

SOUTH WEST COMBINATION  
WOMEN'S • FOOTBALL • LEAGUE



# LEAGUE RULES

SEASON 2007/2008

THURA KT WIN, JP  
President

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Chairman

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General Secretary



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# RULES OF THE LEAGUE

## NOMENCLATURE AND CONSTITUTION

1. This Competition shall be designated the South West Combination Women's Football League ("the League"), its Cup Competition shall be known as the Ambassador League Cup, and shall consist of not more than 12 (twelve) Clubs who shall be Full Member Clubs.

All such Member Clubs must be affiliated to an affiliated County Football Association and their names and particulars shall be returned annually by the appointed date on the Form "D" to The Football Association. The area covered by the League Membership shall be as defined as the areas covered by the South West Region and Southern Region Women's Football Leagues.

The League shall apply annually for sanction to The Football Association.

Member Clubs shall not enter any of their teams playing in the League in any other Competitions (with the exception of The FA, FA of Wales, Regional League, Youth League and parent County FA Competitions) except with the written consent of the Management Committee of the League.

## ENTRY FEE, SUBSCRIPTION, DEPOSIT

2. (A) Applications by Clubs for admission to the League must be made in writing to the General Secretary and must be accompanied by an Entry Fee of £10 (ten pounds) which shall be returned in the event of non-election.

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

- (B) The Annual Subscription shall be £65 (sixty-five pounds) per Club, payable on or before 01 July in each year.
- (C) Each Club shall, within 14 (fourteen) days of election, pay a Deposit of £50 (fifty pounds) which shall be returnable to Clubs on leaving the League provided they have fulfilled their fixtures and complied with all orders of the Management Committee.
- (D) A Club shall not participate in the League until the Entry Fee, Annual Subscription and Deposit have been paid.
- (E) Clubs must advise annually to the General Secretary in writing by 01 July of its Parent County Football Association affiliation number for the forthcoming Season, failing which they shall be fined £10 (ten pounds). Clubs must advise the General Secretary in writing, or on the prescribed form, details of its Headquarters, Officers and any other information required by the League.

## OFFICERS

3. The Officers of the League shall be the President, Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, General Secretary, Fixtures Secretary, Registrations Secretary, Referees Secretary and 2 (two) Women's Football Conference Representatives to be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting. (NB. Auditors are not Officers)

## MANAGEMENT, NOMINATION, ELECTION

4. (A) The League shall be governed in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of The Football Association by a Management Committee comprised of the Officers and no more than 4 (four) Members who shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting.

- (B) Retiring Officers shall be eligible to become candidates for re-election without nomination. All other candidates for elections as Officers or Members of the Management Committee shall be nominated to the General Secretary in writing, signed by the Secretaries of 2 (two) Member Clubs, not later than 15 May in each year. Names of the candidates for election shall be circulated with the notice of the Annual General Meeting. In the event of there being no nomination in accordance with the foregoing for any office, nominations may be received at the Annual General Meeting.

- (C) The Management Committee shall meet as often as necessary to deal with business as it arises.

On receiving a requisition signed by  $\frac{2}{3}$  (two-thirds) of the Members of the Management Committee the General Secretary shall convene a meeting of the Committee.

- (D) Except where otherwise mentioned all communications shall be addressed to the General Secretary who shall conduct the correspondence of the League and keep a record of its proceedings.
- (E) All communications received from Clubs must be conducted through their Secretary on Club Letterhead paper.



#### POWERS OF MANAGEMENT

5. (A) The Management Committee may appoint such other sub-committees as they may consider necessary and may delegate such of their powers as they deem necessary to such committees. The decision of all such committees shall be reported to the Management Committee for ratification.
- (B) Subject to the permission of The Football Association having been obtained the Management Committee may order a match or matches to be played each Season, the proceeds to be devoted to the funds of the League and, if necessary, may call upon each Club (including any Club which may have withdrawn during the Season) to contribute equally such sums as may be necessary to meet any deficiency at the end of the Season. (See Rule 6(E)).
- (C) Each Member of the Management Committee shall have the right to attend and vote at all Management Committee Meetings and have one vote thereat, but no Member shall be allowed to vote on any matters directly appertaining to such Member or to the Club so represented. (This shall apply to the procedure of any sub-committee).

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

Any Management Committee Member who fails to attend 3 (three) Management Committee Meetings in a Season shall be deemed to have resigned from the Management Committee, unless the Management Committee decides otherwise.

- (D) The Management Committee shall have powers to apply, act upon and enforce the Rules of the League and shall also have jurisdiction over all matters affecting the League, including any not provided for in the Rules. Except where these Rules provide for the imposition of a set penalty any Club, Official or Player alleged to be in breach of a League Rule must be formally charged in writing and given the opportunity to present their case before the Management Committee. All breaches of the Laws of the Game, Rules and Regulations of The Football Association shall be dealt with in accordance with FA Rules.
- (E) All decisions of the Management Committee shall be binding subject to the right of appeal to the Board of Appeal in accordance with Rule 16.
- Decisions of the Management Committee must be notified in writing to those concerned within 14 (fourteen) days.
- (F) 4 (Four) Members of the Management Committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business of the Management Committee and 2 (two) Members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business by any sub-committee of the League.
- (G) The Management Committee, as it may deem necessary, shall have the power to fill in an acting capacity, any vacancies that may occur amongst their number.
- (H) A Club having failed to comply with an order or instruction of the Management Committee, or failing to satisfactorily attend to the business and/or the correspondence of the League, shall be liable to be fined or otherwise penalised at the discretion of the Management Committee.
- (I) All fines and charges shall be paid within 14 (fourteen) days of the date of posting of the written notification.
- Clubs, Officials or individuals committing a breach of this Rule will incur such penalties as the Management Committee may impose.
- (J) A Member of the Management Committee appointed by the League to attend a meeting or match may have any expenses incurred refunded by the League.
- (K) The Management Committee shall have the power to fill any vacancy that may occur in the membership of the League between the Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting called to decide the constitution and the commencement of the Season.

#### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

6. (A) The Annual General Meeting shall be held not later than 30 June in each year. At this meeting the following business shall be transacted provided that at least 50% (fifty percent) of the Members are present and entitled to vote:-
- (i) To receive and confirm the Minutes of the preceding Annual General Meeting
  - (ii) To consider any business arising there from
  - (iii) To receive and adopt the Annual Report, Balance Sheet and Statement of Accounts
  - (iv) Election of Clubs to fill vacancies (as recommended by the Management Committee)
  - (v) Constitution of the League for ensuing Season
  - (vi) Election of Officers and Management Committee
  - (vii) Appointment of Accounts Verifiers
  - (viii) Alteration of Rules, if any (of which notice has been given)
  - (ix) Confirm the date for the commencement and conclusion of Playing Season
  - (x) Other business of which due notice shall have been given and accepted as being relevant to an Annual General Meeting.



6. (B) A copy of the duly verified Balance Sheet, Statement of Accounts and Agenda shall be forwarded to each Club at least 14 (fourteen) days prior to the meeting, and to The Football Association.
- (C) A signed copy of the duly verified Balance Sheet and Statement of Accounts shall be sent to The Football Association within 14 (fourteen) days of its adoption by the Annual General Meeting.
- (D) Each Full Member Club shall be empowered to send 2 (two) delegates to an Annual General Meeting. Each Club shall be entitled to 1 (one) vote only. Not less than 28 (twenty-eight) days' notice shall be given of any such Meeting.
- (E) Clubs who have withdrawn their Membership of the League during the Season being concluded or who are not continuing Membership shall be entitled to attend but shall vote only on matters relating to the Season being concluded. This provision will not apply to Clubs expelled in accordance with Rule 17.
- (F) All voting shall be conducted by a show of voting cards unless a ballot be demanded by at least  $\frac{1}{3}$  (one-third) of the delegates present and qualified to vote or the Chairman so decides.
- (G) No individual shall be entitled to vote on behalf of more than one Full Member Club.
- (H) Any continuing Member Club failing to be represented at the Annual General Meeting shall be fined £50 (fifty pounds).
- (I) Officers and Management Committee Members shall be entitled to attend and vote at the Annual General Meeting.

#### AGREEMENT TO BE SIGNED

7. The Chairman and the Secretary of each Club shall complete and sign the following agreement which shall be deposited with the League together with the Application for Membership for the following Season, or upon indicating that the Club intends to compete.

"We, A, \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ (Chairman) and  
B, \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ (Secretary) of the

\_\_\_\_\_ (Club) have been provided with a copy of the Rules and Regulations of the South West Combination Women's Football League and do hereby agree for and on behalf of the said Club, if elected or accepted into Membership, to conform to those Rule and Regulations and to accept, abide by and implement the decisions of the Management Committee of the League, subject to the right of appeal in accordance with Rule 16."

Any alteration of the Chairman and/or Secretary on above Agreement must be notified to the County Football Association(s) to which the Club is affiliated and to the General Secretary of the League within 14 (fourteen) days. Failure to comply with this Rule will incur a penalty of £20 (twenty pounds).

(Note: The spaces above for A and B are intended for the inclusion of the signature and address of officers and members.)

#### QUALIFICATIONS OF PLAYERS

8. (A) Contract players, as defined in Football Association Rules, are permitted in this League.
- (B) A registered playing member of a Club is one who, being in all other respects eligible, has signed a fully and correctly completed League registration form in ink, counter signed by an Officer of the Club, and who has been registered with the Registration Secretary 2 (two) days prior to playing and whose registration has been confirmed by the Registrations Secretary prior to playing.
- (C) A player cannot be registered for the League until she has reached her sixteenth (16th) birthday.
- (D) A team shall not include any player who has taken part in 2 (two) or more senior competition matches during the current Season unless a period of 21 (twenty-one) days has elapsed since they played.  
For the purposes of this League a senior competition is The FA Women's Premier League.
- (E) A player having taken part in matches for any Club affiliated to any County Football Association shall not be allowed to join, be transferred to, or sign for a Club in this League without first proving to the officials of the intended Club that the player has discharged all reasonable financial liabilities to the previous Club or Clubs, and a Club official may not accept such player's signature without first ascertaining whether such claims have been discharged to the satisfaction of the Club, or Clubs, for which the player last played.
- (F) A fee of £2 (two pounds) shall be paid for each player registered.
- (G) The Management Committee shall decide all registration disputes.

