the Committee that a person or club has breached this Code, the hearing will be declared closed and the deposit paid by them shall be returned as soon as is reasonably practicable.
- 37.32 The members of the Committee will not be held liable for any deeds or omissions relating to any disciplinary procedure.

## **Article 38 Failure to Respect Decisions**

- 38.1 Anyone who fails to pay another person (such as a player, a coach or a club) or FIFA a sum of money in full or part, even though instructed to do so by a body, a committee or an instance of FIFA or a subsequent CAS appeal decision (financial decision), or anyone who fails to comply with another decision (non-financial decision) passed by a body, a committee or an instance of FIFA, or by CAS (subsequent appeal decision):



- will be fined for failing to comply with a decision;
  - will be granted a final deadline by the judicial bodies of FIFA in which to pay the amount due or to comply with the (non-financial) decision;
  - (only for clubs:) will be warned and notified that, in the case of default or failure to comply with a decision within the period stipulated, points will be deducted or relegation to a lower division ordered. A transfer ban may also be pronounced;
  - (only for associations) will be warned and notified that, in the case of default or failure to comply with a decision within the period stipulated, further disciplinary measures will be imposed. An expulsion from a FIFA competition may also be pronounced.
- 38.2 If a club disregards the final time limit, the relevant association shall be requested to implement the sanctions threatened.
- 38.3 If points are deducted, they shall be proportionate to the amount owed.
- 38.4 A ban on any football-related activity may also be imposed against natural persons.
- 38.5 Any appeal against a decision passed in accordance with this article shall be lodged with CAS directly.
- 38.6 Any financial or non-financial decision that has been pronounced against a club by a court of arbitration within the relevant association or National Dispute Resolution Chamber (NDRC), both duly recognised by FIFA, shall be enforced by the association of the deciding body that has pronounced the decision in accordance with the principles established in this article and in compliance with the applicable disciplinary regulations.
- 38.7 Any financial or non-financial decision that has been pronounced against a natural person by a court of arbitration within the relevant association or NDRC, both duly recognised by FIFA, shall be enforced by the association of the deciding body that has pronounced the decision or by the natural person's new association if the natural person has in the meantime registered (or otherwise signed a contract in the case of a coach) with a club affiliated to another association, in accordance with the principles established in this article and in compliance with the applicable disciplinary regulations.

**Article 39 Misconduct which has come to the attention of the Committee other than by means of a match official's report**

- 39.1 A club submitting a complaint of misconduct about any player, official, match official or club must submit their complaint in writing dispatched by email to [discipline@irishfa.com](mailto:discipline@irishfa.com) within 14 days from the alleged misconduct coming to their attention. The IFA will send a copy of the complaint to the club or person who is the subject of the complaint.
- 39.2 A deposit of £100 shall be lodged with the IFA with each complaint pursuant to Article 39.1, which shall be returnable only where it is determined that there is a case to answer. The investigation of a complaint shall not commence until the IFA has received the deposit.
- 39.3 In lodging a complaint the club must state fully in writing outlining their complaint and include copies of all evidence, documents and written submissions which the Club intends to rely on to substantiate their complaint within the specified timeframe.
- 39.4 A League, Divisional Association, Committee, Committee member or department within the IFA submitting such a complaint of misconduct will not be required to adhere to the procedure detailed in Article 39.2 of this Code. However, such a claim must be submitted in writing with a full explanation of the claim within 14 days of the alleged misconduct coming to their attention. The IFA will send a copy of the complaint to the club or person who is the subject of the complaint.
- 39.5 A Match Official submitting such a complaint of misconduct will be required to adhere to the procedure detailed in Articles 39.1 and 39.2 of this Code. Such a claim must be submitted in writing with a full explanation of the claim within 14 days of the alleged misconduct coming to their attention. The IFA will send a copy of the complaint to the club or person who is the subject of the complaint.
- 39.6 The Disciplinary Committee reserves the right to deal with cases of serious misconduct that arise outside of the referee's attention.



- 39.7 All complaints of misconduct from a club will require full co-operation from the claimant.

#### **Article 40 Miscellaneous Offences**

- 40.1 Where a match official's report indicates that an offence has occurred which is not specified in the IFA Disciplinary Code the Committee reserves the right to impose sanctions within the FIFA Disciplinary Code.

#### **Article 41 Appeals Board**

- 41.1 Appeals against decisions of the Committee must be lodged as directed in Article 14 of the IFA's Articles of Association.

