

FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND

Rules of the Association

Football Association of Ireland Rules effective from 19 July 2010

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RULE 1. NAME

- (a) The Name of The Association shall be CUMANN PEILE na h-EIREANN or in the English language: THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND, hereinafter referred to as “the FAI”.
- (b) The FAI is a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital.
- (c) Copies of the Memorandum and Articles of Association are available to the members of The Association for inspection at the offices of The Association, subject to suitable notice being given.

RULE 2. OFFICES

The principal offices of The Association shall be in the Republic of Ireland.

RULE 3. THE OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES OF THE ASSOCIATION

The objectives for which The Association is established are: -

- 1. To promote, foster and develop, in all its branches, the game of Association Football in Ireland, and to take such steps as may be deemed necessary or advisable for preventing infringements of the Rules of The Association and the Laws of the Game, or improper methods or practices in the game and for protecting it from abuses and to do such things as are conducive to the attainment of the objects herein before mentioned as the Council may determine.
- 2. The Association shall affiliate to UEFA and FIFA. Accordingly, the Association undertakes to:
 - (a) Observe the principle of loyalty, integrity and sportsmanship in accordance with the fair play rule;
 - (b) Comply with the Laws of the Game issued by the International Football Association Board (IFAB) and with the Futsal Laws of the Game issued by the FIFA Executive Committee;
 - (c) Respect at all times the Statutes, Regulations, Directives and Decisions of FIFA and UEFA;
 - (d) Recognise the jurisdiction of the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in Lausanne (Switzerland), as specified in the relevant provisions of the FIFA and UEFA Statutes;
 - (e) Refer in the last instance any dispute of national dimension arising from or related to the application of the Rules or Regulations of the FAI only to an independent and impartial Court of Arbitration, which will settle the dispute to the exclusion of any ordinary court, unless expressly prohibited by Irish Law;
 - (f) Ensure that its leagues, clubs, players, officials, match and players agents – through their statutes, licence, registration or any other written document - acknowledge and accept all the above mentioned obligations as well as agree to be bound by and observe the rules, regulations, directives and decisions of the FAI.
- 3. Principles
 - i) Members and Leagues shall agree to comply fully with any decisions passed by the relevant FIFA bodies which, according to FIFA Statutes, are final and not subject to appeal.
 - ii) Members and Leagues shall take every precaution necessary to ensure that their own members, Players and Officials comply with these decisions.
 - iii) The same obligation applies to licensed match and players’ agents.
 - iv) Members of The Association shall not take legal action against The Association on any issue relating to the application of The Association’s Rules, until redress through all relevant bodies of The Association have been exhausted.

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RULE 4. MEMBERS' OBLIGATIONS

The Members of the Football Association of Ireland have the following obligations

- a) To comply fully with the statutes, rules, regulations, codes, directives and decisions of FIFA, UEFA and the Football Association of Ireland at all times and to ensure that these are also respected by its members
- b) To ensure the election of its decision-making bodies;
- c) To respect the Laws of the Game as laid down by IFAB and to ensure that these are also respected by its members through a statutory provision;
- d) To adopt a statutory clause specifying that any dispute requiring arbitration involving itself or one of its members and relating to the Statutes, regulations, directives and decisions of FIFA, UEFA, the Football Association of Ireland or the League(s) shall come solely under the jurisdiction of the appropriate Arbitration Tribunal of FIFA, UEFA or the Football Association of Ireland and that any recourse to Civil Courts is prohibited and shall result in a sanction by the Association which shall be verified by the relevant Arbitration Panel or sole Arbitrator.

RULE 5. DEFINITIONS

In the interpretation of these Rules the following words and expressions shall have the meanings so defined; and words importing the singular shall include the plural, and vice versa, words importing the masculine include the feminine and words importing persons shall include bodies Corporate.

Any Definitions not provided hereunder but contained within FIFA and UEFA Statutes, Regulations and Codes are incorporated into FAI Rules where appropriate. In addition, the following terms and expressions shall, unless the context otherwise requires, have the following meanings:

“A Championship” is one of the FAI National League competitions.

“Affiliates” shall mean other affiliated National and Provincial bodies.

“AGM” and “EGM” mean the Annual General Meeting and Extraordinary General Meeting of the Association respectively

“The Association” or “the FAI” shall mean the Football Association of Ireland.

“The Board” means the Board of Management of the FAI

“Chief Executive Officer” shall mean the Chief Executive Officer of The Association.

“The Council” means the National Council of the FAI.

“Days” shall exclude Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays.

“DCU” means the Disciplinary Control Unit.

“Divisional Associations” shall include the Councils of such Divisional Associations.

“Domestic Competitive Match” shall mean all competitions within the League the Player is registered with.

“The FAI National League” means the competitions owned, run and promoted by the FAI.

“Futsal” is football played in accordance with the Futsal Laws of the Game that have been drawn up by FIFA.

“The Honorary Officers” shall mean the Honorary President otherwise the “President”; The Honorary Vice-President otherwise the “Vice-President”, The Honorary Secretary, The Honorary Treasurer and The Chairperson of The FAI National League Executive Committee.

“Junior Council” means The Junior Council of the FAI.

“Legal Persons” means entities or bodies not being individuals

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“Manager” means the Official of a Club responsible for selecting a team

“Match Agent” means a natural person employed to arrange matches and is licensed in accordance with FIFA regulations. “Match” means a football match sanctioned by the Association or an Affiliated body.

“Match Officials” means referees and assistant referees and includes reserve officials and fourth officials.

“Members” of The Association shall mean:

- (1) National Associations; Divisional Associations and Leagues who have affiliated to the FAI.
- (2) Clubs in Leagues who are currently affiliated to their Divisional/National Association.
- (3) Players who are currently registered to play for their Club on League Registration Forms obtainable from a member League.
- (4) Clubs participating in the FAI National League and Affiliated to their Divisional Associations.
- (5) Other members who may be appointed by the Council from time to time.
- (6) Participants.

“Natural Persons” shall mean an individual human being as distinct from a corporate body or entity

“Official” means any official, technical official, director, secretary, servant or representative of an affiliated body or competition.

“Participant” means an affiliated Association, League, Club, Club official, Player, Official, Match Official and all such persons who are from time to time participating in any activity sanctioned either directly or indirectly by The Association.

“Participation Agreement” sets out the terms and conditions which each Participant Club in the FAI National League agrees to adhere to, including inter alia; the FAI National League’s format and operation, its Disciplinary Procedures, Commercial Rules and the FAI Club Licensing Scheme.

“Players’ Agent” means a natural person who, for a fee, on a regular basis introduces a player to a club with a view to employment or introduces two clubs to one another with a view to concluding a transfer contract, and is licensed in accordance with FIFA regulations.

“Special Meeting” means any Council Meeting convened for special purposes outside the scheduled Council meetings.