In the event of a player signing a Registration Form or having registration submitted for more than 1 (one) Club, priority of registration shall decide for which Club the player shall be registered. The Registrations Secretary shall notify the Club last applying to register the player of the fact of the previous registration.



8. (H) It shall be a breach of Rule for a player to:-
- (i) Play for more than 1 (one) Club in the League in the same Season without first being transferred
  - (ii) Having signed for 1 (one) Club in the League, sign for another Club in the League in that Season except for a purpose of a transfer
  - (iii) Submitted a signed Registration Form for registration that the player had wilfully neglected to accurately or fully complete.
- (I) (i) The Management Committee shall have power to accept the registration of any player.
- (ii) The Management Committee shall have power to refuse, cancel or suspend the registration of any player or may fine any player at their discretion who has been charged and found guilty of registration irregularities. (Subject to Rule 16)
- (iii) The Management Committee shall have power to refuse or cancel the registration of any player charged and found guilty of undesirable conduct (Subject to Rule 16). Undesirable conduct shall mean an incident of repeated conduct, which may deter a participant from being involved in this Competition.
- (Note: Action under Clause (iii) shall not be taken against a player for misconduct until the matter has been dealt with by the appropriate Association, and then only in cases of the player bringing the Competition into disrepute.)
- (J) Subject to The Football Association Rules dealing with players without written contract when a player desires a transfer, the Club the player wishes to transfer shall submit a Transfer Form to the Registrations Secretary accompanied by a fee of £10 (ten pounds). Such transfer shall be referred by the Registrations Secretary to the Club for which the player is registered. Should this Club object to the transfer it should state its objections in writing to the Registrations Secretary and to the player concerned within 7 (seven) days of receipt of the Transfer Form. Upon receipt of the Club's consent, or upon its failure to give written objection with 7 (seven) days, the Registrations Secretary may, on behalf of the Management Committee, transfer the player who shall be deemed eligible to play for the new Club from such date.
- In the event of an objection to a transfer the matter shall be referred to the Management Committee for a decision.
- (K) A player may not be registered for a Club nor transferred to another Club in the League after 15 March except by special permission of the Management Committee.
- (L) A Club shall keep a list of the players it registers and a record of the games in which they have played, and shall produce such records upon demand by the Management Committee.
- (M) A register containing the names of all players registered for each Club, with the date of registration, shall be kept by the Registrations Secretary and shall be open to the inspection of any duly appointed Member Club representative at all Management Committee meetings or at other times mutually arranged. Registrations are valid for one Season only.
- (N) A player shall not be eligible to play for a team in any special championship, promotion or relegation deciding match (as specified in Rule 12(A)) unless the player has played 2 (two) games for that team in the League in the current Season, except by special permission of the Management Committee.
- (O) (i) Any team playing an unregistered or otherwise ineligible player or players may have the points gained in the match deducted from its total and may be fined and/or otherwise dealt with at the discretion of the Management Committee.
- (ii) In addition, the team may have up to 3 (three) points deducted from its total at the discretion of the Management Committee and may be dealt with in any further manner which is thought to be fit.
- (iii) The Management Committee in exceptional circumstances may, at its discretion, award any points deducted from a Club under this Rule to the opponents in the match in question, subject to the match not being ordered to be replayed.

#### CLUB COLOURS. CLUB NAME

9. (A) Every Club must register the colour of its shirts, shorts and socks with the General Secretary by 01 July who shall decide as to their suitability.

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

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

During the Close Season, the General Secretary shall obtain from the Clubs, on the Membership Application Form, the details of their first and second choice colours (shirts, shorts and socks) and such details shall be published in the Directory of Member Clubs. Clubs are required to wear their first choice colours both at home and away where possible.

If, in the opinion of the referee, two Clubs have the same or similar colours, the away team shall make the change. Any team not having a change of colours or delay the kick-off by not having a change shall be fined £10 (ten pounds).

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



9. (B) Any Club wishing to change its name and/or colour must seek permission from its affiliated County Association and from the Management Committee.
- (C) Players' shirts must be numbered clearly, and correspond to the numbers appearing on any match result sheet. Clubs failing to comply will be fined £10 (ten pounds) for each match in which this Rule is infringed.

The captain shall wear a distinguishing armband to indicate her status.

In League matches, the players' shirts may carry advertising subject to The Rules relating to the clothing of players laid down by The Football Association.

PLAYING SEASON, CONDITIONS OF PLAY, TIME OF KICK-OFF, POSTPONEMENTS, SUBSTITUTES

10. (A) The Management Committee shall fix the dates for the start and finish of the following Season, which shall be in accordance with The Football Association Rules, by 31 December of current Season and advise the Member Clubs and the Leagues with direct promotion and relegation links accordingly. The dates will be confirmed at the Annual General Meeting.

The dates of all matches shall be arranged by the Fixtures Secretary, on a home and away basis, in conjunction with the Management Committee, and notified to the Clubs. Where it is considered necessary the Fixtures Secretary will require Clubs to play on days other than Sundays. Receipt of these fixtures must be acknowledged, in writing, within 5 (five) days of the date of notification from the Fixtures Secretary. Failure to do so will result in a fine of £10 (ten pounds).

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

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

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

The grounds for the Premier Division Teams shall satisfy the minimum of Grade B requirements as stated in the current approved version of the Women's Pyramid of Football Ground Grading Document (see Appendix F).

All matches shall have a duration of 90 (ninety) minutes unless a shorter time (not less than 60 (sixty) minutes) is mutually arranged by the two captains in consultation with the referee prior to the commencement of the match, and in any event shall be of equal halves.

For Sunday matches, the times of kick-off may be between 11:00am and 3:00pm, if both Clubs are in agreement. If agreement cannot be reached then the kick-off time will be 2:00pm.

For the matches played on days other than Sundays, both Clubs may agree the kick-off time. If agreement cannot be reached then The Fixtures Secretary shall fix the kick-off time.

Any Club failing to commence at the agreed or appointed time may be fined £20 (twenty pounds) or be otherwise dealt with the Management Committee may determine.

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

If the match is not ready to commence within 30 (thirty) minutes of the agreed or appointed time, the game will be recorded as an unfulfilled fixture, and the Club(s) will be dealt with by the Management Committee accordingly.

The home team must provide at least 2 (two) footballs fit for play and the referee shall make a report to the League if the footballs are unsuitable. The Club thus reported may be fined £10 (ten pounds) or be otherwise dealt with the Management Committee may determine.

- (C) Except by permission of the Management Committee all matches must be played on the dates originally fixed but priority shall be given to The Football Association, The FA of Wales and all relevant parent Count Association Cup Competitions. All other matches must be considered secondary. Clubs may mutually agree to bring forward a match with the consent of the Fixtures Secretary.

- (D) The Fixtures Secretary of home Club must give notice in writing of full particulars of the location of, and access to, the ground and time of kick-off to the match officials and the Fixtures Secretary of the opposing Club at least 5 (five) clear days prior to the playing of the match. The away Club shall acknowledge receipt of such particulars.

Any Club failing to comply with this Rule shall be liable to a fine of £20 (twenty pounds).

- (E) Every Club shall play its best available qualified team in all matches in the League.

(Note: The intention of this Rule is not to interfere with normal team selection by Clubs, but to prevent Clubs deliberately fielding a weakened team in order to unreasonably reserve players for another game or to boost the strength of another or lower team. It is NOT intended that Clubs MUST field higher team players in lower teams when the higher team has no engagement. If, in the opinion of the Management Committee, the substance or spirit of the Rule is obviously being disregarded, the Club or Clubs concerned may be called to account for its/theirs actions and shall be subject to such decisions as the Management Committee may determine, despite the fact that Rule 8 has not been infringed.)



In the event of a Club playing in any match with less than 11 (eleven) players, the Club will be dealt with by the Management Committee at its discretion. A minimum of 7 (seven) players will constitute a team for a match.

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

Notice of postponement of any match must be given without delay by the postponing Club. Such notice must be given to the Fixtures Secretary, the Referees Secretary, the Secretary or Fixtures Secretary of the opposing Club and the match officials. A letter of explanation of postponement, including letter of explanation from the Referee/Grounds Person/Local Authority if applicable, is required to be sent to the Fixtures Secretary within 14 (fourteen) days. Any Club failing to comply with any part of this Rule shall be dealt with by the Management Committee who may inflict any penalty it may deem suitable.

In the event of a team being unable to fulfil a fixture because of excessive illness or injury of players, the Club shall supply official medical certification evidence to the Fixtures Secretary within 48 (forty-eight) hours of the scheduled fixture to substantiate any application for postponement.

In the event of a match not being played or abandoned owing to causes over which neither Club has control, it shall be played in its entirety on a date to be mutually agreed by the two Clubs and approved by the Fixtures Secretary. Failing such agreement and notification to the Fixtures Secretary within 7 (seven) days, the Fixtures Secretary shall have power to order the match to be played on a name date or on or before a given date.

The Management Committee shall review all matches abandoned in cases where it is consequent upon the conduct of either or both Teams. Where it is to the advantage of the Competition and does no injustice to either Club, the Management Committee shall be empowered to order the score at the time of abandonment to stand. In all cases where the Management Committee are satisfied that a match was abandoned owing to the conduct of one team or its Club member(s) they shall be empowered to award points for the match to the opponents and/or take what other action they may deem necessary. In cases where a match is abandoned owing to the conduct of both teams or the Club members, the Management Committee shall take such action as they consider appropriate. Such action is subject to any disciplinary action taken by the appropriate Affiliated Association.

Clubs shall support The Football Association, and the parent County Football Association, in relation to International and County Representative matches in accordance with the provisions of The Football Association, and the parent County Football Association, Rules respectively.

A Club having 2 (two) players selected for International match, or parent County Representative match, shall be allowed to request a postponement of its League fixture. If 1 (one) player is selected and that player is a goalkeeper, a Club may similarly make a request for the postponement of its League fixture.

- (G) A Club may at its discretion and in accordance with the Laws of the Game use 3 (three) substitute players in any match in the League who may be selected from 5 (five) players.

Both teams must provide a list of player, including substitutes, with their correct shirt numbers, on a prescribed form to the referee at least 30 (thirty) minutes before the scheduled kick-off time and in presence of a representative from the opposing Club. Team sheets will then be exchanged. All players shall wear numbered shirts. Failure to comply with any part of this Rule will incur a fine of £10 (ten pounds).