#### **Article 42 Divisional Associations' and NIBFA Disciplinary Codes**

- 42.1 The procedures described within the code may be adapted to suit each Divisional Association or the Northern Ireland Boys Football Association noting that some powers can be administered by the Committee only. However, the fines & sanctions detailed in this code must be adopted for the purpose of harmonising disciplinary sanctions.
- 42.2 Divisional Associations shall be entitled to choose their means of communication when notifying suspensions or charges.
- 42.3 The Northern Ireland Boys Football Association shall carry out all of its football administration, including notifications of suspensions or charges, via the Comet system.

# IRISH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

## FIXTURE LIST – SEASON 2021/2022

### JUNE

Tues	01.06.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Wed	02.06.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Wed	02.06.2021	U21 – Scotland v NI – International Friendly	
Thur	03.06.2021	Men's – International Teams	Ukraine v NI – International Friendly
Fri	04.06.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Fri	04.06.2021	IFA Women's Challenge Cup	Preliminary Round
Sat	05.06.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Sat	05.06.2021	U21	Scotland v NI – International
Friendly			
Sun	06.06.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Mon	07.06.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Mon	07.06.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	08.06.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	08.06.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Wed	09.06.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Thur	10.06.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Thur	10.06.2021	Senior Women's	NI v Scotland – friendly
Fri	11.06.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Fri	11.06.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date – UEFA Euro 2020 – 11.06.21 – 11.07.21
Sat	12.06.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Sun	13.06.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Mon	14.06.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	15.06.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Fri	18.06.2021	CAFA Women's Cup	Preliminary Round
Tues	22.06.2021	UCL	2021/22 Champions League Preliminary round – Semi-Finals
Fri	25.06.2021	UCL	2021/22 Champions League Preliminary round – Final Round 1
Fri	25.06.2021	IFA Women's Challenge Cup	

### JULY

Tues	06.07.2021	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – first qualifying round
Wed	07.07.2021	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – first qualifying round
Thur	08.07.2021	UECL	2021/22 Europa Conference League – first qualifying round
Fri	09.07.2021	IFA Women's Challenge Cup	Round 2
Tues	13.07.2021	UCL	2020/21 Champions League – first qualifying round
Wed	14.07.2021	UCL	2020/21 Champions League – first qualifying round

Thur	15.07.2021	UECL	2021/22 Europa Conference League – first qualifying round
Fri	16.07.2021	CAFA Women's Cup	Round 1
Tues	20.07.2021	UCL	2020/21 Champions League – second qualifying round
Wed	21.07.2021	UCL	2020/21 Champions League – second qualifying round
Wed	21.07.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International date – Women's Olympic Football Tournament
Thur	22.07.2021	UECL	2021/22 Europa Conference League – second qualifying round
Fri	23.07.2021	IFA Women's Challenge Cup	Quarter-Finals
Sat	24.07.2021	NWFA	2020/21 Senior Cup Final
Tues	27.07.2021	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – second qualifying round
Wed	28.07.2021	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – second qualifying round
Thur	29.07.2021	UECL	2021/22 Europa Conference League – second qualifying round
Fri	30.07.2021	MUFA	Ladies Mid Ulster Cup – Round 1
Sat	31.07.2021	NIFL League Cup	NIFL League Cup – Round 1
<b>AUGUST</b>			
Tues	03.08.2021	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – third qualifying round
Wed	04.08.2021	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – third qualifying round
Thur	05.08.2021	UEL	2021/22 Europa League – third qualifying round
Thur	05.08.2021	UECL	2021/22 Europa Conference League – third qualifying round
Fri	06.08.2021	CAFA Women's Cup	Round 2
Sat	07.08.2021	MUFA	Gerald Kennedy Cup – Round 1
Sat	07.08.2021	CAFA	Steel & Sons – Round 1
Sat	07.08.2021	NWFA	NW Senior Cup (Intermediate clubs only) – Round 1
Sat	07.08.2021	NIFL Championship	MD 1
Tues	10.08.2021	MUFA	Gerald Kennedy Cup – Quarter-Finals
Tues	10.08.2021	NIFL Championship	MD 2
Tues	10.08.2021	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – third qualifying round
Wed	11.08.2021	UEFA Super Cup	
Thur	12.08.2021	UEL	2021/22 Europa League – third qualifying round
Thur	12.08.2021	UECL	2021/22 Europa Conference League – third qualifying round
Fri	13.08.2021		
Sat	14.08.2021	Irish Cup	Qualifying Round 1
Sat	14.08.2021	NIFL Championship	MD 3