“The Society” means the Irish Soccer Referees Society

RULE 6. AFFILIATION

- (a) Divisional Associations, Affiliates, Leagues and The Society in membership of The Association shall pay the prescribed annual affiliation fee, set from time to time by the AGM of The Association. For the winter season this shall be paid on or before the 31st December in any year; for the summer season this shall be paid on or before the 31st of August in any year.
- (b) Clubs shall pay the prescribed annual FAI affiliation fee to their appropriate Divisional Association or Affiliate on or before a date to be determined by that Divisional Association or Affiliate, who shall pass on the fee to the FAI on or before December 31st in any year.
- (c) Members agree to be bound by the Rules of FAI.
- (d) Any member whose prescribed annual affiliation fee is not paid by 31st December in each year is liable to be suspended.
- (e) A Club in an area not within the jurisdiction of any Divisional Association may be permitted to affiliate directly to The Association.

RULE 7. HONORARY LIFE VICE-PRESIDENTS

The Council may appoint Honorary Life Vice Presidents at its opening meeting each season on the recommendation of the Board. No more than two appointments may be made at any one meeting.

RULE 8. HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS

- (a) The Association may appoint Honorary Life Members at the AGM of the Association on the recommendation of the Board.
- (b) Members of the Council and/or the Junior Council or other National bodies who have given in aggregate 20 years service as a member of either Council shall be considered by the Board as eligible for Honorary Life membership.
- (c) The Board may recommend to the AGM that other members of The Association or other appropriate individuals may be appointed Honorary Life Members.
- (d) Such membership shall entitle the holder to enjoy full privileges such as stand accommodation and board room invitations to all representative matches played under the jurisdiction of The Association.

RULE 9. RULEBOOKS

- (a) Rulebooks of The Association shall be available from the principal office of the Association at a reasonable commercial price to be set from time to time by that office or on the Association's website free of charge.
- (b) The Association accepts no responsibility for the non-possession of Rulebooks by Participants nor can the non-possession be pleaded as ignorance of the Rules of The Association.

RULE 10. RULES OF NATIONAL BODIES, DIVISIONAL ASSOCIATIONS, LEAGUES & THE SOCIETY

- (a) The Rules of all National Associations, Divisional Associations, Affiliated Leagues and The Society must be in conformity with the Rules of the FAI and the statutes and regulations of FIFA and UEFA. In the event of any discrepancy between the Rules of the FAI and National Associations, Divisional Associations, Affiliated Leagues or the Society, the Rules of the FAI shall prevail.
- (b) The Association shall have the power at any time to make inquiries into the working of such affiliates and to deal with same as it thinks fit provided that all proper procedures are duly followed.
- (c) The Rules of the FAI National League in addition to being in compliance with the FAI Rules must comply with all of the conditions of the FAI Participation Agreement, FAI National Club Licensing Manual and the statutes and regulations of FIFA and UEFA.

RULE 11. RULEBOOKS & LIST OF MEMBERS

Approved rulebooks of all affiliates together with a list of the current membership of National Bodies, Divisional Associations, Leagues and The Society shall be requested by the Association on an annual basis. The Association shall have the power to review the Rules of all these bodies.

RULE 12. POWER TO FORM DIVISIONS

- (a) For the governance of Association Football, Ireland shall be divided into Divisions designated as Leinster, Munster, Connaught and Ulster.

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- (b) The Council shall have the power, with the consent of the Divisions concerned, to vary the area and boundary of these Divisions and/or to create new Divisions. Representation on the Council of the various Divisions shall be in accordance with rule. Clubs or teams in Ireland not situated within the area of jurisdiction of a Divisional Association shall be under the direct control of The Association.

RULE 13. BODIES OF THE ASSOCIATION

The bodies are the most important parts of an Association. Only the bodies, or persons who are authorised by them, can act with legally binding force for the Association. The Association shall ensure the separation of powers and respect the principles of corporate governance (e.g. checks and balances). Using the FIFA Statutes as a reference, these bodies are referred to below as the AGM, Council, Executive Committee, Standing Committees, General Secretariat, Disciplinary Committee and Appeal Committee.

1. The AGM is the supreme and legislative body.
2. The Council is a body comprised of members as defined in Rule 14 and is empowered to monitor the Association in accordance with Rule 15.
3. The Executive Committee is the Board of Management.
4. Standing and ad-hoc Committees shall advise and assist the Board of Management in fulfilling its duties. Their duties, composition and function are defined in these Rules and /or special regulations drawn up by the Board of Management.
5. The General Secretariat is the administrative body.
6.
 1. The judicial bodies are composed of the Disciplinary Bodies and the Club Licensing Bodies.
 2. The disciplinary bodies are the Disciplinary Committee and the Appeal Committee.
 3. The club licensing bodies are the FAI Club licensing Committee and the FAI Club licensing Appeals Committee. At least one member of each of these bodies shall be a chartered accountant and at least another one shall be a Solicitor or Barrister in accordance with Club Licensing Rules.
 4. Moreover, the composition, areas of authority and functions of the judicial bodies are the subject of specific regulations drawn up by the Board.
7. The bodies of the Football Association of Ireland shall be either elected or appointed by the Football Association of Ireland itself without any external influence and in accordance with the procedures described in these Rules.

RULE 14. COMPOSITION OF THE FAI NATIONAL COUNCIL

The Council of the Association shall consist of: -

1.
 - (a) The President of The Association
 - (b) The Vice President of The Association
 - (c) The Honorary Treasurer of The Association
 - (d) The Honorary Secretary of The Association
 - (e) The Chairperson of the FAI National League Executive Committee.
 - (f) 1 representative to be appointed by each of the 22 participant clubs in the Premier and First Divisions of the FAI National League provided they are holders of a current FAI National League Club licence and in compliance with the terms of their Participation Agreement.
 - (g) 9 representatives to be appointed by the Leinster Football Association,
 - (h) 5 representatives to be appointed by the Munster Football Association,

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- (i) 2 representatives to be appointed by the Connaught Football Association and
- (j) 2 representatives to be appointed by the Ulster Football Association.
- (k) 2 representatives to be appointed by the FAI Junior Council.
- (l) 1 representative to be appointed by the Defence Forces.
- (m) 1 representative to be appointed by The Colleges Football Association.
- (n) 4 representatives to be appointed by The Schoolboys FAI.
- (o) 1 representative to be appointed by Irish Universities Football Union.
- (p) 2 representatives to be appointed by the Football Association of Irish Schools.
- (q) 2 representatives to be appointed by The Women's Football Association of Ireland.
- (r) The FAI Chief Referees Observer
- (s) 1 representative from the Irish Soccer Referees Society.
- (t) 1 representative from the "Football for All" Body.