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

- (H) The half time interval shall be of 10 (ten) minutes duration, but it shall not exceed 15 (fifteen) minutes. The half time interval may only be altered with the consent of the referee.

- (I) (i) There must be in attendance, for every team, a holder of The Football Association approved Emergency Aid Certificate, or equivalent recognised first aid certificate. Failure will result in a fine of £10 (ten pounds).

(ii) There must be a provision of a first aid kit.

- (J) A Club under suspension by its County Association or The Football Association and whose suspension is not lifted by 5 (five) clear days before the date of a fixture, will not be allowed to fulfil that fixture on the scheduled date. The fixture will be considered as unfulfilled and dealt with under the provisions of Rule 10(F).

#### REPORTING RESULTS

11. (A) The Fixtures Secretary must receive within 3 (three) days of the date played, the result of each League match in the prescribed manner. This must include the forename(s) and surname of the team players (in block letters) and also the Referee markings required by Rule 13, or any other information required by the League. Failure to do so will incur a fine of £20 (twenty pounds) and/or the Club being dealt with as the Management Committee decide.
- (B) The home Club shall telephone the result of each match to the Fixtures Secretary by 5:30pm, for a Sunday match, or within 2 (two) hours of the conclusion, for a match played on a day other than Sunday.



11. (C) The match result notification, correctly completed, shall be signed by a responsible member of the Club. The Management Committee shall have power to take such action as they deem suitable against a Club which submits an incomplete form or incorrect information.

#### DETERMINING CHAMPIONSHIP

12. (A) Team rankings within the League will be decided by points with 3 (three) points to be awarded for a win and 1 (one) point for a drawn match. The team gaining the highest number of points at the conclusion shall be adjudged the winner. Matches must not be played for double points.

In the event of 2 (two) or more teams being equal on points, team rankings may be decided in the following ways:

- (i) Goal difference
  - (ii) Goal scored
  - (iii) Deciding match(es) played under conditions determined by the Management Committee.
- (B) Automatic promotion and relegation shall be applied for the first team and last 2 (two) teams respectively except as provided for hereunder.
- (i) Should 1 (one) or more teams withdraw from the League after confirmation of Constitution of the League, an equal number of teams to those withdrawing shall not be relegated.
  - (ii) Vacancies occurring after the conclusion of the Season may be filled on any of the following ways:
    - (a) Retention of otherwise relegated teams(s)
    - (b) To be decided by the Joint Liaison Committee.
- (C) In the event of a team not completing 75% (seventy-five percents) of its fixtures for the Season or withdrawing from the League after the fixtures have commenced, all points obtained by or recorded against such defaulting or withdrawing team shall be expunged from the League table.
- (D) The Champion Club of the League will be nominated for promotion to The FA Women's Premier League.

Each Champion Club of the South West Region Women's Football League and the Southern Region Women's Football League, providing they meet the appropriate grading criteria, will be eligible to make application to join the League for election at the League Annual General Meeting. Should the aforementioned Champion Club not wish for promotion or, alternatively, not have the necessary grading criteria, then the Second place Club will be eligible under the same conditions.

At the end of each Season and depending upon the geographical location of Clubs being relegated from The FA Women's Premier League, it may be necessary for the League to either accept a Club from, or have a Club transferred to, the South East Combination Women's Football League recommended as most appropriate by the Joint Liaison Committee.

The bottom 2 (two) Clubs from the League will be relegated to the South West Region Women's Football League and/or the Southern Region Women's Football League, depending upon the parent County Association the Clubs are affiliated to or recommended as most appropriate by the Joint Liaison Committee.

In the event of there being no eligible Club wishing promotion or not having the necessary grading criteria from either of the Regional Leagues, this will reduce the number of Clubs to be relegated from the League.

In the event of there being only 1 (one) eligible Club wishing promotion or having the necessary grading criteria from either of the Regional Leagues, this will equally reduce the number of Clubs to be relegated from the League.

#### REFEREES

13. (A) Registered Referees and Assistant Referees for all matches shall be appointed in a manner approved by the Management Committee and by the sanctioning Association(s).
- (B) In the event of the non-appearance of the appointed Referee, the appointed senior Assistant Referee shall take charge and a substitute Assistant Referee appointed by the competing teams. In cases where there are no officially appointed Assistant Referees, the Clubs shall agree upon a Referee. A Referee thus agreed upon shall, for that game, have the full powers, status and authority of a registered Referee.
- (C) Where Assistant Referees are not appointed, each team shall provide a Club Assistant Referee. Failure to do so will result in a fine of £10 (ten pounds) being imposed on the defaulting Club. Substitute players are not permitted to act as a Club Assistant Referee.
- (D) The appointed Referee shall have power to decide as to the fitness of the ground in all matches and decision shall be final subject to either in the case of a ground of a Local Authority or the owners of a ground, the Representative of that body is the sole arbiter and whose decision must be accepted unless the ground is declared fit for play.
- (E) Match Officials appointed under this Rule shall be entitled to charge standard class public transport expenses or private car expenses of 20p (twenty pence) per mile, a maximum of £5 (five pounds), together with £15 (fifteen pounds) match fee for the Referee and £10 (ten pounds) match fee for the Assistant Referees subject to limits laid down by the sanctioning Association(s).

The Home Club shall pay the Match Officials their fees and expenses before or immediately after the match.



13. (F) In the event of a match not being played because of circumstances over which the Clubs have no control, the Match Officials, if present, shall be entitled to half fee plus expenses only. Where a match is not played owing to one Club being in default, that Club shall be ordered to pay the Match Officials, if they attend the ground, their full fee and expenses. If the defaulting Club be absent, the Club in attendance shall pay the attending Match Officials their full fees and expenses which will be reimbursed by the League upon receipt of proper supporting receipts duly signed by the Match Officials. The defaulting Club will be dealt with as the Management Committee decide.
- (G) A Referee not keeping his/her engagement, and failing to give a satisfactory explanation as to his/her non-appearance, may be reported to the Association to which he/she is registered.
- (H) Each Club shall, in a manner prescribed from time to time by The Football Association, award marks to the Referee for each match and the name of the Referee and the marks awarded shall be submitted to the League on the prescribed Form provided. Clubs failing to comply with this Rule shall be liable to be fined £10 (ten pounds) or dealt with as the Management Committee shall determine.
- All Referee markings of 50 (fifty) or less must be accompanied by a letter, in duplicate, of explanation. Clubs failing to comply with shall be fined £10 (ten pounds) or dealt with as the Management Committee shall determine.
- (I) The Referee shall submit a report Form, supplied by the League via the Home Club, giving the result of the match, the number of players in each team, time of kick-off, names of players cautioned and sent off, and from which Club, to the Referees Secretary within 2 (two) days of the match.

#### CONTINUATION OF MEMBERSHIP OR WITHDRAWAL OF A CLUB

14. (A) After 31 December in the current Season a Club intending, or having a provisional intention, to withdraw from the League on completion of its fixtures and fulfilment of all other obligations to the League must notify the General Secretary in writing by 31 March in the current Season or be liable to a fine of £50 (fifty pounds).
- All Clubs wishing to remain in the membership of the League for the following Season must confirm their intention to do so, in writing, to the General Secretary by 31 March in the current Season. Failure to do so will result in a fine of £10 (ten pounds).
- (B) A Club shall not be allowed to withdraw from the League after the Annual General Meeting for the following Season. Any Club infringing this Rule shall be liable for a fine of £50 (fifty pounds) and shall also be liable for its share of any call which may be made under Rule 5(B).
- (C) In the event of a Member Club which is an un-incorporated association withdrawing and/or disbanding it shall be immediately liable to discharge all its financial and other obligations to the League.
- In the event that any such obligation remains un-discharged after a period of 21 (twenty-one) days then such obligation shall be met by the then current Club members, excluding those under the statutory school leaving age. Until a Member's pro rata obligation is discharged in full the Member shall not be allowed to participate in the League, which may apply to the Club's parent County Association for a suspension order.

#### PROTESTS AND APPEALS

15. (A) (i) All questions of eligibility, qualifications of players or interpretations of the Rules shall be referred to the Management Committee.
- (ii) Objections relevant to the dimensions of the pitch, goals, flag posts or other facilities of the venue will not be entertained by the Management Committee unless a protest is lodged with the Referee before the commencement of the match. Any Club lodging such protest and not proceeding with it shall be deemed guilty of a breach of this Rule and shall be dealt with by the Management Committee.
- (B) Except in cases where the Management Committee decide that there are special circumstances, protests and complaints (which must contain full particulars of the grounds upon which they are founded) must be lodged with the General Secretary within 7 (seven) days (excluding Sundays) of the match or occurrence to which they refer. A protest or complaint shall not be withdrawn except by permission of the Management Committee. A Member of the Management Committee who is a member of any Club involved shall not be present (except as a witness or representative of his/her Club) when such protest or complaint is being determined.
- (C) Any dispute occurring between Clubs in the League shall be referred for determination by the Management Committee whose decision shall be binding upon all parties subject to Rule 16.
- (D) No protest of whatever kind shall be considered by the Management Committee unless the complaining Club shall have deposited with the General Secretary a sum of £25 (twenty-five pounds). This may be forfeited in whole or in part in the event of the complaining or protesting Club losing its case. The League shall have power to order the defaulting Club or the Club making a losing or frivolous protest or complaint to pay the expenses of the enquiry or to order that the costs to be shared by the parties.
- (E) All parties to a protest or complaint must be afforded an opportunity to make a statement when the protest or complaint is being heard and must have received 14 (fourteen) days notice of the hearing, together with a copy of submission. When dealing with a protest or complaint the Management Committee shall take into consideration the possession by the protesting or complaining Club of any information which, if properly used, might have avoided the protest or complaint.



#### BOARD OF APPEAL

16. Within 14 (fourteen) days of the posting of written notification of any decision of the Management Committee of the League a Club, Official or Player against whom action is taken may appeal against such decision by lodging particulars in duplicate with the Secretary of The Football Association, including a fee of £50 (fifty pounds), for adjudication of a Board of Appeal. The grounds of appeal shall be in accordance with FA Rules. The Board of Appeal may order the appeal fee to be forfeited and shall decide by whom the costs of the appeal shall be borne. The decision of the Board of Appeal is final and binding on all parties concerned.

An appeal to an Appeals Board of The Football Association shall be made and be conducted only in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of The Football Association that relate to appeals to an Appeals Board as are in force at any time. (See Appendix A.)