Sat	14.08.2021	MUFA	Gerald Kennedy Cup – Semi-Finals
Mon	16.08.2021	WU17	International friendlies – 2 matches – home & away v ROI
Tues	17.08.2021	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – play-offs
Tues	17.08.2021	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 1
Wed	18.08.2021	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – play-offs
Wed	18.08.2021	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – Round 1
Thur	19.08.2021	UEL	2021/22 Europa League – play-offs
Thur	19.08.2021	UECL	2021/22 Europa Conference League – play-offs
Fri	20.08.2021	MUFA	Ladies Mid Ulster Cup – Quarter-Finals
Sat	21.08.2021	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – Round 1
Sat	21.08.2021	MUFA	Bob Radcliffe Cup – preliminary round
Sat	21.08.2021	CAFA	Steel & Sons – Round 2
Sat	21.08.2021	NIFL Championship	MD 4
Sat	21.08.2021	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 2
Tues	24.08.2021	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – play-offs
Wed	25.08.2021	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – play-offs
Thur	26.08.2021	UEL	2021/22 Europa League – play-offs
Thur	26.08.2021	UECL	2021/22 Europa Conference League – play-offs
Fri	27.08.2021	IFA Women's Challenge Cup	Semi-Finals
Fri	27.08.2021	MUFA	Gerald Kennedy Cup – Final
Sat	28.08.2021	NIFL Premiership	MD 1
Sat	28.08.2021	NIFL Championship	MD 5
Sat	28.08.2021	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 3
Mon	30.08.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	31.08.2021	NIFL Premiership	MD 2
Tues	31.08.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	31.08.2021	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – Round 2

## SEPTEMBER

Wed	01.09.2021	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – Round 2
Wed	01.09.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Thur	02.09.2021	Senior Men's	Lithuania v NI – World Cup Qualifier
Fri	03.09.2020	CAFA Women's Cup	Quarter Finals

Fri	03.09.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Fri	03.09.2021	U21	Malta U21 v NI U21 – Euro Qualifier
Sat	04.09.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Sat	04.09.2021	NIFL Premiership	MD 3
Sat	04.09.2021	NIFL Championship	MD 6
Sat	04.09.2021	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 4
Sun	05.09.2021	Senior Men's	Estonia v NI – International Friendly
Mon	06.09.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	07.09.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	07.09.2021	U21	NI U21 v Slovakia U21 – Euro Qualifier
Tues	07.09.2021	MUFA	Mid Ulster Cup – Round 1
Tues	07.09.2021	NWFA	NW Senior Cup – Round 2
Wed	08.09.2021	Senior Men's	NI v Switzerland – World Cup Qualifier
Wed	08.09.2021	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – Round 2
Thur	09.09.2021	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – Round 2
Fri	10.09.2021	CAFA Women's Cup	Semi Finals
Fri	10.09.2021	MUFA	Ladies Mid Ulster Cup – Semi-Finals
Sat	11.09.2021	NIFL Premiership	MD 4
Sat	11.09.2021	NIFL Championship	MD 7
Sat	11.09.2021	IFA Junior Challenge Cup	Round 1
Sat	11.09.2021	MUFA	Bob Radcliffe Cup – Round 1
Sat	11.09.2021	CAFA	Steel & Sons – Round 3
Sat	11.09.2021	NWFA	North West Craig Memorial Intermediate Cup – Round 1
Mon	13.09.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	14.09.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	14.09.2021	NIFL League Cup	NIFL League Cup – Round 2
Tues	14.09.2021	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – MD 1
Wed	15.09.2021	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – MD 1
Wed	15.09.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Thur	16.09.2021	UEL	2021/22 Europa League – MD 1
Thur	16.09.2021	UECL	2021/22 Europa Conference League – group stage
Thur	16.09.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Fri	17.09.2021	Senior Women's	NI v Luxembourg – Women's World Cup Qualifier
Fri	17.09.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Sat	18.09.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Sat	18.09.2021	NIFL Premiership	MD 5
Sat	18.09.2021	NIFL Championship	MD 8
Sat	18.09.2021	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 5
Sat	18.09.2021	IFA Junior Challenge Cup	Round 1 (continued)

Sun	19.09.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Mon	20.09.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	21.09.2020	CAFA	Senior Shield – R1
Tues	21.09.2021	Senior Women's	NI v Latvia – Women's World Cup Qualifier
Tues	21.09.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Fri	24.09.2021	WU17	Spain v NI – UEFA WU17 Euro 2021/22 qualifying round
			Mini tournament hosts – Serbia
Fri	24.09.2021	MUFA	Ladies Mid Ulster Cup – Final
Sat	25.09.2021	NIFL Premiership	MD 6
Sat	25.09.2021	NIFL Championship	MD 9
Sat	25.09.2021	Irish Cup	Qualifying Round 2
Sat	25.09.2021	MUFA	Mid Ulster Shield – Round 1
Sat	25.09.2021	CAFA	Junior Shield – Round 1
Mon	27.09.2021	WU17	Serbia v NI – UEFA WU17 Euro 2021/22 qualifying round
			Mini tournament hosts – Serbia
Tues	28.09.2021	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – MD 2
Wed	29.09.2021	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – MD 2
Thur	30.09.2021	WU17	NI v Iceland – UEFA WU17 Euro 2021/22 qualifying round
			Mini tournament hosts – Serbia
Thur	30.09.2021	UEL	2021/22 Europa League – MD 2
Thur	30.09.2021	UECL	2021/22 Europa Conference League – group stage