(Total membership of Council: (61)

- (u) Any member of the Board not otherwise so entitled shall be entitled to attend Council Meetings on a non voting basis.
 - (v) In the case of death or resignation of a member of Council, the Club or affiliate concerned shall have the right to appoint a person to act in his place.
 - (w) In the event of a representative being unable to attend a Council Meeting, his nominating Club or Affiliate may appoint a substitute to attend that particular Council meeting in his place, providing they notify the Chief Executive of The Association in writing, prior to the meeting.
 - (x) In relation to clause (f) to (t) inclusive, the representatives or substitutes appointed must be members of the affiliate that appoints them. The appointment of representatives must be notified to the Chief Executive of The Association within one week after The Association's AGM.
 - (y) No person shall be eligible to be a representative or substitute on the FAI National Council, if they are an FAI employee or retained contractor or a person who receives a substantial part of their income from any FAI activity, unless otherwise approved by the Board.
2. No person shall be eligible to be first appointed an Honorary Officer or a member of Council if at the time of appointment that person has attained the age of 70 years. An Honorary Officer or member of Council shall vacate office at the AGM after attaining the age of 75 years.

RULE 15. ROLE OF COUNCIL

- (a) The Council shall be responsible for monitoring the activities of the FAI and for monitoring the Board's governance of the Association. The Board shall be empowered to take such decisions as are necessary for the effective governance and control of The Association in accordance with the provisions of Rule 22.
- (b) The Council shall empower the Board to appoint Standing Committees in accordance with rule. Terms of reference for Standing Committees shall be established by the Board in consultation with the Chairperson of each Standing Committee and the Chief Executive Officer.
- (c) The Council shall empower the Board and the Standing Committees to appoint Resource Groups, where necessary - such groups shall deal with specific projects or issues, and shall be purely temporary in nature.
- (d) The Council shall have the power to remove the Board and/or the Honorary Officers and/or any individual member of the Council by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting on a motion submitted 14 days in advance of a meeting of the Council and signed by at least 20 Council members.
- (e) The Council shall retain the power to elect Honorary Officers.

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- (f) The Council shall establish written Codes of Practice for its own members.
- (g) Members of the Council shall retain the privileges stated in the Code of Practice applicable to Council members, unless the Council itself decides otherwise by majority vote.
- (h) The Council shall meet a minimum of four times each year to discuss reports presented by the Board (including the activities of the various Standing Committees) and to respond to requests for its views from the Board. The opening Council meeting shall take place no earlier than 14 days after the AGM.
- (i) At each meeting, Council shall receive a report from the Chief Executive on the activities of the Association.
- (j) The President shall chair all meetings of Council. In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall chair the meeting. In the absence of both the President and the Vice President, Council shall select an Honorary Officer to chair the meeting.
- (k) Each member of the Council, present and entitled to vote at a Council meeting, shall have one vote. The President shall have a casting vote only and not an original vote at Council meetings.
- (l) A complete record of the draft minutes of the previous Council meeting and reports of the Standing Committees shall be distributed to Council members in advance of each meeting.
- (m) Special meetings of the Council may be convened at the request of the Board or on receipt of a written request signed by 20 Council members. A special meeting shall transact the business specified in the notice convening that meeting and shall be convened within 14 days of receiving the request.
- (n) The quorum for Council meetings shall be one half of the total number of Council members appointed at the time, rounded up to the nearest whole number.
- (o) The Council may fill any casual vacancy in the office of President, Vice-President, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer or Auditors in accordance with the Rules.
- (p) The Financial Year of The Association shall end on 31st December each year.
- (q) At any meeting, a resolution put to the vote of the meeting shall be decided on a show of hands, unless a poll is demanded on any question. A simple majority shall be deemed to pass a resolution except as otherwise provided for. A declaration by the President that a resolution has been carried, or carried unanimously, or by any particular majority or lost, or not carried by a particular majority, and an entry to that effect made in the Minute Book of the proceedings of The Association, shall be sufficient evidence of the fact, without proof of the number or proportion of the votes recorded. A like declaration and entry of the result of a ballot shall have a like effect.

A poll may be demanded by not less than one-fifth of the duly nominated representatives present, and it shall be taken in such manner as may be determined by the President and the result of such poll shall be deemed to be the resolution of The Association. A poll demanded on the election of a President or on the question of an adjournment shall be taken forthwith. Representatives or their substitutes may only give votes in person, and voting by written proxy shall not be permitted.

If any votes are given or counted at a meeting which shall afterwards be discovered to be improperly given or counted, the same shall not affect the validity of any resolution passed or done at the meeting, unless the objection to such votes be taken at the same meeting, and not in that case, unless the President shall then and there decide that the error is of sufficient magnitude to affect such resolution.

RULE 16. ELECTION OF HONORARY TREASURER AND HONORARY SECRETARY

- (a) No person other than a retiring Honorary Treasurer or Honorary Secretary shall be eligible for election to these offices unless, not later than 30th April in each year they have sent by registered post to the Chief Executive a nomination in writing signifying their candidature for such office. The nomination shall be signed by the candidate and by a proposer and seconded (who shall be members of The Association).
- (b) When an election is needed because an officer-holder has reached the end of his term of office or a vacancy has occurred, the Chief Executive shall summon a special meeting of the members of Council immediately after the AGM and submit the nominations of the candidates for the positions. If only one candidate is nominated for either position, he shall be declared elected on receiving a vote of the majority of those voting.

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In the event of there being more than one candidate for any office a vote shall be taken by those present at the meeting, and the candidate receiving an absolute majority of votes, after an elimination process if necessary, shall be declared elected.

- (c) In the event of there being no nominations for the positions, the Special Meeting may fill any vacancy from the membership of The Council or from other members of the Association. No other business shall be transacted at this meeting.
- (d) The Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Secretary elected under this Rule shall hold office until their successors are elected.

RULE 17. ROLE OF THE HONORARY TREASURER

- (a) The Honorary Treasurer shall, together with the Director of Finance, oversee the financial strategy of the Association on a continuous basis, on behalf of The Association. This strategy must be presented to the Finance Committee for discussion/input and subsequently to the Board for their approval or otherwise.
- (b) The Honorary Treasurer shall oversee the implementation of the financial strategy. The Chief Executive Officer and the Director of Finance shall be responsible for its implementation.
- (c) The Honorary Treasurer shall oversee the management of the Association assets with the Chief Executive Officer and Director of Finance.
- (d) The Honorary Treasurer shall, together with the Director of Finance, sign off the expenses of the Chief Executive Officer, the President and other officers. The Honorary Treasurers expenses shall be signed off by the Chief Executive Officer and the Director of Finance.
- (e) It is the responsibility of the Honorary Treasurer and the Director of Finance to ensure that all significant financial matters brought to their attention are placed before the Finance Committee and/or the Board as appropriate.
- (f) The Honorary Treasurer shall ensure that an Audit Committee be established annually, comprising of four (4) members of the Finance Committee one of whom shall act as chairperson. This committee shall meet at least twice (2) each year with a representative of the External Auditors. The Chief Executive Officer, the Honorary Treasurer and the Director of Finance shall be available to attend if required to do so by the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee shall see the External Auditors draft and final management letters.
- (g) The Honorary Treasurer and the Director of Finance shall provide a copy of the audited accounts of the Association to all those entitled to attend the AGM at least 7 days prior to that meeting.