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

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

17. (A) At the Annual General Meeting, or Special General Meeting called for the purpose, Notice of Motion having been duly circulated on the Agenda, the accredited delegates present shall have the power to exclude any Club or Team from further membership. Voting on this point shall be conducted by ballot, which must be supported by (more than) two thirds (2/3) of those present and voting.
- (B) At the Annual General Meeting, or at a Special General Meeting called for the purpose, in accordance with the provision of Rule 19, the accredited delegate present shall have the power to exclude from further participation in the League any Club whose conduct has, in their opinion, been undesirable, which must be supported by  $\frac{2}{3}$  (two-thirds) of those present and voting. Voting on this point shall be conducted by ballot. A Club whose conduct is subject to the vote being taken shall be excluded from voting.
- (C) Any official or member of a Club proved guilty of either a breach of Rule, other than field offences, or of inducing or attempting to induce a player or players of another Club in the League to join them shall be liable to expulsion or such penalty as a General Meeting or Management Committee may decide, and their Club shall also be liable to expulsion in accordance with the provisions of Clauses (A) and (B) of this Rule.
- (D) Any Club or team failing to complete all of its fixtures in any Season shall (unless the conditions are beyond their control, or the accredited delegates present at the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting decide otherwise by a majority of  $\frac{2}{3}$  (two-thirds) of the votes cast be debarred from membership the following Season.
- (E) In all matters and transactions relating to the League each Club shall behave towards each other Club and the League with the utmost good faith.

No Club either by itself, its servants or agents shall by any means whatsoever unfairly criticise, disparage, belittle or discredit any other Club or the League or in either case any of its Officers or Players.

#### TROPHY – LEGAL OWNERS, CONDITION OF TAKING OVER, AGREEMENT TO BE SIGNED, AWARDS

18. A League Cup or Trophy shall be vested in the Association sanctioning the League as Trustees. If the League be discontinued for any cause the Cup or Trophy shall be returned to the Donor, if the conditions attached to it so provide, or otherwise dealt with as the Association may decide. At the close of each Competition awards may be made to the winners and runners-up if the funds of the League permit.

Provided that the funds of the League permit, the League shall present to the Championship Club and the Championship Runners-Up Club 17 (seventeen) souvenirs each comprising 16 (sixteen) for the players and 1 (one) for the Manager/Coach. Additional souvenirs, no more than 7 (seven) may be purchased by the recipient Clubs, may be presented by the consent of the Management Committee.

The following agreement shall be signed on behalf of the winners of the Cup or Trophy:

"We A \_\_\_\_\_ and B \_\_\_\_\_, the Chairman and Secretary of \_\_\_\_\_ (Club), members of and representing the Club, having been declared winners of \_\_\_\_\_ Cup or Trophy, and it having been delivered to us by the League, do hereby on behalf of the Club jointly and severally agree to return the Cup or Trophy to the League General Secretary on or before 01 March. If the Cup or Trophy is lost or damaged whilst under our care we agree to refund the League the amount of its current value or the cost of its thorough repair."

#### SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

19. Upon receiving a requisition signed by  $\frac{2}{3}$  (two-thirds) of the Clubs in membership, the General Secretary shall call a Special General Meeting.

The Management Committee may call a Special General Meeting at any time.

At least 28 (twenty-eight) days notice shall be given of either meeting under this Rule, together with an Agenda of the business to be transacted at such meeting. Each Full Member Club shall be empowered to send 2 (two) delegates to all Special General Meetings. Each Club shall be entitled to 1 (one) vote only.



Any continuing Member Club failing to be represented at a Special General Meeting shall be fined £50 (fifty pounds).

Officers and Management Committee members shall be entitled to attend and vote at all Special General Meetings.

#### ALTERATION TO RULES

20. Alterations shall be made to these Rules only at the Annual General Meeting or at a Special General Meeting specially convened for the purpose called in accordance with Rule 19. Any alteration made during the playing Season to the Rule relating to the qualification of players shall not take effect until the following Season.

Notice of proposed alterations to be considered at the Annual General Meeting shall be submitted to the General Secretary by 31 March in each year. The proposals, together with any proposals by the Management Committee, shall be circulated to the Clubs by 15 April and any amendments thereto shall be submitted to the General Secretary by 30 April. The proposals and proposed amendments thereto shall be circulated to Clubs with the notice of the Annual General Meeting. A proposal to change a Rule shall be carried if a majority of those present and entitled to vote are in favour.

A copy of the proposed alterations to Rules to be considered at the Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting shall be submitted to The Football Association 14 (fourteen) days prior to the date of the meeting.

Any alterations or additions decided upon at any meeting shall not become operative until the approval of The Football Association shall have been obtained.

#### RULES BINDING ON CLUBS

21. Each Member Club shall be deemed to have given its assent to these Rules, and Appendices, and agreed to abide by the decision of the Management Committee subject to Rule 16. Each Club must abide by any issued Football Association Code of Conduct (See Appendix C).

#### FINANCE

22. (A) The Management Committee shall determine with which bank or other financial institution the funds of the League will be lodged.
- (B) All expenditure in excess of £100 (one hundred pounds) shall be approved by the Management Committee. Cheques shall be signed by at least 2 (two) Officers nominated by the Management Committee.
- (C) The financial year of the League will end on 30 April.
- (D) The books, or a certified balance sheet, of a Competition shall be prepared and shall be verified annually by some suitable person(s) who shall be appointed at the Annual General Meeting.

#### CLUB FINANCE/RECORDS, INSURANCE

23. (A) Every Club must keep proper books of Accounts in which all receipts and payments are recorded and which would be available for random inspection. Failure to maintain proper records may result in a Club being liable to a fine of £25 (twenty-five pounds), or dealt with in such a manner as decided by the Management Committee.
- (B) All Clubs shall take and retain Minutes of meetings, which would be available for random inspection. Failure to maintain proper records may result in a Club being liable to a fine of £25 (twenty-five pounds) or dealt with in such a manner as decided by the Management Committee.
- (C) All Clubs shall insure their players against personal accident, the Club and its members against public liability and provide the League with proof of these insurance on demand by the Management Committee.



## RULES OF THE AMBASSADOR LEAGUE CUP

1. The Cup shall be called Ambassador League Cup ("the Ambassador League Cup").
2. The Cup is the property of The South West Combination Women's Football League ("the League").
3. When the winning Club have been ascertained, the League shall deliver the Cup to such Club, which shall be responsible for its return to the League on or before 01 March in the ensuing year in good order and condition.
4. Should the Cup be lost, destroyed or damaged by fire or any other cause whilst under the care or custody of the Club the latter shall refund to the League the amount to its current insured value or the cost of thorough repair in addition to any other penalty which the Management Committee may impose.
5. In addition to the Cup, the League shall present medals to the players and substitutes in the final tie. When a player taking part is ordered to leave the field of play for misconduct, the medal to which she may be entitled may be withheld at the discretion of the Management Committee.
6. The Ambassador League Cup will be competed for by all Clubs competing in the League. The Management Committee may at its sole discretion exclude Club or Clubs from competing in this Ambassador League Cup Competition.
7. Only players registered for a Club shall be eligible to play for that Club in any one season. A player shall not play for more than 1 (one) Club in the Ambassador League Cup Competition during any one season except in exceptional circumstances as determined by the Management Committee.
8. If a Match is postponed only the players eligible for the tie on the said date will be eligible to play in the re-scheduled tie (except those players returning from suspension).
9. The Competition may be played on a "Knock-out" basis. The ties shall be drawn at a Management Committee meeting. In each tie the game shall be played on the ground of the Club first drawn, unless otherwise mutually arranged, and the consent of the Management Committee is obtained.
10. Any Club failing to fulfil the tie, through its own fault, will be eliminated from further taking part in this Ambassador League Cup Competition and the opposing Club in that tie will proceed to the draw for the next round.  
  
All other unfulfilled fixtures and abandoned matches will be at the discretion of the Management Committee.
11. In all rounds, including the Final, 90 (ninety) minutes must be played in all matches. If the teams are level after 90 (ninety) minutes, an extra 15 (fifteen) minutes each way is to be played. If the scores are level after extra time has been played the tie shall be determined by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark, in accordance with the Laws of the Game.
12. All matches in this competition shall be played in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of The Football Association and the Laws of the Game.
13. Subject to the preceding Rules, the Rules of The South West Combination Women's Football League shall apply.



## APPENDIX - A

### APPEAL PROCEDURE: REGULATIONS FOR FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION APPEALS

#### COMMENCEMENT OF APPEAL

- 1.1 An appeal shall be commenced by lodging a notice of appeal ("the Notice of Appeal") with The Association.
- 1.2 The Notice of Appeal shall be lodged within 14 days of the date of notification of the decision appealed against. In the case of an appeal from a decision of a Disciplinary Commission, the date of notification of the decision shall be the date of the written decision or, if applicable, the date of the written reasons for the decision. In relation to any other decision, the relevant date shall be the date on which it was first announced.
- 1.3 The Notice of Appeal must:
  - (1) identify the specific decision(s) being appealed;
  - (2) set out the ground(s) of appeal and the reasons why it would be substantially unfair not to alter the original decision;
  - (3) set out a statement of the facts upon which the appeal is based;
  - (4) be accompanied by any deposit prescribed by the relevant Rules or Regulations. Where an appeal is lodged by fax, the deposit must be received not later than the third day following the day of despatch of the fax (including both the day of despatch and receipt);<sup>[1]</sup>
  - (5) where appropriate, apply for leave to present new evidence under 2.6 below.
- 1.4 The grounds of appeal shall be that the body whose decision is appeal against:
  - (1) misinterpreted or failed to comply with the rules or regulations relevant to its decision; and/or
  - (2) came to a decision to which no reasonable such body could have come; and/or
  - (3) imposed a penalty, award, order or sanction which is excessive.
- 1.5 Once an appeal has been commenced, it shall not be withdrawn except by leave of the Appeal Board, which such order for costs as the Appeal Board may consider appropriate.