## OCTOBER

Fri	01.10.2021		MD 7
Sat	02.10.2021	NIFL Premiership	MD 10
Sat	02.10.2021	NIFL Championship	Round 1
Sat	02.10.2021	Harry Cavan Youth Challenge Cup	Bob Radcliffe Cup – Round 2
Sat	02.10.2021	MUFA	Steel & Sons – Round 4
Sat	02.10.2021	CAFA	North West Craig Memorial Intermediate Cup
Sat	02.10.2021	NWFA	– Quarter-Finals
Mon	04.10.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	05.10.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	05.10.2021	NWFA	NW Senior Cup – Semi-Finals
Tues	05.10.2021	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – MD 1
Wed	06.10.2021	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – MD 1
Wed	06.10.2021	U19	NI v Denmark UEFA U19 Euro 2021/22 qualifying round
			Mini tournament hosts – Czech Republic
Wed	06.10.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Thur	07.10.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date

Fri	08.10.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Fri	08.10.2021	U21	Russia U21 v NI U21 – Euro Qualifier
Sat	09.10.2021	Senior Men's	Switzerland v NI – World Cup Qualifier
Sat	09.10.2021	NIFL Premiership	MD 8
Sat	09.10.2021	NIFL Championship	MD 11
Sat	09.10.2021	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 6
Sat	09.10.2021	IFA Junior Challenge Cup	Round 2
Sat	09.10.2021	U19	Czech Republic v NI UEFA U19 Euro 2021/22 qualifying round
			Mini tournament hosts – Czech Republic
Sun	10.10.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Mon	11.10.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	12.10.2021	NIFL League Cup	NIFL League Cup – Round 3
Tues	12.10.2021	MUFA	Mid Ulster Cup – Quarter-Finals
Tues	12.10.2021	Senior Men's	Bulgaria v NI – World Cup Qualifier
Tues	12.10.2021	U21	Spain U21 v NI U21 – Euro Qualifier
Tues	12.10.2021	U19	Kazakhstan v NI UEFA U19 Euro 2021/22 qualifying round
			Mini tournament hosts – Czech Republic
Wed	13.10.2021	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – MD 2
Thur	14.10.2021	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – MD 2
Fri	15.10.2021	IFA Women's Challenge Cup	Final
Sat	16.10.2021	NIFL Premiership	MD 9
Sat	16.10.2021	NIFL Championship	MD 12
Sat	16.10.2021	CAFA Women's Cup	Final
Sat	16.10.2021	IFA Intermediate Challenge Cup	Round 1
Sat	16.10.2021	MUFA	Mid Ulster Shield – Round 2
Sat	16.10.2021	CAFA	Junior Shield – Round 2
Mon	18.10.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	19.10.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	19.10.2022	CAFA	Senior Shield – QF
Tues	19.10.2021	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – MD 3
Wed	20.10.2021	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – MD 3
Wed	20.10.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
October	Wed	20.10.2021	WU19 Switzerland v NI UEFA WU19 Euro 2021/22 qualifying round
			Mini tournament hosts – ROI
Thur	21.10.2021	UEL	2021/22 Europa League – MD 3
Thur	21.10.2021	UECL	2021/22 Europa Conference League – group stage