RULE 18. ROLE OF THE HONORARY SECRETARY

- (a) The Honorary Secretary shall meet with the CEO on a regular basis to be kept updated on continuing activities within the Association.
- (b) The Honorary Secretary shall, if requested to do so by the CEO, assist the CEO on an issue by issue basis on matters pertaining to the affairs of the Association.
- (c) The Honorary Secretary shall keep himself apprised of football Rules, FIFA / UEFA Directives, company, employment and other appropriate legislation.
- (d) The Honorary Secretary shall be responsible for the preparation of all minutes of all AGM/EGM meetings and all of the meetings of the Council and the Board. The minutes shall be recorded in a minute book with each item numbered for reference.

RULE 19. ELECTION OF HONORARY PRESIDENT AND HONORARY VICE PRESIDENT

- (a) Following their first election to the positions, the Honorary President and Honorary Vice President shall serve for a single term of 2 years, but shall be eligible to seek a nomination for a further two year period.

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- (b) Immediately after the election of the Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Secretary, a meeting of the Council shall be held to elect from their number a President and a Vice President.
- (c) The Honorary Secretary or Honorary Treasurer shall act as Chairperson at that meeting until the election of the President. The presiding Honorary Officer shall then vacate the chair and the President shall proceed with the election of the Vice President.
- (d) To be nominated for the office of President or Vice-President a person must have been a member of Council for at least three years, which service need not necessarily have been consecutive. No person shall be eligible for election to these offices unless, not later than 30th April in each year they have sent by registered post to the Chief Executive a nomination in writing signifying their candidature for such office. The nomination shall be signed by the candidate and by a proposer and seconded (who shall be members of The Association).
- (e) When an election is needed because an officer-holder has reached the end of his term of office or a vacancy has occurred, the Chief Executive shall summon a special meeting of the members of Council immediately after the AGM and submit the nominations of the candidates for the positions. If only one candidate is nominated for either position, he shall be declared elected on receiving a vote of the majority of those voting. In the event of there being more than one candidate for any office a vote shall be taken by those present at the meeting, and the candidate receiving an absolute majority of votes, after an elimination process if necessary, shall be declared elected.
- (f) In the event of there being no nominations for the positions, the Special Meeting may fill any vacancy from the membership of The Council or from other members of the Association. No other business shall be transacted at this meeting.

RULE 20. ROLE OF THE HONORARY PRESIDENT

- (a) The President shall be required to lead by example and devote time and effort into ensuring that The Association and its members under his direction are progressing in the propagation of the game of Association football at all levels. The President, as the senior Honorary Officer, shall represent The Association at all times in a manner appropriate to the position.
- (b) The President should have knowledge of the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the FAI and the Rules and Standing Orders of The Association.
- (c) The President in conjunction with the Chief Executive/Honorary Secretary ensures that all scheduled meetings are held, with advance notice of agenda given to all members.
- (d) The President shall chair all meetings of the Council and the Board in a non-partisan manner. At meetings, the President shall ensure that the minutes of previous meetings are passed, adopted and reviewed. He should ensure that the agenda is strictly adhered to and allows all members a fair opportunity to speak on each topic before a consensus is reached or calls for a vote to determine the decision.
- (e) The President shall have a casting vote only at Council meetings and not an original vote.
- (f) At the conclusion of each Council and Board meeting, the President shall review the decisions made and announce the date and time of the next Council and/or Board meeting.
- (g) The President shall ensure that all decisions taken by Council and the Board are acted upon as quickly as possible and that all matters discussed within the confines of a meeting shall stay confidential until the Chief Executive has dealt with the appropriate matter.

RULE 21. ROLE OF THE HONORARY VICE PRESIDENT

In the absence of the President, the Vice-President shall undertake the duties of the President. The Vice President, once elected, shall automatically be Chairperson of the Development Committee.

RULE 22. GOVERNANCE OF THE ASSOCIATION

- (a) The governance and control of The Association is vested in the Board.
- (b) The Board shall carry out its duties and exercise its powers to achieve the objects of The Association as defined elsewhere in these Rules. It shall have the power to deal with such matters concerning The Association as are not expressly provided for in these Rules, but must report on such matters to the next meeting of Council.

RULE 23. COMPOSITION OF THE FAI BOARD

The FAI Board shall have a maximum of ten members as follows:

- a. The President of the FAI
- b. The Vice President of the FAI , who shall chair the Development Committee
- c. The Honorary Secretary of the FAI
- d. The Honorary Treasurer of the FAI, who shall chair the Finance Committee
- e. The Chairperson of the FAI National League Executive Committee
- f. The Chairperson of the International Committee
- g. The Chairperson of the Domestic Committee
- h. The Chairperson of the Legal and Corporate Affairs Committee
- i. The Chairperson of the Underage Committee
- j. The Chief Executive Officer

RULE 24. OPERATIONS OF THE FAI BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

- 1. The Board shall act as the Board of Directors of the Football Association of Ireland in compliance with the current provisions of the Rules of the Association, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, company law and the requirements of regulatory bodies and shall adopt best practice in corporate governance of the Association.
- 2. The President of the FAI shall chair the meetings of the Board. In the absence of the President, the Vice President shall take the chair. In the absence of both the President and Vice President, those Directors present shall choose one of their number to chair the meeting.
- 3. A quorum for the transaction of business of the Board shall be six. As a Board member, the President shall have an original vote and a casting vote.
- 4. The Board shall meet as required, in accordance with the Articles of the Association, to govern the affairs of the Association, and such meetings shall normally be held once a month. The Board shall be responsible for ensuring delivery of the objects of the Association, setting its strategic direction and upholding the values of the Association.
- 5. The Board shall establish at its opening meeting a set of Standing Orders, in writing, indicating how it shall conduct the business of the Association.
- 6. Board members shall comply with the written Codes of Conduct for Board members approved by Council.
- 7. No substitutions shall be permitted at Board meetings.
- 8. The Chief Executive Officer shall circulate a bi-monthly report of all Board Meetings and of all meetings of Standing Committees to all Council Members.

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9. The Board shall report on its work to the Council at each meeting of that body and shall also consult, as necessary, with the Council in developing and progressing major policies of the Association.
10. The Board shall be entitled to place proposals for changes in FAI Rules before an AGM or EGM for acceptance or rejection by that body.
11. The Board shall approve regulations or codes of practice which are required to implement FAI Rules as required from time to time. These regulations shall be binding on all members.
12. The Board may delegate any of their powers to Standing Committees consisting of such members as authorised by Council. Any Standing Committees so formed shall, in the exercise of the power so delegated, conform to any limitation that may be imposed on it by the Board. The Chairperson of each Standing Committee shall report on its work to the Board of the Association.
13. The Board shall have the authority to define and approve in specific regulations the various criteria to be fulfilled by a club in order to be admitted to participate in the FAI top domestic competitions and in the UEFA club competitions as well as the licensing process to be observed by the FAI club Licensing bodies. With regard to the participation in UEFA club competitions, the above mentioned regulations must be accredited by UEFA.
14. The Board shall appoint both the Chair and other members of the FAI Club Licensing Committee and the FAI Club Licensing Appeals Body.
15. As a Board member, the President shall have an original vote and a casting vote.