#### APPEAL PROCEEDINGS

- 2.1 An Appeal Board shall proceed as set out below.
- 2.2 Reference to a party or parties means:
  - (1) the appellant (the "Appellant"); and
  - (2) The Association in the case of an appeal against a decision of the Disciplinary Commission, or the Affiliated Association or Competition whose decision is appealed against (the "Respondent").
- 2.3 The Respondent shall nominate an individual or individuals to represent it before the Appeal Board.
- 2.4 The Respondent shall serve a written reply to the Notice of Appeal (the "Reply") on an Appellant and the Appeal Board within 21 days if the lodging of the Notice of Appeal. Where appropriate, the Reply must include any application for leave to present new evidence under 2.6 below.
- 2.5 The parties shall be entitled to make oral submission to the Appeal Board but an appeal shall be by way of a review on documents only, without oral evidence, except where the Appeal Board gives leave to present new evidence under 2.6 below.
- 2.6 The Appeal Board shall hear new evidence only where it has given leave that it may be presented. An application for leave to present new evidence must be made in the Notice of Appeal or the Reply, setting out the nature and the relevance of the new evidence, and why it was not presented at the original hearing. Save in exceptional circumstances, the Appeal Board shall not grant leave to present new evidence unless satisfied with the reason given as to why it was not, or could not have been, presented at the original hearing and that such evidence is relevant. The Appeal Board's decision shall be final.
- 2.7 The Chairman of an Appeal Board may upon the application of a party or otherwise, give any instructions considered necessary for the proper conduct of the proceedings, including but not limited to
  - (1) extending or abridging any time limit;
  - (2) amending or dispensing with any procedural steps set out in these Regulations;
  - (3) instructing that a transcript be made of the proceedings;
  - (4) ordering parties to attend a preliminary hearing;
  - (5) ordering a party to provide written submissions.The decision of the Chairman of the Appeal Board shall be final.
- 2.8 The Appeal Board may adjourn a hearing for such period and upon such terms (including an order as to costs) as it considers appropriate.

<sup>[1]</sup> A deposit of £100 is required for appeals against decisions of FA Disciplinary Commissions and £50 for appeals against decisions of Commissions of Affiliated Associations.



- 2.9 The Appellant shall prepare a set of documents which shall be provided to the Appeal Board and Respondent at least seven days before the hearing and which shall comprise the following (or their equivalent);
- (1) the Charge;
  - (2) the Answer;
  - (3) any documents or other evidence referred to at the original hearing relevant to the appeal;
  - (4) any transcript of the original hearing;
  - (5) the notification of decision appealed against and where they have been given the reasons for the decision;
  - (6) any new evidence;
  - (7) The Notice of Appeal;
  - (8) The Reply.

Where the Disciplinary Commission or other body appealed against has not stated the reasons for the decision, either

- (i) the Appellant shall request written reasons from that body which shall be provided to the Appeal Board; or
  - (ii) the Appeal Board shall require that a member of the body that made the decision shall attend (in which case, questions may be put by the Appeal Board at a hearing to satisfy itself as to the reasons for the decisions. Cross-examination by the Appellant or Respondent shall not be permitted. Representations may be made by the parties to the Appeal Board who may then put questions to the member of the body that made the decision).
- 2.10 Appeal hearings shall be conducted how, when and where the Appeal Board considers appropriate. Reasonable notice shall be given by the Appeal Board of the date, time and venue of the appeal.

Where an application to present new evidence has been made, the party making the application shall address the Appeal Board in support of the application and the other party may respond; the Appeal Board shall then determine whether or not it will receive the new evidence. The following procedures shall be followed at an appeal hearing unless the Appeal Board thinks it appropriate to amend them:

- (1) The Appellant to address the Appeal Board, summarising its case;
  - (2) Any new evidence to be presented by the Appellant;
  - (3) The Respondent to address the Appeal Board, summarising its case;
  - (4) Any new evidence to be presented by the Respondent;
  - (5) Each party to be able to put questions to any witness giving new evidence;
  - (6) The Appeal Board may put questions to the parties and any witness giving new evidence at any stage;
  - (7) The Respondent to make closing submissions;
  - (8) The Appellant to make closing submissions.
- 2.11 The Appeal Board shall proceed in the absence of any party, unless it is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for the failure of the party to attend, and shall do so in such manner as it considers appropriate.
- 2.12 The Appeal Board may, in the event of a party failing to comply with an order, requirement or instruction of the Appeal Board, take any action it considers appropriate, including an award of costs against the offending party.

#### APPEAL BOARD DECISION

- 3.1 A decision, order requirement of the Appeal Board shall (save where to be made under the Rules by the Chairman of the Appeal Board alone) be determined by a majority. Each member of the Appeal Board shall have one vote, save that the Chairman shall have a second and casting vote in the event of deadlock.
- 3.2 A decision of the Appeal Board shall be final and binding and there shall be no right of further challenge.
- 3.3 The Appeal Board shall have power to:
- (1) allow or dismiss the appeal;
  - (2) exercise any power which the body against whose decision the appeal was made could have exercised, whether the effect is to increase or decrease any penalty, award, order or sanction originally imposed;
  - (3) remit the matter for re-hearing;
  - (4) order that any deposit be forfeited or returned as it considers appropriate;
  - (5) make such further or other order as it considers appropriate, generally or for the purpose of giving effect to its decision.

#### COSTS

- 3.4 Any costs incurred in bringing, or responding to an appeal shall be borne by the party incurring the costs. Any cost incurred in relation to the Appeal Board, including travel, accommodation and room hire, may be ordered by the Appeal Board to be paid by either party.



## ANNOUNCEMENT OF DECISION

- 3.5 The Appeal Board shall announce its decision to the parties as soon as practicable in such a manner as it considers appropriate; and unless it directs otherwise, its decision shall come into effect immediately.

## WRITTEN DECISION

- 3.6 As soon as practicable after the hearing, the Appeal Board shall publish a written statement of its decision, which shall state:

- (1) the names of the parties, the decision(s) appealed against and the grounds of appeal;
- (2) whether or not the appeal is allowed; and
- (3) the order(s) of the Appeal Board.

The written statement shall be signed and dated by the Chairman of the Appeal Board and be the conclusive record of the decision.

- 3.7 The Appeal Board shall, upon the request of the Appellant or the Respondent (such request to be received at The Association within 5 days of the date of the announcement of the decision), give written reasons for the decision.

# APPENDIX - B

## ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

### THE POLICY AND COMMITMENT OF THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

1. As the governing body of the national game, The Football Association (The FA) is responsible for setting standards and values to apply throughout the game at every level. Football belongs to, and should be enjoyed by, everyone equally. It is The FA's commitment to confront and eliminate discrimination whether by reason of sex, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or disability.
2. The FA, being an equal opportunities employer, is committed to equality of opportunity within its own organisation and to encouraging similar commitment from every organisation or individual acting within the game.
3. Equality of opportunity at The FA means that in all its activities The FA will not discriminate, or in any way treat anyone less favourably, on grounds of sex, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or disability.
4. The FA will not tolerate sexual or racial-based harassment or other discriminatory behaviour, whether physical or verbal, and will work to ensure that such behaviour is met with appropriate disciplinary action in whatever context it occurs.
5. The FA is committed to the development of a programme of on going training and awareness-raising events and activities in order to promote the eradication of discrimination within its own organisation and, in the wider context, within football as a whole.

### THE POLICY AND COMMITMENT OF THE LEAGUE

1. It is the commitment of the League to fully endorse and support The FA's Anti-Discrimination Policy for Football as set out above.
2. The Management Committee and the Member Clubs of the League agree to adopt The FA's Anti-Discrimination Policy for Football in confronting and eliminating discrimination whether by reason of sex, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or disability.
3. The Management Committee and the Member Clubs of the League in all activities will not discriminate, or in any way treat anyone less favourably, on grounds of sex, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or disability.
4. The Management Committee and the Member Clubs of the League will promote the eradication of discrimination within own organisations and, in the wider context, within football as a whole.
5. The League, like The FA, will not tolerate sexual or racial-based harassment or other discriminatory behaviour, whether physical or verbal, and will work to ensure that such behaviour is met with appropriate disciplinary action in whatever context it occurs.



## APPENDIX - C

### CODES OF CONDUCT

The following Codes of Conduct are to be adopted by all Players, Coaches, Managers and Officials of all Member Clubs within the League.

This agreement is made between each Member Club; on behalf of its Players, Coaches, Managers, Officials or any of its servants or agents; and the League.

These Codes are a framework within which Member Clubs must work. It is a series of guidelines and instructions which Member Clubs are required to abide by.

#### CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MANAGERS / COACHES

1. The Manager / Coach shall comply with the Laws of the Game, the Rules of The Football Association, the Rules of the League and the Rules of any Competition which they participate in. They shall not encourage or invite any person, including Players and Officials of the Member Club to act in breach of the game and the aforementioned Rules but shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that they comply with them.
2. The Manager / Coach shall use their best endeavours to ensure that they undertake at their Clubs a fair and effective disciplinary policy applicable to Players and other persons under their control and that it is applied consistently.
3. The Manager / Coach shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that Players and other persons under their control accept and observe the authority and decisions of all Officials.
4. The Manager / Coach shall not make public any unfair decision of any Match Official or any other Manager / Coach, Player, Official of their or another Club.
5. The Manager / Coach shall conduct themselves at all times in an ethical and professional manner and shall observe the highest standards of integrity and fair play.
6. The Manager / Coach must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and their ultimate right to be treated equitably and sensitively within the context of their activity and ability regardless of gender, ethnic origin, cultural background, sexual orientation, religion or political affiliation.
7. The Manager / Coach shall take all possible steps to promote the reputation of the Women's game, Association Football for Women, and to prevent it being brought into disrepute.
8. The Manager / Coach shall adhere at all times to standards of personal and professional behaviour which reflect credit on themselves, The Football Association, the League and their Club.
9. The Manager / Coach must place the well being and safety of their Players above all other considerations, including the development of performance.
10. The Manager / Coach must co-operate fully with other specialists e.g. Officials, Sports Scientists, Doctors, and Physiotherapists in the best interest of the Player.
11. The Manager / Coach must develop an appropriate working relationship and friendship with all Players, most certainly where the Player is a young girl.
12. The Manager / Coach must not exert undue influence to obtain personal benefit or reward, the relationship between Manager / Coach and player must be based on mutual trust and respect.
13. The Manager / Coach must not allow their Players to advocate measures which could constitute an unfair advantage. They must never advocate or condone the use of prohibited drugs or other banned performance enhancing substances.
14. The Manager / Coach must accept responsibility for the conduct of their performers and discourage inappropriate behaviour in training, Competition and away from the playing area.

#### CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PLAYERS

1. The Player must abide by the Rules and Laws of the Game of Association Football.
2. The Player must accept all decisions of Manager / Coach and Match Officials without question or protestation.
3. The Player must accept success / failure / victory / defeat with good grace and without excessive display of emotion.
4. The Player shall by no means whatsoever unfairly criticise, disagree, belittle or discredit any Players or Officers of any other Club, or the League.
5. The Player shall not use foul, abusive or offensive language including racist, sexist or homophobic language or gestures likely to insult or provoke others.
6. The Player must not make any comment to the media or publish or cause to be published or broadcasted any comment likely to bring their Club, the League or game of the Association Football into disrepute.
7. The Player must at all times promote Women's and Girls' Football favourably.
8. The Player must abide by any Rules and Regulations as determined by their individual Club.



## CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBER CLUBS

1. All decisions, negotiations and transactions relating to the League, each Member Club shall also behave towards each other Club with the utmost good faith.
2. No Member Club either by itself, its servants or agents shall by any means whatsoever unfairly criticise, disparage, belittle or discredit any other Club or the League or in either case any of its Officers or Players.
3. The League Management Committee shall have the power to exclude from further participation in the League any Member Club, Player or Official whose conduct has in their opinion been objectionable.
4. Any breach of any provisions of these Codes of Conduct by a Member Club, Player, Official or any of its servants or agents shall constitute a breach of the Rules of the League and shall be dealt with in accordance with the Rules of the League.

The League wishes to acknowledge the valuable contributions received from The Football Association's Women's and Girls' Football Development Plan in compiling these Codes of Conduct.

# APPENDIX - D

REGULATIONS RE APPROACH: The Football Association, "The Association", Rule

## C.2. PLAYERS WITHOUT WRITTEN CONTRACTS

### (a) Regulations Concerning Approach

Players who are not under written contract to a Club may be registered with a number of Clubs at any time, subject to the following provisions and those of the Competitions in which they play.

- (i) Competitions sanctioned by The Association under Regulation 3 of the 'Regulations for the Sanction and Control of Leagues and Competitions' may make their own Regulations for the approach of Players between club of the Competition.
- (ii) During the current season<sup>+</sup> and Club wishing to approach a Player known to be registered with and having played for any other Club must give to the Secretary of each such Club seven (7) days' formal written notice of the intention to approach a Player.  
Formal written notice of approach need be given by:
  - (A) a Saturday Club only to all Saturday Clubs
  - (B) a Sunday Club only to all Sunday Clubs
  - (C) a midweek Club only to all midweek Clubs
- (iii) The written notice must be sent by Special Delivery or Recorded Post, or a written acknowledgement otherwise obtained from the Secretary or Chairman of the Club approached. Facsimile or e-mail transmissions may be used provided a receipt of acknowledgement is also obtained.
- (iv) Following the date of posting of the written notice of approach, or receipt of an acknowledgement:
  - (A) the Player may be registered on or after the eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) day;
  - (B) the Player must have been registered on or before the twenty-first (21<sup>st</sup>) day.
- (v) The approaching Club:
  - (A) may not approach the same Player a second time in the same season;
  - (B) may approach only (1) Player at a Club at any time subject to (ix) below;
  - (C) may not approach another Player at the same Club within twenty-eight (28) days of an earlier notice of approach or acknowledgment.
- (vi) If an approach is made by a Player to another Club during the current season<sup>+</sup>, that Club shall give the Club(s), for which the Player is known to be registered and has played, seven (7) days' notice of approach as set out in (i) to (iv) above before registering the Player.
- (vii) A Club which is the subject of a complaint alleging failure to give notice in accordance with this Rule may be subject to a charge of misconduct under FA Rule G2(2).
- (viii) A Club proved to have breached the provisions of the Rule may have its current registration of the Player cancelled and be subject to such other penalty as The Association or Affiliated Association deems appropriate, in accordance with Regulation 6.1 of the Regulations for FA Disciplinary Action.
- (ix) During the current season<sup>+</sup> a maximum of two (2) Players may be approached in the manner described above if invited to trial at a licensed Football Association/FA Premier League/Football League Academy or Centre of Excellence.



(b) Conditions

- (i) A currently registered Player shall not be allowed to register with another Club without first satisfying the Club Official of the intended Club that all reasonable financial and other liabilities have been discharged to the Club or Clubs with which the Player is or was known to be registered in the current<sup>+</sup> and previous season.
- (ii) A Player approached on or after the first (1st) May in the current season<sup>+</sup> may not play in competitive football for the Club making the approach until the commencement of the following season.

(c) Service Players

- (i) While serving in any branch of Her Majesty's Regular Forces, a Player may not hold a contract of employment with any Club under the jurisdiction of The Association or an Affiliated Association.
- (ii) Neither a Club or any person may attempt to induce a Player of a Club of any branch of Her Majesty's Regular Forces to play for another Club during the current season<sup>+</sup> without at least fourteen (14) days' written notice of approach – in the case of the Army to the Secretary of The Army Football Association, the Royal Navy to the Secretary of The Royal Navy Football Association and the Royal Air Force to the Player's Commanding Officer. The notice must be forwarded by Special Delivery or Recorded Post, or written acknowledgement otherwise obtained. Facsimile or e-mail transmissions may be used provided a receipt of acknowledgement is also obtained.
- (iii) Players<sup>+</sup> are required to inform Civilian Clubs of their rank and service number, which information must be stated on League or other registration forms.

<sup>+</sup> a current season runs from 1<sup>st</sup> July to the following 31<sup>st</sup> May.

## APPENDIX - E

### CHILD PROTECTION: The Football Association, "The Association", Rule

1. Any act, statement, conduct or other matter which harms a child or children, or poses or may pose a risk of harm to a child or children, shall constitute behaviour which is improper and brings the game into disrepute.
2. In these Regulations the expression "Offence" shall mean any one or more of the offences contained in Schedule 1 to the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 and any other criminal offence which reasonably causes The Association to believe that the person accused of the offence poses or may pose a risk of harm to a child or children.
3. Upon receipt by The Association of:
  - 3.1 notification that an individual has been charged with an Offence; or
  - 3.2 notification that an individual is the subject of an investigation by the Police, Social Services or any other authority relating to an Offence; or
  - 3.3 any other information which causes The Association reasonably to believe that a person poses or may pose a risk of harm to a child or children then The Association shall have the power to order that the individual be suspended from all or any specific football activity for such period and on such terms and conditions as it thinks fit.
4. In reaching its determination as to whether an order under Regulation 3 should be made The Association shall give consideration, inter alia, to the following factors:
  - 4.1 whether a child is or children are or may be at risk of harm;
  - 4.2 whether the matters are of serious nature;
  - 4.3 whether an order is necessary or desirable to allow the conduct of any investigation by The Association or any other authority or body to proceed unimpeded.
5. The period of an order referred to in 3 above shall not be capable of lasting beyond the date upon which any charge under the Rules of The Association or any Offence is decided or brought to an end.
6. Where an order is imposed on an individual under regulation 3 above, The Association shall bring and conclude any proceedings under the Rules of The Association against the person relating to the matters as soon as reasonably practicable.
7. Where a person is convicted, or is made the subject of a caution in respect of an Offence, that shall constitute a breach of the Rules of The Association and The Association shall have the power to order the suspension of the person from all or any specific football activity for such a period (including indefinitely) and on such terms and conditions as it thinks fit.
8. For the purposes of these Regulations, The Association shall act through its Council or any committee or sub-committee thereof, including the Board.
9. Notification in writing of an order referred to above shall be given to the person concerned and/or any club with which he is associated as soon as reasonably practicable.



## APPENDIX – F

### THE WOMEN'S PYRAMID OF FOOTBALL GROUND GRADING CRITERIA

#### WOMEN'S PYRAMID OF FOOTBALL GRADING CRITERIA

<u>STEP</u>	<u>COMPETITION</u>	<u>GRADING CATEGORY</u>
Step 1	FA Women's Premier League – National Division	Grade A
Step 2	FA Women's Premier League – Northern & Southern Divisions	Grade A
Step 3	Women's Combination Leagues	Grade B
Step 4	Women's Regional Leagues – Premier Divisions	Grade C
Step 5	Women's Regional Leagues – First Divisions	N/A
Step 6	County Women's Leagues	N/A

#### Summary Information of Requirements for each step

<u>Grade Category</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>
Security required	1 year tenure agreement	1 year tenure agreement	N/A
Club House	Yes	Yes	N/A
Car Parking	Yes	Yes	N/A
Pitch Perimeter Barrier	Yes	Permanent barrier or roped off	Permanent barrier or roped off
Playing Area	100m x 64m (110ydsx70yds)	100m x 64m (110yds x 70yds)	100m x 64m (110ydsx70yds)
Technical Area – trainers' boxes	Yes – 8 Seats	Yes – 8 Seats	N/A
Floodlighting	Yes	N/A	N/A
Public Address System	Yes	N/A	N/A
Entrances – turnstiles (minimum)	1 turnstiles	N/A	N/A
Covered Accommodation	100	N/A	N/A
Dressing Rooms Players	Separate dressing rooms and showers	Separate dressing rooms and showers	Separate dressing rooms & adequate washing facilities
Dressing Rooms – match officials	Separate dressing room	Separate dressing room	Separate dressing room



## THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

### WOMEN'S PYRAMID OF FOOTBALL GROUND GRADING DOCUMENT

#### GRADING CATEGORY – A Steps 1 & 2

#### 1. GROUND

The ground must give an overall appearance and impression of being a football ground suitable for the highest levels of the Women's Pyramid of Football.

##### 1.1 Security of Tenure

Where a club does not own the freehold of their ground then evidence of adequate security of tenure for one season must be provided.

##### 1.2 Boundary of Ground

The ground must be enclosed by a permanent boundary, which will prevent spectators from viewing the game from outside the ground.

In certain circumstances one side of the ground, which adjoins private land/property, may be exempt from the need for a permanent boundary.

##### 1.3 Club House

There must be a clubhouse facility either on or near-by to the ground, which should be open on match days to provide refreshments to spectators.

##### 1.4 Car Parking

There should be adequate car parking facilities on or near-by to the ground.

##### 1.5 Pitch Perimeter Barrier

There must be a permanent fixed barrier of sound construction surrounding the pitch on all four sides of the pitch. The recommended height of the barrier is 1.1 metres.