Thur	21.10.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Fri	22.10.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Sat	23.10.2021	WU19	England v NI UEFA WU19 Euro 2021/22 qualifying round
Sat	23.10.2021	Women's – International Teams	Mini tournament hosts – ROI
Sat	23.10.2021	Senior Women's	FIFA International Date
Sat	23.10.2021	NIFL Premiership	England v NI – Women's World Cup Qualifier
Sat	23.10.2021	NIFL Championship	MD 10
Sat	23.10.2021	MUFA	MD 13
Sat	23.10.2021	CAFA	Bob Radcliffe Cup
Sun	24.10.2021	Women's – International Teams	– Quarter-Finals
Mon	25.10.2021	Women's – International Teams	Steel & Sons – Round 5
Tues	26.10.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	26.10.2021	Senior Women's	FIFA International Date
Wed	27.10.2021	U17	NI v ROI UEFA WU19 Euro 2021/22 qualifying round
Sat	30.10.2021	U17	Mini tournament hosts – ROI
Sat	30.10.2021	NIFL Premiership	FIFA International Date
Sat	30.10.2021	NIFL Championship	NI v Austria – Women's World Cup Qualifier
Sat	30.10.2021	Irish Cup	NI v Scotland 2021/22 UEFA U17 Championship – qualifying round
Sun	31.10.2021	Harry Cavan Youth Challenge Cup	Mini tournament hosts – NI
			Italy v NI 2021/22 UEFA U17 Championship – qualifying round
			Mini tournament hosts – NI
			MD 11
			MD 14
			Qualifying Round 3
			Round 2
<b>NOVEMBER</b>			
Mon	01.11.2021		
Tues	02.11.2021	U17	Albania v NI 2021/22 UEFA U17 Championship – qualifying round
Tues	02.11.2021	UCL	Mini tournament hosts – NI
Wed	03.11.2021	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – MD 4
Thur	04.11.2021	UEL	2021/22 Champions League – MD 4
Thur	04.11.2021	UECL	2021/22 Europa League – MD 4
Sat	06.11.2021	NIFL Premiership	2021/22 Europa Conference League – group stage
Sat	06.11.2021	NIFL Championship	MD 12
Sat	06.11.2021	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 15
Sat	06.11.2021	MUFA	MD 7
Sat	06.11.2021	NWFA	Mid Ulster Shield – Round 3
Sat	06.11.2021	CAFA	North West Matt Morrison Junior Cup – Round 1
			Junior Shield – Round 3



Mon	08.11.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	09.11.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	09.11.2021	NIFL League Cup	NIFL League Cup – Quarter Final
Tues	09.11.2021	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – MD 3
Wed	10.11.2021	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – MD 3
Wed	10.11.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Thur	11.11.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Fri	12.11.2021	Senior Men's	NI v Lithuania – World Cup Qualifier
Fri	12.11.2021	U21	NI U21 v Lithuania U21 – Euro Qualifier
Sat	13.11.2021	NIFL Premiership	MD 13
Sat	13.11.2021	NIFL Championship	MD 16
Sat	13.11.2021	MUFA	Bob Radcliffe Cup – Semi-Final 1
Sat	13.11.2021	NWFA	North West Craig Memorial Intermediate Cup – Semi-Finals
Sat	13.11.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Sun	14.11.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Mon	15.11.2021	Senior Men's	NI v Italy – World Cup Qualifier
Tues	16.11.2021	MUFA	Mid Ulster Cup – Semi-Final 1
Tues	16.11.2021	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	16.11.2021	U21	NI U21 v Malta U21 – Euro Qualifier
Wed	17.11.2021	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – MD 4
Thur	18.11.2021	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – MD 4
Fri	19.11.2021	CAFA	Steel & Sons Cup – Semi-Final 1
Fri	19.11.2021	MUFA	Bob Radcliffe Cup – Semi-Final 2
Sat	20.11.2021	IFA Intermediate Challenge Cup	Round 2
Sat	20.11.2021	IFA Junior Challenge Cup	Round 3
Sat	20.11.2021	NIFL Premiership	MD 14
Sat	20.11.2021	NIFL Championship	MD 17
Sat	20.11.2021	NWFA	North West Craig Memorial Intermediate Cup – Semi-Finals
Mon	22.11.2021	CAFA	Steel & Sons Cup – Semi-Final 2
Mon	22.11.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	23.11.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	23.11.2021	MUFA	Mid Ulster Cup – Semi-Final 2
Tues	23.11.2021	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – MD 5
Wed	24.11.2021	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – MD 5
Wed	24.11.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Thur	25.11.2021	UEL	2021/22 Europa League – MD 5
Thur	25.11.2021	UECL	2021/22 Europa Conference League – group stage
Thur	25.11.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Thur	25.11.2021	Senior Women's	North Macedonia v NI – Women's World Cup Qualifier

Fri	26.11.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Sat	27.11.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Sat	27.11.2021	Irish Cup	Qualifying Round 4
Sat	27.11.2021	NIFL Premiership	MD 15
Sat	27.11.2021	NIFL Championship	MD 18
Sat	27.11.2021	Harry Cavan Youth Challenge Cup	Round 3
Sun	28.11.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Mon	29.11.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	30.11.2021	NIFL Premiership	MD 16
Tues	30.11.2021	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	30.11.2021	Senior Women's	NI v North Macedonia – Women's World Cup Qualifier