RULE 25. STANDING COMMITTEES/FAI NATIONAL LEAGUE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A.

- 25.1 The following Standing Committees shall be formed at the opening meeting of Council after the AGM on the following basis:
- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| (i) Finance, | 2007 and every two years thereafter |
| (ii) Legal and Corporate Affairs, | 2007 and every two years thereafter |
| (iii) Development, | 2008 and every two years thereafter |
| (iv) International, | 2008 and every two years thereafter |
| (v) Domestic | 2007 and every two years thereafter |
| (vi) Underage | 2008 and every two years thereafter. |
- 25.2 In accordance with the provisions of 25.1 a meeting of each Standing Committee shall where necessary be convened by the Honorary Secretary with the Chief Executive or his nominee in attendance, to elect its Chairperson before the opening meeting of the Board. The Chairperson of each of the Standing Committees shall be a member of the Board. The Board shall duly approve the new Board members and the terms of reference of each Standing Committee.
- 25.3 A Standing Committee may meet and adjourn as it thinks proper. Questions arising at any meeting shall be determined by a majority of votes by the members present. The Chairperson shall be entitled to vote at Standing Committee meetings. Where there is an equality of votes, the Chairperson shall have a casting vote. The quorum shall be 6 persons. In the absence of the Chairperson, the members present shall select one of their number to chair that meeting.
- 25.4 In the event of a nominated representative to a Standing Committee being unable to attend a meeting, his nominating affiliate may appoint a substitute to attend that particular meeting, providing
- (a) the Chairperson or the Chief Executive Officer is notified in writing, prior to the meeting and;
 - (b) the substitute is an active member of the Association and;
 - (c) the substitute was nominated in writing by the body competent to nominate the representatives at the time the Standing Committee was appointed. For the avoidance of doubt the substitute shall be nominated

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in writing after the election of the representative but before the opening meeting of the Standing Committee.

- 25.5 The Chief Executive shall be a voting member of the Finance and Legal and Corporate Affairs Committees.
- 25.6 Positions on Standing Committees to be filled by election shall be determined at the opening Council meeting.
- 25.7 The remaining positions on Standing Committees shall be selected by a Selection Sub Committee.
- 25.8 Nominations from Members of the Association for election must be in the hands of the Chief Executive no less than five days in advance of the Council meeting in question.

The official FAI nomination form should be signed by the candidate stating their willingness to serve on such Committee.

Such nominees shall be formally proposed and seconded at the said Council meeting.

In the case of an equality of votes between two or more candidates, a further vote shall be held and if that fails to produce a result, the result shall be determined by the drawing of lots.

Each member of a Standing Committee must be conversant with and experienced in dealing with those aspects of the Association's business which has been designated by the Board as being appropriate to that particular Committee.

- 25.9 At the opening Council meeting, Council shall elect one of its members who shall not be an Officer to sit on a Selection Sub Committee to select the remaining members of the relevant Standing Committees. In exercising its right to select members of the Standing Committees, the selection Sub Committee cannot select a member from one affiliate to a Standing Committee where another member or members of the affiliate has been elected to that Committee.
- 25.10 No person may sit on more than two Standing Committees at any one time.
- 25.11 The quorum for Standing Committees shall be 6 persons.
- 25.12 The terms of reference for the six Standing Committees shall be established by the Board in consultation with the Chairperson of each Standing Committee and the Chief Executive.
- 25.13 Following the opening meeting of Council, a meeting of the selection Sub Committee comprising the President, Chief Executive and the member elected by Council shall meet to select the relevant members of the Standing Committees. Members who put themselves forward for selection but were not elected to a Standing Committee shall be eligible for selection as shall other persons who are put forward for selection to the selection Sub Committee. The selection of persons to a Standing Committee shall be open to non-members of Council provided they are active members of the Association. The decision of the selection Sub Committee shall be final and binding.
- 25.14 The process for nominating representatives to sit on the six Standing Committees shall be determined by each nominating body, and confirmed in writing to the Chief Executive Officer five days in advance of the opening Council meeting.
- 25.15 In cases where Provincial Associations are entitled to less than four representatives on any Committee by right, the Presidents/Chairmen for the time being of the four Provincial Associations shall meet to decide which Provincial Associations shall be represented on those Committees.
- 25.16 In the case of Standing Committees where the Provincial Associations have four representatives, the four representatives shall comprise of one representative from each of the four Provincial Associations.

25.17 COMPOSITION OF DOMESTIC COMMITTEE

- a. Four representatives from the Provincial Associations
- b. Three representatives from the FAI National League participant clubs
- c. One representative from an affiliate not otherwise automatically represented

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- d. Two representatives to be elected by Council
- e. Two representatives to be selected by the Selection Sub Committee

With reference to 25.17 (c) above, a meeting to elect this representative shall be presided over by the Honorary Secretary, with the Chief Executive Officer or his nominee in attendance, who shall formally call the meeting and notify the Association of the outcome of the election.

25.18 COMPOSITION OF UNDERAGE COMMITTEE

- a. Four representatives from the S.F.A.I.
- b. Two representatives from the F.A.I.S.
- c. Two representatives from the W.F.A.I.
- d. One representative from the FAI National League participant clubs
- e. One representative from the Youth Committee
- f. One representative to be elected by Council.
- g. One representative to be selected by the Selection Sub Committee.

In selecting this member, the Selection Sub Committee shall select only from the S.F.A.I, F.A.I.S and W.F.A.I., on the clear understanding that none of the aforementioned affiliates shall have more than five members on this Committee. The person selected may not be a representative of the same affiliate as the person elected.

25.19 COMPOSITION OF LEGAL & CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

- a. The Honorary Secretary.
- b. The Honorary Treasurer.
- c. The Chief Executive Officer
- d. Two representatives from the FAI National League participant clubs
- e. Four representatives from other strands not otherwise automatically represented.
- f. One external member.
- g. One member to be elected by Council
- h. One member to be selected by the Selection Sub Committee.

In the case of this Committee, a meeting of one representative from each of the four Provincial Associations, together with one representative from the S.F.A.I., F.A.I.S., W.F.A.I. and one representative on behalf of the other bodies, namely the Defence Forces, I.U.F.U., the C.F.A.I. and the Irish Soccer Referees' Society, shall be convened as soon as possible after the AGM to decide which four persons shall serve on this Committee representing these bodies. With reference to 25.19 (e) above, a meeting to elect these representatives shall be presided over by the Honorary Secretary, with the Chief Executive Officer or his nominee in attendance, who shall formally call the meeting and notify the Association of the outcome of the election. The External member to sit on the Legal and Corporate Affairs Committee shall be elected by the Committee at its opening meeting.