The barrier, if other than solid wall type of construction may be infilled. Advertising boards may be acceptable as a means of infill.

There must be a minimum of 1.83 metres, ideally 2 metres between the touchline, goal line and the pitch perimeter barrier.

##### 1.6 Pitch Standards

The playing surface will be grass, unless otherwise authorised by the respective league Management Committee, and must be of a high standard. It must be level and free from surface depressions and excessive undulations.

The maximum slope allowable shall not exceed an even gradient of vertical to horizontal 1 : 41 in any direction.

The playing surface must be maintained to the highest possible standards.

New generation rubber infill pitches will be permitted, with prior consent of the FA Women's Premier League Management Committee, provided that the artificial turf meets the following conditions:

(a) the artificial turf meets any of the applicable FIFA quality standards for artificial turf, currently corresponding to the "FIFA Recommended 2-Star Standard", the "FIFA Recommended 1-Star Standard" in accordance with the "FIFA Quality Concept - Handbook of Test Methods and Requirements for Artificial Turf Football Surfaces" dated February 2005 as well all requirements under the applicable national laws and regulations; and

(b) the artificial turf has passed all the necessary tests (laboratory and field tests) and, in the case of "FIFA Recommended 2-Star Standard" or "FIFA Recommended 1-Star Standard", has obtained the required FIFA licence; and

(c) the artificial turf has passed all the necessary yearly tests confirming that it still meets the applicable FIFA quality standards. Such tests must be conducted by a FIFA accredited laboratory; and

(d) the surface of the artificial turf must be of a green colour.



A Club using a new generation rubber infill pitch must allow their opposition the opportunity to train on the facilities prior to the fixture. Players must not wear boots with blades or metal studs.

#### 1.7 Playing Area

The playing area to be a minimum of 100 metres by 64 metres (110 yards x 70 yards) and should conform to the requirements of the Laws of the Game.

Goal posts and goal net supports should be of professional manufacture and conform to the current safety requirements and to the requirements of the Laws of the Game.

Reference should be made to the Goalpost Safety information published by The Football Association.

#### 1.8 Technical Area

Two covered trainers benches clearly marked "Home" and "Away" are to be provided. They should be at least 3 metres apart. Each box should accommodate at least 8 persons on fixed seats or benches.

Portable trainers' boxes are permitted and must be securely fixed when in use.

A Technical Area, as defined within the Laws of the Game should be marked out round each trainer's box.

#### 1.9 Secure Walkway

Clubs are to provide for safe passage for players and match officials from the dressing rooms to the field of play, which should be adequately stewarded. The use of protection designed products such as retractable tunnels or permanent structures to separate players and spectators are acceptable.

#### 1.10 Floodlighting

Floodlights must be provided to an average lux reading of 120. No single reading can be less than one quarter of the highest reading so as to ensure an even spread of light.

Reading shall be on a grid of 88 markings (8 across, 11 down) evenly spaced with the outside readings falling on the pitch boundary line. The average of all the readings is taken to be the average illumination level in lux of the floodlighting installation.

The lux values must be tested every two years in accordance with current guidelines by an approved independent contractor.

When new or improved installations are being planned, an average lux. reading of 180 should be provided.

#### 1.11 Public Address System

A public address system must be provided with adequate output to convey information to all spectator areas.

#### 1.12 Entrances

There should be at least 1 fully operational turnstile, which must be of the controlled revolving type or a pay box where a charge for entry to the ground can be taken.

#### 1.13 Exits

The location and number of ground exits must be approved by a competent authority and comply with the requirements of the Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds (Green Guide).

All exits must be clearly signed with "running man" signs.

### 2. SPECTATOR FACILITIES

#### 2.1 Covered Standing/Seated Accommodation

Covered accommodation constructed of timber/steel/brick/concrete or any combination of these materials should be provided for a minimum of 100 spectators (seated or standing).

#### 2.2 Toilets

The following minimum toilet facilities must be provided:

- 2 Ladies WC's
- 1 Gents WC
- 2 Urinals or equivalent



In addition, there must be at least one hand basin in each Ladies and Gents toilet area with hot and cold running water. Warm air hand driers and/or paper towels with an appropriate dispenser together with a supply of toilet paper must be provided.

All toilet areas to be maintained to a high level of cleanliness.

### 2.3 Disabled Facilities

The club must be able to accommodate disabled spectators in accordance with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Reference should be made to the Information/Data Sheets by both The Football Association and the Football Foundation.

## 3. DRESSING ROOM FACILITIES

All dressing rooms must be secure, heated, well ventilated and free from damp

### 3.1 Players

Separate dressing rooms must be provided for both teams within the enclosed area of the ground. Existing dressing rooms dimensions will be in order provided that they are of a minimum of 12 square metres. However, clubs wishing to progress should be aware of the need to increase to a minimum of 18 square metres. Where clubs are planning to build new changing rooms, these must be planned to be a minimum size of 18 square metres, excluding shower and toilet areas.

Each dressing room must have the following:

A shower area comprising of at least 4 showerheads

At least 1 WC and 1 wash hand basin together with a warm air hand drier and/or paper towels in an appropriate dispenser.

All must have hot and cold running water

There must be a treatment table in each dressing room unless there is a separate medical room.

### 3.2 Match Officials

Separate dressing rooms must be provided for match officials, the minimum size of which shall be 4 square metres excluding shower and toilet areas.

Each dressing room must have the following:

At least 1 shower

At least 1 WC and 1 wash hand basin together with a warm air hand drier and/or paper towels in an appropriate dispenser.

Provision should be made for separate changing accommodation for both male and female match officials.

There must be an audible electronic warning device (bell or buzzer) located in the match official's dressing room, which is linked to the player's dressing rooms.

All dressing room areas to be maintained to a high level of cleanliness and secure on match days

### 3.3 Press Facilities

Facilities for the press should be available when required



## THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

### WOMEN'S PYRAMID OF FOOTBALL GROUND GRADING DOCUMENT

#### GRADING CATEGORY – B Steps 3

##### 1. GROUND

The ground must give an overall appearance and impression of being a football ground suitable for the highest levels of the Women's Pyramid of Football.

##### 1.1 Security of Tenure

Where a club does not own the freehold of their ground then evidence of adequate security of tenure for one season must be provided.

##### 1.2 Club House

There must be a clubhouse facility either on or near-by to the ground, which should be open on match days to provide refreshments to spectators.

##### 1.3 Car Parking

There should be adequate car parking facilities on or near-by to the ground.

##### 1.4 Pitch Perimeter Barrier

There should be a permanent fixed barrier of sound construction surrounding the pitch on all four sides of the pitch. The recommended height of the barrier is 1.1 metres.

Where no permanent fixed barrier is available, the pitch must be roped off

##### 1.5 Pitch Standards

The playing surface will be grass, unless otherwise authorised by the respective league Management Committee, and must be of a high standard. It must be level and free from surface depressions and excessive undulations.

The maximum slope allowable shall not exceed an even gradient of vertical to horizontal 1 : 41 in any direction.

The playing surface must be maintained to the highest possible standards.

New generation rubber infill pitches will be permitted, with prior consent of the FA Women's Football Committee and the appropriate League Management Committee, provided that the artificial turf meets the following conditions:

(a) the artificial turf meets any of the applicable FIFA quality standards for artificial turf, currently corresponding to the "FIFA Recommended 2-Star Standard", the "FIFA Recommended 1-Star Standard" in accordance with the "FIFA Quality Concept - Handbook of Test Methods and Requirements for Artificial Turf Football Surfaces" dated February 2005 as well all requirements under the applicable national laws and regulations; and

(b) the artificial turf has passed all the necessary tests (laboratory and field tests) and, in the case of "FIFA Recommended 2-Star Standard" or "FIFA Recommended 1-Star Standard", has obtained the required FIFA licence; and

(c) the artificial turf has passed all the necessary yearly tests confirming that it still meets the applicable FIFA quality standards. Such tests must be conducted by a FIFA accredited laboratory; and

(d) the surface of the artificial turf must be of a green colour.

A Club using a new generation rubber infill pitch must allow their opposition the opportunity to train on the facilities prior to the fixture. Players must not wear boots with blades or metal studs.

##### 1.6 Playing Area

The playing area to be a minimum of 100 metres by 64 metres (110 yards x 70 yards) and should conform to the requirements of the Laws of the Game.

Goal posts and goal net supports should be of professional manufacture and conform to the current safety requirements and to the requirements of the Laws of the Game.

Reference should be made to the Goalpost Safety information published by The Football Association.



#### 1.7 Technical Area

Two covered trainers benches clearly marked "Home" and "Away" are to be provided. They should be at least 3 metres apart. Each box should accommodate at least 8 persons on fixed seats or benches.

Portable trainers' boxes are permitted and must be securely fixed when in use.

A Technical Area, as defined within the Laws of the Game should be marked out round each trainer's box.

#### 1.8 Secure Walkway

Clubs are to provide for safe passage for players and match officials from the dressing rooms to the field of play.

### 2. DRESSING ROOM FACILITIES

All dressing rooms must be secure, heated, well ventilated and free from damp

#### 2.1 Players

Separate dressing rooms must be provided for both teams within the enclosed area of the ground. Existing dressing rooms dimensions will be in order provided that they are of a minimum of 12 square metres. However, clubs wishing to progress should be aware of the need to increase to a minimum of 18 square metres. Where clubs are planning to build new changing rooms, these must be planned to be a minimum size of 18 square metres, excluding shower and toilet areas.

Each dressing room must have the following:

A shower area comprising of at least 4 showerheads

At least 1 WC and 1 wash hand basin together with a warm air hand drier and/or paper towels in an appropriate dispenser.

All must have hot and cold running water

There must be a treatment table in each dressing room unless there is a separate medical room.

#### 2.2 Match Officials

Separate dressing rooms must be provided for match officials, the minimum size of which shall be 4 square metres excluding shower and toilet areas.

Each dressing room must have the following:

At least 1 shower

At least 1 WC and 1 wash hand basin together with a warm air hand drier and/or paper towels in an appropriate dispenser.

Provision should be made for separate changing accommodation for both male and female match officials.

There must be an audible electronic warning device (bell or buzzer) located in the match official's dressing room, which is linked to the player's dressing rooms.

All dressing room areas to be maintained to a high level of cleanliness and secure on match days



THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

WOMEN'S PYRAMID OF FOOTBALL GROUND GRADING DOCUMENT

GRADING CATEGORY – C

Step 4

1. GROUND

The ground must be suitable for staging a football match in the premier division of the Regional League structure.