## DECEMBER

Sat	04.11.2021	NIFL Premiership	MD 17
Sat	04.12.2021	NIFL Championship	MD 19
Sat	04.12.2021	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 8
Sat	04.12.2021	MUFA	Mid Ulster Shield – Round 4
Sat	04.12.2021	NWFA	North West Matt Morrison Junior Cup – Round 2
Sat	04.12.2021	CAFA	Junior Shield – Round 4
Tues	07.12.2021	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – MD 6
Wed	08.12.2021	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – MD 6
Wed	08.12.2021	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – MD 5
Thur	09.12.2021	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – MD 5
Thur	09.12.2021	UEL	2021/22 Europa League – MD 6
Thur	09.12.2021	UECL	2021/22 Europa Conference League – group stage
Sat	11.12.2021	NIFL Premiership	MD 18
Sat	11.12.2021	NIFL Championship	MD 20
Sat	11.12.2021	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 9
Tues	14.12.2021	NIFL League Cup	NIFL League Cup – Semi final
Wed	15.12.2021	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – MD 6
Thur	16.12.2021	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – MD 6
Sat	18.12.2021	NIFL Premiership	MD 19
Sat	18.12.2021	NIFL Championship	MD 21
Sat	18.12.2021	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	
Sat	25.12.2021	CAFA	Steel & Sons Cup – Final (alternative date – 29.12.21)
Sun	26.12.2021	NIFL Premiership	MD 20
Mon	27.12.2021	NIFL Championship	MD 22
Mon	27.12.2021	MUFA	Bob Radcliffe Cup – Final
Mon	27.12.2021	NWFA	North West Craig Memorial Intermediate Cup – Final
Wed	29.12.2021	CAFA	Steel & Sons Final (alternative date to 25.12.21)

## JANUARY

Sat	01.01.2022	NIFL Premiership	MD 21
Sat	01.01.2022	NIFL Championship	MD 23
Sat	01.01.2022	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 11
Sat	08.01.2022	Irish Cup	Round 1
Sat	08.01.2022	IFA Junior Challenge Cup	Round 4
Sat	08.01.2022	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 12
Sat	15.01.2022	Harry Cavan Youth Challenge Cup	Round 4 (Quarter-Finals)
Sat	15.01.2022	NIFL Premiership	MD 22
Sat	15.01.2022	NIFL Championship	MD 24
Sat	15.01.2022	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 13
Sat	15.01.2022	MUFA	Mid Ulster Shield – Quarter-Finals
Sat	15.01.2022	NWFA	North West Matt Morrison Junior Cup – Round 3
Sat	15.01.2022	CAFA	Junior Shield – Round 5
Tues	18.01.2022	MUFA	Mid Ulster Cup – Final
Sat	22.01.2022	NIFL Premiership	MD 23
Sat	22.01.2022	NIFL Championship	MD 25
Sat	22.01.2022	IFA Intermediate Challenge Cup	Round 3
Tues	25.01.2021	NIFL Premiership	MD 24
Sat	29.01.2022	NIFL Premiership	MD 25
Sat	29.01.2022	NIFL Championship	MD 26
Sat	29.01.2022	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 14
Sun	30.01.2022		
Mon	31.01.2022		

## FEBRUARY

Sat	05.02.2022	Irish Cup	Round 2
Sat	05.02.2022	IFA Junior Challenge Cup	Round 5
Sat	05.02.2022	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 15
Mon	07.02.2022	Harry Cavan Youth Challenge Cup	Semi-Finals – week commencing 07.02.22
Tues	08.02.2021	NIFL Premiership	MD26
Sat	12.02.2022	NIFL Premiership	MD 27
Sat	12.02.2022	NIFL Championship	MD 27
Sat	12.02.2022	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 16
Sat	12.02.2022	F&WFA	Mulhern Cup – Round 1
Sat	12.02.2022	F&WFA	Reihill Cup – Round 1
Sat	12.02.2022	MUFA	Mid Ulster Youth Cup – Round 1
Mon	14.02.2022	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	15.02.2022	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	15.02.2022	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – Round of 16
Wed	16.02.2022	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – Round of 16
Wed	16.02.2022	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Thur	17.02.2022	UEL	2021/22 Europa League – Knockout round play-offs
Thur	17.02.2022	UECL	2021/22 Europa Conference League – Knockout round play-offs