25.20 COMPOSITION OF INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

- a. The Honorary Secretary (excluded from Chairmanship)
- b. Two representatives from the FAI National League participant clubs
- c. Two representatives from the Provincial Associations / Junior Council.
- d. One representative from the S.F.A.I.

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- e. One representative from the F.A.I.S.
- f. One representative from the W.F.A.I.
- g. Two representatives to be elected by Council.
- h. Two representatives to be selected by the Selection Sub Committee.

25.21 COMPOSITION OF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- a. The Vice-President of the Association, who shall be the Chairperson of the Committee.
- b. Two representatives from the FAI National League participant clubs
- c. Four representatives from the Provincial Associations.
- d. One representative from the S.F.A.I.
- e. One representative from the W.F.A.I.
- f. One representative from the F.A.I.S.
- g. One representative to be elected from the other affiliates not otherwise automatically represented.
- h. One representative to be selected by the Selection Sub Committee.

In the case of the Development Committee, the person elected must be from either the Defence Forces, the C.F.A.I., I.U.F.U., or the Irish Soccer Referees Society.

With reference to 25.21 (g) above, a meeting to elect this representative shall be presided over by the Honorary Secretary, with the Chief Executive or his nominee in attendance, who shall formally call the meeting and notify the Association of the outcome of the election.

25.22 COMPOSITION OF FINANCE COMMITTEE

- a. The Honorary Treasurer who shall be the Chairperson of the Committee.
- b. Two representatives from the FAI National League participant clubs
- c. Two representatives from the Provincial Associations.
- d. One representative from the W.F.A.I.
- e. One representative from the S.F.A.I.
- f. One representative from other affiliates not otherwise automatically represented.
- g. The Chief Executive
- h. Two members to be elected by Council.
- i. One member to be selected by the Selection Sub Committee.

In the case of a Finance Committee, a meeting shall be held as soon as practicable following the AGM comprising one representative, each from the Defence Forces, C.F.A.I., I.U.F.U and the Irish Soccer Referees Society to decide who, from these bodies, shall fill the one position available on this Committee.

With reference to 25.22 (f) above, a meeting to elect this representative shall be presided over by the Honorary Secretary, with the Chief Executive Officer or his nominee in attendance, who shall formally call the meeting and notify the Association of the outcome of the election.

B.

COMPOSITION OF THE FAI NATIONAL LEAGUE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- a. The Chairperson elected at the participant Clubs' Annual Convention

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- b. The Vice-Chairperson elected at the participant Clubs' Annual Convention
- c. The Chief Executive Officer
- d. One member to be elected by Council at its opening meeting who shall not be an active member of any of the participant clubs.

Nominations from Members of the Association for election must be in the hands of the Chief Executive no less than five days in advance of the Council meeting in question.

The official FAI nomination form should be signed by the candidate stating their willingness to serve on such Committee.

Council members of participant clubs are not entitled to nominate or vote.

Such nominees shall be formally proposed and seconded at the said Council meeting.

In the case of an equality of votes between two or more candidates, a further vote shall be held and if that fails to produce a result, the result shall be determined by the drawing of lots.

- e. Two External Specialists to be co-opted by the Committee at its opening meeting and approved by the Board.

With reference to 25 B (d) the member elected by Council shall take up his/her position on 1st January and serve a term of two Calendar years.

RULE 26. THE HONORARY OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION:

The Honorary Officers of the Association shall be:

1.

- (a) The President
- (b) The Vice President
- (c) The Honorary Secretary
- (d) The Honorary Treasurer
- (e) The Chairperson of the FAI National League Executive Committee

2.

The Honorary Officers as a group shall not exercise any collective responsibility as a "Board".

- (a) The President shall serve for a single term of 2 years, but shall be eligible to seek a nomination for a further two year period immediately following his first term.
- (b) The Vice President shall serve for a single term of 2 years, but shall be eligible to seek a nomination for a further two-year period immediately following his first term.
- (c) The Honorary Secretary shall serve a term of 4 years and be entitled to seek re-election for further terms.
- (d) The Honorary Treasurer shall serve a term of 4 years and be entitled to seek re-election for further terms.
- (e) During the term of office of the above named Honorary Officers, they shall have no direct or indirect capacity with any members of The Association except the Chairperson of the National League.
- (f) The Chairperson of the National League shall serve a term or terms determined by that body.

RULE 27. REMOVAL FROM MEMBERSHIP

- (a) The AGM is responsible for removing or suspending a Member from membership of the Association. The Board may, however, suspend a Member that seriously and repeatedly violates its obligations as a member.

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on the terms detailed in the notice of suspension. This suspension shall be confirmed at the next AGM by a two thirds majority of the votes taken. If it is not confirmed, the suspension is automatically lifted.

- (b) Any member suspended from Membership of The Association shall not, during the period of suspension, play or take part in any activity, match or fixture under the auspices of The Association.

RULE 28. EXPENSES ALLOWED TO MEMBERS

Members of the Council and persons assisting The Association in its functions shall be paid such expenses and/or fees in line with the policy laid down by the Finance Committee, and as approved by it.

RULE 29. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) / EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING (EGM)

- (a) The AGM of The Association shall be held not later than the 31st July in each year, and shall transact any business of which notice may appear on the Agenda of the Meeting. In exceptional circumstances the Council may defer the AGM and opening Meeting of Council for a period of not more than one calendar month.
- (b) The following only shall be entitled to attend the AGM or EGM of The Association:-

1. FAI National League - Two Representatives from each Club participating in the FAI National League provided the Clubs are holders of a current FAI National League licence and in compliance with the terms of their Participation Agreement and Affiliated to their Divisional Associations.
2. Leinster FA - Nine representatives, of which not more than five shall be from the Dublin area.
3. Munster FA - Five representatives of which not more than three shall be from the Cork area.
4. Connaught FA - Two Representatives
5. Leinster Senior League - One representative from each non-FAI National League Club, in the highest section of its highest division.
6. Munster Senior League - One representative from each non-FAI National League Club in the highest section of its highest division.
7. Junior Council of the FAI - Five direct representatives.
8. Defence Forces FA - Two Representatives.
9. Schoolboys' FAI - Four Representatives.
10. The Football Association of Irish Schools - Four Representatives.
11. Irish Universities' Football Union - Two Representatives.
12. Ulster Football Association - Two Representatives.
13. Women's Football Association - Two Representatives.
14. The Colleges' Football Association - Two Representatives.
15. Ulster Senior League - One Representative from each non-FAI National League Club in the highest section of its highest division.
16. Each League in membership of The Association shall be entitled to one Representative at the AGM or EGM.
17. The FAI Chief Referees Observer
18. Irish Soccer Referees Society - Two Representatives.
19. Football for All – One Representative
20. In addition, members of the Board, outgoing Council and Honorary Life Members shall also be entitled to attend the AGM but shall not be entitled to vote unless they are also acting in the capacity of representatives in accordance with the provisions of this rule.
21. No member shall have a right to representation unless such member's subscription shall have been received by the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with rule. In the case of Clubs formed after 1st September, such Clubs shall be entitled to representation at the AGM (or EGM) provided their subscriptions have been paid within 15 days of election to membership.