A recreation ground or public park will be suitable provided that the criteria set out below can be met.

1.1 Security of Tenure

Where a club does not own the freehold of their ground then evidence of adequate security of tenure for one season must be provided.

1.2 Club House

Where there is a clubhouse facility, this should be within walking distance of the pitch.

1.3 Car Parking

Whilst car parking is not necessary where possible, there should be adequate car parking facilities on or near-by to the ground.

1.4 Pitch Perimeter Barrier

There should be a permanent fixed barrier of sound construction. The recommended height of the barrier is 1.1 metres.

Where no permanent fixed barrier is available, the pitch must be roped off.

Clubs moving from Step 5 to Step 4 of the Women's Pyramid of Football must comply with this requirement by the commencement of the following season.

1.5 Pitch Standards

The playing surface will be grass, unless otherwise authorised by the respective league Management Committee, and must be of a high standard. It must be level and free from surface depressions and excessive undulations.

The playing surface must be maintained to the highest possible standards.

New generation rubber infill pitches will be permitted, with prior consent of the FA Women's Football Committee and the appropriate league management committee, provided that the artificial turf meets the following conditions:

(a) the artificial turf meets any of the applicable FIFA quality standards for artificial turf, currently corresponding to the "FIFA Recommended 2-Star Standard", the "FIFA Recommended 1-Star Standard" in accordance with the "FIFA Quality Concept - Handbook of Test Methods and Requirements for Artificial Turf Football Surfaces" dated February 2005 as well all requirements under the applicable national laws and regulations; and

(b) the artificial turf has passed all the necessary tests (laboratory and field tests) and, in the case of "FIFA Recommended 2-Star Standard" or "FIFA Recommended 1-Star Standard", has obtained the required FIFA licence; and

(c) the artificial turf has passed all the necessary yearly tests confirming that it still meets the applicable FIFA quality standards. Such tests must be conducted by a FIFA accredited laboratory; and

(d) the surface of the artificial turf must be of a green colour.

A Club using a new generation rubber infill pitch must allow their opposition the opportunity to train on the facilities prior to the fixture. Players must not wear boots with blades or metal studs.

1.6 Playing Area

The playing area to be a minimum of 100 metres by 64 metres (110 yards x 70 yards) and should conform to the requirements of the Laws of the Game.

Goal posts and goal net supports should be of professional manufacture and conform to the current safety requirements and to the requirements of the Laws of the Game.

Reference should be made to the Goalpost Safety information published by The Football Association.



2. DRESSING ROOM FACILITIES

All dressing rooms must be secure, heated, well ventilated and free from damp

2.1 Players

Separate dressing rooms must be provided for both teams within the enclosed area of the ground.

There must be adequate washing and toilet facilities available with hot and cold running water.

2.2 Match Officials

Separate dressing rooms must be provided for match officials.



## APPENDIX - G

# REGULATIONS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF THE WOMEN'S FOOTBALL PYRAMID

### 1. Introduction

The Women's Football Pyramid shall comprise a system by which promotion and relegation links shall exist between participating leagues (the "Leagues") and shall be operated in accordance with these regulations.

The aims and objectives of the Women's Football Pyramid are:

- (a) To provide clubs with a level of competitive football appropriate to their playing ability, stadium/ground facilities and economic means.
- (b) To provide a framework for discussion on matters of policy and common interest to leagues and clubs.
- (c) To allow the seasonal movement of clubs.

All leagues, and clubs participating from time to time in such leagues (the "Clubs"), shall be bound by these regulations. All leagues will be required to sign a copy of these regulations on an annual basis signifying their agreement to be bound by their content.

### 2. Position of a League in the Women's Football Pyramid

- 2.1 The structure of the Women's Football Pyramid is set out at Appendix A
- 2.2 Any league wishing to become part of the Women's Football Pyramid at Step 6 must advise The Football Association in such form and/or providing such information as shall be required by the Women's Football Committee ("WFC") from time to time. The decision as to whether or not a league should be admitted to, and their position in the Women's Football Pyramid shall be made by the WFC and shall be final and binding.

### 3. Rules and Regulations for Promotion and Relegation

- 3.1 The Women's Football Pyramid shall provide for the seasonal promotion and relegation of clubs between Steps within the system. A league that signifies its acceptance to be bound by these regulations must be in a position to promote and relegate clubs at the conclusion of each season. In extenuating circumstances, where a league is not in a position to relegate due to that league not being up to strength they must obtain the permission of the WFC.

### 4. Detailed Promotion and Relegation Issues

- 4.1 Eligibility criteria, including ground grading, shall be agreed between the WFC and the various leagues. Details of the requirements at each Step are contained in the Women's Football Pyramid Ground Grading Document as published by The Football Association.
- 4.2 It may be necessary from time to time to move clubs between leagues at the same Step to accommodate the movement of clubs by normal promotion and relegation. Where this is necessary, no club will be asked to move more than once in every three seasons.
- 4.3 At the conclusion of each season, the following procedures will apply:

#### Step 1 and Step 2

The clubs finishing in the bottom two places at Step 1 (FAWPL National Division) will be relegated and placed in the most geographically appropriate division at Step 2 (FAWPL Northern & Southern Divisions). They will be replaced by the clubs finishing in 1<sup>st</sup> position in each of the divisions at Step 2.

#### Step 2 and Step 3

The clubs in the bottom two places in each of the two divisions at Step 2 will be relegated to Step 3 (Combination Leagues). They will be replaced by the clubs finishing in 1<sup>st</sup> position in each of the leagues at Step 3. Should a club finishing in 1<sup>st</sup> position not wish to be considered for promotion, then the club finishing in 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> place may take its place. Clubs finishing lower than 3<sup>rd</sup> place will not be considered for promotion.



### Step 3 and Step 4

The clubs in the bottom two places in each of the four leagues at Step 3 will be relegated to Step 4 (Regional League Premier Divisions). They will be replaced by the clubs finishing in 1<sup>st</sup> position in each of the leagues at Step 4. Should a club finishing in 1<sup>st</sup> position not wish to be considered for promotion, then the club finishing in 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> place may take its place. Clubs finishing lower than 3<sup>rd</sup> place will not be considered for promotion.

### Step 4 and Step 5

The clubs in the bottom two places in each of the eight leagues at Step 4 will be replaced by the clubs finishing in 1<sup>st</sup> place in the sixteen divisions at Step 5 (Regional Leagues 1<sup>st</sup> Divisions). Should the ground of a club finishing in 1<sup>st</sup> position not be suitable by the respective management committee for Step 4, then a club finishing in 2<sup>nd</sup> (or 3<sup>rd</sup>) may take its place, provided that its ground does meet the requirements of Step 4.

A club finishing in a position lower than 3<sup>rd</sup> will not be considered for promotion

### Step 5 to Step 6

The movement of clubs between Steps 5 and 6 (County Leagues) will be at the discretion of the appropriate Joint Liaison Committees.

Each league shall include in its constitutional rules and regulations provisions for the movement of clubs as detailed above.

Reserve Teams are not permitted to play above Step 5

## 5. The Movement of Clubs within the Women's Football Pyramid other than by Promotion or Relegation

- 5.1 Movement of a club from participation in one league to another is not permitted other than by promotion and relegation save with the approval of the WFC, such approval being final and binding.
- 5.2 Any club proposing to move from one league to another must make appropriate applications to resign from and be elected to the relevant leagues in accordance with the rules and regulations of those leagues. Any such notice must in any event, and regardless of any provisions to the contrary in a league's rules and regulations, be given to both leagues and the WFC by 1<sup>st</sup> April in the relevant year in order to be valid.
- 5.3 If a club (whether a Members' Club or a Company) is liquidated and then wishes to reform, unless otherwise determined by the WFC, it will be allowed to make an application only to join a league/division a minimum of two Steps below the league/division in which it was a member when liquidated. This relates only to clubs that wish to reform for the following season

## 6. Election of a Club into a League

In normal circumstances a club can enter the Women's Football Pyramid only at Step 6 (County League level). However, in exceptional circumstances a league may seek approval from the WFC to elect a club not currently in membership of a league within the Women's Football Pyramid provided that there is: (a) a vacancy within its constitution (b) the club meets the entry criteria and (c) promotion and relegation issues have been satisfied.

The determination by the WFC shall be final and binding.

## 7. Women's Football Conference

The Women's Football Conference (the Conference) will comprise of representatives from leagues within the Women's Football Pyramid and the WFC with the objective to take steps to protect and further the interests of Girl's and Women's Association Football.

## 8. Joint Liaison Committees

Regional Joint Liaison Committees (JLC's) will be established to consider matters relating to the development of the Women's Football Pyramid in their regions. In particular JLC's will be responsible for the determining the promotion and relegation of clubs between Steps 5 & 6.

The Joint Liaison Committees will be established on a regional basis and will comprise of representatives of the Regional League and the appropriate County Leagues.

Both the Conference and the JLC's may refer a matter to the WFC for determination and the decision of the WFC shall be final and binding



#### 9. Procedures for the Determination of any Matter, Dispute or Difference by the Leagues Committee

- 9.1 The WFC may adopt such procedures for the determination of any matter, dispute or difference as it considers appropriate and expedient, having regard to the aims and objectives set out at Regulation 1. The WFC may require the attendance at a meeting or the written observations of any league or club, as it considers appropriate to assist its determination.
- 9.2 The WFC may, at its discretion, delegate the resolution of any matter, dispute or difference arising under these Regulations to any body it considers to be appropriate (including a sub-committee or commission which may include members of council not on the WFC or a body constituted by a County Football Association).

#### 10. Appeal Procedure

Any dispute or difference between a league and a club relating to promotion and relegation issues and/or other eligibility criteria should be referred for determination to the WFC, such determination shall be final and binding. Any referral must be carried out in accordance with The Football Association's appeal procedure and be submitted at the offices of The Football Association, 25 Soho Square, London W1D 4FA within 14 days of the posting of the relevant decision and must be accompanied by a fee of £100.

#### 11. Arbitration

The fact of participation in the Women's Football Pyramid and signifying agreement to be bound by these Regulations shall constitute an agreement between each league and club to refer to Arbitration any challenge in law arising out of, or in relation to, these Regulations in accordance with the provisions of the Rules of The Football Association.