Thur	17.02.2022	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Fri	18.02.2022	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Sat	19.02.2022	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Sat	19.02.2022	NIFL League Cup	NIFL League Cup – Final
Sat	19.02.2022	NIFL Premiership	MD 28
Sat	19.02.2022	NIFL Championship	MD 28
Sat	19.02.2022	IFA Intermediate Challenge Cup	Round 4
Sat	19.02.2022	NWFA	North West Matt Morrison Junior Cup – Quarter-Finals
Sat	19.02.2022	CAFA	Junior Shield – Round 6
Sun	20.02.2022	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Mon	21.02.2022	MUFA	Mid Ulster Shield – Semi-Final 1 – week commencing 21.02.22
Mon	21.02.2022	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	22.02.2022	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	22.02.2022	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – Round of 16
Wed	23.02.2022	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – Round of 16
Wed	23.02.2022	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Thur	24.02.2022	UEL	2021/22 Europa League – Knockout round play-offs
Thur	24.02.2022	UECL	2021/22 Europa Conference League – Knockout round play-offs
Sat	26.02.2022	NIFL Premiership	MD 29
Sat	26.02.2022	NIFL Championship	MD 29
Sat	26.02.2022	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 17
Sat	26.02.2022	IFA Junior Challenge Cup	Round 6 (Quarter-Finals)
Mon	28.02.2022	MUFA	Mid Ulster Shield – Semi-Final 2 – week commencing 28.02.22
<b>MARCH</b>			
Fri	04.03.2022	Irish Cup	Quarter-Finals
Sat	05.03.2022	Irish Cup	Quarter-Finals
Sat	05.03.2022	F&WFA	Mulhern Cup – Round 2
Sat	05.03.2022	F&WFA	Reihill Cup – Round 2
Sat	05.03.2022	MUFA	Mid Ulster Youth Cup – Quarter-Finals
Sat	05.03.2022	NIFL Championship	MD 30
Sat	05.03.2022	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 18
Tues	08.03.2021	NIFL Premiership	MD 30
Tues	08.03.2022	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – Round of 16
Wed	09.03.2022	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – Round of 16
Thur	10.03.2022	UEL	2021/22 Europa League – Round of 16
Thur	10.03.2022	UECL	2021/22 Europa Conference League – Round of 16
Sat	12.03.2022	NIFL Premiership	MD 31
Sat	12.03.2022	NIFL Championship	MD 31

Sat	12.03.2022	IFA Intermediate Challenge Cup	Quarter-Finals
Tues	15.03.2022	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – Round of 16
Wed	16.03.2022	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – Round of 16
Thur	17.03.2022	UEL	2021/22 Europa League – Round of 16
Thur	17.03.2022	UECL	2021/22 Europa Conference League – Round of 16
Sat	19.03.2022	NIFL Premiership	MD 32
Sat	19.03.2022	NIFL Championship	MD 32
Sat	19.03.2022	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 19
Sat	19.03.2022	MUFA	Mid Ulster Youth Cup – Semi-Finals
Mon	21.03.2022	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	22.03.2022	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	22.03.2022	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – Quarter-Finals
Wed	23.03.2022	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – Quarter-Finals
Wed	23.03.2022	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Wed	23.03.2022	CAFA	Junior Shield – Semi-Final 1
Thur	24.03.2022	CAFA	Junior Shield – Semi-Final 2
Thur	24.03.2022	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Fri	25.03.2022	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Fri	25.03.2022	U21	Slovakia U21 v NI U21 – Euro Qualifier
Sat	26.03.2022	NIFL Premiership	MD 33 33
Sat	26.03.2022	NIFL Championship	MD 33
Sat	26.03.2022	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 20
Sat	26.03.2022	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Sat	26.03.2022	F&WFA	Mulhern Cup – Round 3
Sat	26.03.2022	F&WFA	Reihill Cup – Round 3
Sun	27.03.2022	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Mon	28.03.2022	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Mon	28.03.2022	IFA Junior Cup Challenge Cup	Semi-Finals – week commencing 28.03.22 / 04.04.22
Tues	29.03.2022	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	29.03.2022	U21	NI U21 v Russia U21 – Euro Qualifier
Wed	30.03.2022	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – Quarter-Finals
Thur	31.03.2022	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – Quarter-Finals
<b>APRIL</b>			
Fri	01.04.2022	Irish Cup	Semi-Finals
Sat	02.04.2022	Irish Cup	Semi-Finals
Mon	04.04.2022	IFA Intermediate Challenge Cup	Semi-Finals – week commencing 04.04.22
Mon	04.04.2022	IFA Junior Cup Challenge Cup	Semi-Finals – week commencing 28.03.22 / 04.04.22