(c) Notification

1. All members must submit, in writing, to the Chief Executive Officer, the names of its representatives at the AGM, not later than 14 days before the AGM or 7 days for an EGM.

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2. The Chief Executive Officer shall inform the members of The Association of the time, date and venue of the forthcoming AGM, at least 14 days in advance of same or 7 days for an EGM.
3. Where necessary, the Chief Executive Officer shall inform the AGM or EGM at the beginning of that meeting whether the Affiliation Fees of members present had been received in full and on time.
4. The President or, in his absence, the Vice President shall preside as Chairman at every AGM or EGM of the Association. In the event that neither the President nor the Vice President is available, the Board members present (the Directors) shall choose one of their number to preside as Chairman.

(d) Future Venue

The venue for the next AGM shall be decided each year at the AGM.

(e) Extraordinary General Meeting

1. An EGM may be called by The Council, as it may deem necessary.
2. An EGM shall be called upon receipt by the Chief Executive Officer of a requisition signed by at least 50 representatives entitled to vote at an AGM or EGM, accompanied by a deposit of €3000 to defray expenses. No business shall be transacted at any such meeting except that specified in the requisition or contained in the Agenda issued by the Chief Executive Officer.
3. For any matters involving fresh principle or policy, an EGM of all members of The Association may be called by The Council. Seven days' notice of such meeting shall be given by the Chief Executive Officer to all members of The Association entitled to attend.
4. An EGM may be called by the Board.

RULE 30. ALTERATIONS TO RULES

- (a) Rules may only be amended at an AGM or an EGM.
- (b) The Council or any member shall have the right to submit alterations to the Rules of The Association which must be formally proposed and seconded and sent by registered post, to the Chief Executive so as to reach him not later than the 31st January. These proposed alterations to Rules shall be considered by the Rules Commission and the Board and then circulated to those entitled to attend the AGM or, if necessary, an EGM. It shall be open to those persons to submit amendments to the Chief Executive by registered post on or before 30th April.
- (c) At any other time, the Council or any member shall have the right to submit alterations to the rules of The Association. These must be formally proposed and seconded and sent by registered post to the Chief Executive for consideration by the Rules Commission which may, at the discretion of the Board, submit them to the next AGM or an EGM. These proposed alterations to Rules shall be considered by the Rules Commission and the Board and then circulated to those entitled to attend. It shall be open to those persons to submit amendments to the Chief Executive by registered post.
- (d) The Board shall have the right to submit alterations to the Rules to the AGM of the Association or to an EGM convened for the purpose of amending the Rules.
- (e) Proposed alterations, amendments and addenda shall be submitted to the members by post and or electronic mail with the notice convening the AGM no later than one calendar month before the AGM, and seven days for an EGM. It shall be the responsibility of Council members to notify their representative body of such proposed changes.
- (f) No alteration of Rules shall be made unless supported by at least two-thirds of those present and voting at the AGM/EGM.

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- (g) When the AGM/EGM has considered and voted on the proposed changes, the President shall announce that the changes shall take effect eight days after the AGM/EGM. These new rules shall be available on the FAI website and circulated by electronic mail within this timeframe.

RULE 31. AMATEUR OR PROFESSIONAL PLAYERS

1

- (a) Players are either Amateur or Professional upon signing the appropriate registration form. A Professional is a player who has a written contract with a club and is paid more than the expenses he effectively incurs in return for his footballing activity. The application for registration of a Professional must be submitted together with a copy of the player's contract. All other players are considered as Amateurs. (See Rule 46)
- (b) Players must be registered on approved FAI League Registration Forms obtainable from a member League. A bona-fide player of a club is one who has signed a properly completed registration form and paid the appropriate registration fee (if any), duly witnessed by the Club Secretary and lodged with the League forty eight (48) hours before kick-off. Registration procedures for the FAI National League shall be in accordance with the terms of the prevailing Participation Agreement. An Amateur player under the age of 20, and playing in the FAI National League Under 20 Development League shall not lose his junior status whilst playing in this League.
- (c) A League date stamp shall be the official date of registration. A player is eligible for a League match if his Registration Form has been examined and considered to be properly completed and stamped by a League. In Cup competitions the player must be signed with his club and registered with his league at least ten days, as per Rule 5, for his club before the match in question to be eligible.
- (d) Any Player, registered as an Amateur, receiving money or taking advantage over and above the reimbursement or payment for his account of expenses for travelling or hotel (duly justified), shall be deemed to be in breach of his Amateur registration.
- (e) In relation to players registered as Amateurs –
1. Travelling and hotel expenses are to be understood as those necessary for training or taking part in matches, whether as playing members of a team or as a reserve.
 2. A player may receive at the expense of his Club the advice of a coach and/or trainer, the care of masseurs or specialists for his training, or when he is injured.
 3. A player receiving any money prize in a football contest shall be deemed to be in breach of his Amateur registration. Where the Council is satisfied that a player has been induced to sign a Professional Form for the purpose of his Club without any agreement being entered into, or his Amateur status otherwise interfered with, the Professional registration may, on the application of the player, be cancelled and he shall thereupon revert to the status of an Amateur.
 4. No Amateur shall be paid compensation in respect of broken time.

2 TERMINATION OF ACTIVITY

- a) Professionals who end their careers on expiry of their contracts and Amateurs who terminate their activity shall remain registered at the Association of their last club for a period of 30 months.
- b) This period begins on the day the player made his last appearance for the club in an Official Match.

RULE 32. REGISTRATION

- a) In accordance with the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players, a player must be registered with The Association to play for a club as either a Professional or an Amateur in accordance with the Rules. Only registered players are eligible to participate in organised football.

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By the act of registering, a player agrees to abide by the Statutes and regulations of FIFA, UEFA and the Football Association of Ireland.

- b) A player may only be registered for one club at a time. No club may sign more than three players on Amateur forms from the same club during the latter club's current season except with the written consent of the Secretary of the club from which the players are being signed.
- c) Players may be registered for a maximum of three clubs during the current season. During this period, the player is only eligible to play in Official Matches for two clubs. As an exception to this rule, a player moving between two clubs belonging to Associations with overlapping seasons (i.e. start of the season in summer/autumn as opposed to winter/spring) may be eligible to play in official matches for a third club during the relevant season, provided he has fully complied with his contractual obligations towards his previous club. Equally the provisions relating to registration period as well as to the minimum length of contract must be respected.
- d) No player either Amateur or Professional shall play for two Clubs during his current season without first obtaining a transfer from his original Club and League with the exception specified under Rule 34(d). Original shall mean the Club which the player has signed a form and first registered with a League during any one season. Players shall complete an FAI approved transfer form. The Transfer Form must be signed/stamped in the following order: a) by the player, b) by the Secretary of the Club the player is leaving, c) by the Secretary of the club the player is going to, d) by the Registrar/Secretary of the League the player is leaving together with the appropriate fee, if any, e) finally the transfer form and the new registration form shall then be presented to the League the player is going to for processing. The League from which the player is leaving is obliged to furnish in writing, if requested in writing, full details of the player's disciplinary record for that season.
- e) If the claims of any Club are considered exorbitant, the player concerned or Club seeking his transfer shall have the right to report same to the Governing Authority of the League, the latter shall make an enquiry and if the claims are excessive they shall fix a transfer and suspend, fine or otherwise deal with the offending Club.