Mon	04.04.2022	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	05.04.2022	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	05.04.2022	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – Quarter-Finals
Wed	06.04.2022	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – Quarter-Finals
Wed	06.04.2022	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Thur	07.04.2022	UEL	2021/22 Europa League – Quarter-Finals
Thur	07.04.2022	UECL	2021/22 Europa Conference League – Quarter-Finals
Thur	07.04.2022	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Fri	08.04.2022	Harry Cavan Youth Challenge Cup	Final
Fri	08.04.2022	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Fri	08.04.2022	Senior Women's	Austria v NI – Women's World Cup Qualifier
Sat	09.04.2022	NIFL Premiership	MD 34
Sat	09.04.2022	NIFL Championship	MD 34
Sat	09.04.2022	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 21
Sat	09.04.2022	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Sun	10.04.2022	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Mon	11.04.2022	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	12.04.2022	Women's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	12.04.2022	Senior Women's	NI v England – Women's World Cup Qualifier
Tues	12.04.2022	MUFA	Mid Ulster Youth Cup – Final
Tues	12.04.2022	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – Quarter-Finals
Wed	13.04.2022	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – Quarter-Finals
Thur	14.04.2022	UEL	2021/22 Europa League – Quarter-Finals
Thur	14.04.2022	UECL	2021/22 Europa Conference League – Quarter-Finals
Sat	16.04.2022	NIFL Premiership	MD 35
Sat	16.04.2022	NIFL Championship	MD 35
Sat	16.04.2022	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 22
Mon	18.04.2022	MUFA	Mid Ulster Shield – Final
Tues	19.04.2022	NIFL Premiership	MD 36
Tues	19.04.2022	NIFL Championship	MD 36
Tues	19.04.2022	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 23
Wed	20.04.2022	CAFA	Junior Shield – Final (alternative date – 27.04.22)
Wed	20.04.2022	F&WFA	Reihill Cup – Semi-Final 1
Thur	21.04.2022	F&WFA	Reihill Cup – Semi-Final 2
Fri	22.04.2022	NWFA	North West Matt Morrison Junior Cup – Semi-Final 1
Sat	23.04.2022	NIFL Premiership	MD 37
Sat	23.04.2022	NIFL Championship	MD 37
Sat	23.04.2022	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 24
Sat	23.04.2022	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – Semi-Finals

Sun	24.04.2022	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – Semi-Finals
Tues	26.04.2022	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – Semi-Finals
Tues	26.04.2022	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 25
Wed	27.04.2022	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – Semi-Finals
Wed	27.04.2022	CAFA	Junior Shield – Final (alternative date to 20.04.22)
Wed	27.04.2022	F&WFA	Mulhern Cup – Semi-Final 1
Thur	28.04.2022	F&WFA	Mulhern Cup – Semi-Final 2
Thur	28.04.2022	UEL	2021/22 Europa League – Semi-Finals
Thur	28.04.2022	UECL	2021/22 Europa Conference League – Semi-Finals
Fri	29.04.2022	NWFA	North West Matt Morrison Junior Cup – Semi-Final 2
Sat	30.04.2022	NIFL Premiership	MD 38
Sat	30.04.2022	NIFL Championship	MD 38
Sat	30.04.2022	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 26
Sat	30.04.2022	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – Semi-Finals
<b>MAY</b>			
Sun	01.05.2022	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – Semi-Finals
Mon	02.05.2022	IFA Junior Cup Challenge Cup	Final
Tues	03.05.2022	NIFL Premiership	European Playoff Provisional
Tues	03.05.2022	NIFL Premiership/Championship	Promotion/Relegation playoff – 1st leg – Provisional
Tues	03.05.2022	NIFL Premier Intermediate League	MD 27 Provisional
Tues	03.05.2022	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – Semi-Finals
Wed	04.05.2022	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – Semi-Finals
Thur	05.05.2022	UEL	2021/22 Europa League – Semi-Finals
Thur	05.05.2022	UECL	2021/22 Europa Conference League – Semi-Finals
Fri	06.05.2022	F&WFA	Reihill Cup – Final
Fri	06.05.2022	NIFL Premiership	European Playoff Provisional
Fri	06.05.2022	NIFL Premiership/Championship	Promotion/Relegation playoff – 2nd leg – Provisional
Fri	06.05.2022	NIFL Championship/PIL	Promotion/Relegation playoff – 1st leg – Provisional
Sat	07.05.2022	Irish Cup	Final
Mon	09.05.2022	IFA Intermediate Challenge Cup	Final – TBC – week commencing 09.05.22
Tues	10.05.2022	NIFL Premiership	European Playoff Provisional
Tues	10.05.2022	NIFL Championship/PIL	Promotion/Relegation playoff – 2nd leg – Provisional
Fri	13.05.2022	F&WFA	Mulhern Cup – Final

Fri	13.05.2022	NWFA	North West Matt Morrison Junior Cup – Final
Wed	18.05.2022	UEL	2021/22 Europa League – Final
Sun	22.05.2022	UWCL	2021/22 Women's Champions League – Final
Wed	25.05.2022	UECL	2021/22 Europa Conference League – Final
Sat	28.05.2022	UCL	2021/22 Champions League – Final
Mon	30.05.2022	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date
Tues	31.05.2022	Men's – International Teams	FIFA International Date





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