RULE 33. REGISTRATION/TRANSFER PERIODS FOR PROFESSIONAL GAME

- a) Players may only be registered during one of the two annual Registration Periods fixed by the Association. As an exception to this rule, a Professional whose contract has expired prior to the end of a Registration Period may be registered outside that Registration Period. Leagues are authorised to register such Professionals provided due consideration is given to the sporting integrity of the relevant competition. In case of just cause for termination of a contract, the Association may take provisional measures in order to avoid abuse and in accordance with FIFA regulations.
- b) The first Registration Period shall begin after the completion of the season and shall normally end before the new season starts. This period may not exceed twelve weeks. The second Registration Period shall normally occur in the middle of the season and may not exceed four weeks. The two Registration Periods for the season shall be communicated to FIFA at least 12 months before they come into force.
- c) Players may only be registered – subject to the exception as foreseen in paragraph 1 of this rule – if an application from the club is validly submitted to the Association during a Registration Period.
- d) The provisions concerning Registration Periods do not apply to competitions in which only Amateurs participate.
- e) An Amateur Player may be registered on a Professional Contract for the Professional Game during the Professional Registration Periods

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RULE 34. REGISTRATION/TRANSFER PERIODS FOR AMATEUR GAME

- a) The registration period for the Amateur game, other than the SFAI, shall be 1st June to the 31st of March inclusive for the winter season and 1st of December to the 30th of September inclusive for the Summer Season.
- b) The two transfer periods for the Amateur game shall be 1st June to 30th September inclusive and the 1st December to the 31st of January inclusive with the exception of (c) below. However, an Amateur Player may be signed on a Professional Contract for the Professional Game during the Professional Registration Periods.
- c) The transfer period for all football under the jurisdiction of the SFAI up to and including the Under 16 grade shall be 1st August to 15th October inclusive in the current season. The registration period shall be as defined by the SFAI from time to time.
- d) If a player's registration/contract expires naturally at the end of his current season (i.e. 31st May Winter Season/ 30th November Summer Season) a Transfer Form is not required for the player to register with another club in another League. Players registered with clubs whose fixtures extend beyond the above dates are committed to these clubs until those fixtures are completed.

RULE 35. UNREGISTERED PLAYERS

In accordance with the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players if a player who has not been registered with the Association appears for a club in any Official Match, that player will be considered as having played illegally. Without prejudice to any measure required to rectify the sporting consequences of such an appearance, sanctions may also be imposed on the player and/or the club. The right to impose such sanctions lies with the Association or the organiser of the competition concerned.

RULE 36. AGE ELIGIBILITY

As and from August 1, 2011, in all under-age competitions under the jurisdiction of the Association and its affiliates, age eligibility shall be calculated from January 1 of the season in which the competition finishes.

RULE 37. PLAYER PASSPORT

The registering Association is obliged to provide the club for which the player is registered with a player passport containing the relevant details of the player. The player passport shall indicate the club(s) for which the player has been registered since the season of his 12th birthday. If a birthday falls between seasons, the player shall be listed in the player passport for the club for which he was registered in the season following his birthday.

RULE 38. LOAN OF PROFESSIONALS

- a) A Professional may be loaned to another club on the basis of a written agreement between him and the clubs concerned. Any such loan is subject to the same rules as apply to the transfer of players, including the provisions on training compensation and solidarity mechanism.
- b) Subject to Rule 33 the minimum period of loan shall be the time between two Registration Periods.
- c) The club that has accepted a player on a loan basis is not entitled to transfer him to a third club without the written authorisation of the club that released the player on loan and of the player concerned.

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RULE 39. SPECIAL PROVISIONS RELATING TO CONTRACTS BETWEEN PROFESSIONALS AND CLUBS

- (a) If an agent is involved in the negotiation of a contract, he shall be named in that contract.
- (b) The minimum length of a contract shall be from the date of its entry into force to the end of the season, while the maximum length of a contract shall be five years. Contracts of any other length shall only be permitted if consistent with national laws. Players under the age of 18 may not sign a Professional contract for a term longer than three years. Any clause referring to a longer period shall not be recognised.
- (c) A club intending to conclude a contract with a Professional must inform his current club in writing before entering into negotiations with that Professional. A Professional shall only be free to conclude a contract with another club if his contract with his present club has expired or will expire within six months. Any breach of this provision shall be subject to appropriate sanctions.
- (d) The validity of a contract may not be made subject to a positive medical examination and/or the granting of a work permit.

RULE 40. INSURANCE OF AMATEUR PLAYERS

- (a) An Amateur player injured while playing football in circumstances approved by his club and not otherwise in conflict with the Rules of The Association shall be permitted by The Association to have his medical, dental and physiotherapy fees/loss of earnings reimbursed by his club.
- (b) A club **MAY** arrange insurance to provide for such fees/loss of earnings. It is not compulsory for a club to make such arrangements.

RULE 41. PLAYING SEASONS

- (a) The Winter Season shall be 1st August ending 31st May except for competitions under the auspices of the SFAI which shall end the 30th June.

The Summer Season shall be 1st March ending 30th November

The Current Season shall be defined by the calendar year in which every League commences

- (b) The Association shall have power to suspend or extend the season either sectionally or entirely and to alter the period of playing as may from time to time in their discretion be deemed necessary or desirable and agreements between Clubs, Players and Officials shall be subject to such decisions.

RULE 42. PROFESSIONAL PLAYERS' AGREEMENTS

- (a) All agreements between Clubs and players must be in writing and in the agreed format.
- (b) For the purpose of this Rule all Professional Registration Forms and Agreements shall be deemed to be in the hands of the Chief Executive Officer of The Association and the FAI National League as from the time they are posted by registered post and the postmark shall be conclusive evidence thereon. Contracts, schedules and registration papers may be copied and shared with the FAI Club Licensing Department in order to satisfy licensing requirements. These documents shall be held in the strictest confidence by the FAI Club Licensing Department.
- (c) A Professional Player is eligible to play in competitions other than Cup Competitions, for the Club by which he is registered, if his Professional Form and Agreement have been in the hands of the Chief Executive Officer of The Association and the National League one day prior to such match. A player cannot be registered as a Professional until the transfer has been completed by the National Association with which he has been previously registered, and the one day above mentioned is to count from the date of registration with

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The Association. The word 'play' shall be understood to mean engage in a match or competition in which the number of players in each side is more than five and where a charge for admission is made.

- (d) No player under the age of 16 years shall be registered as a Professional player under the provisions of this Rule.
- (e) The Club engaging a Professional player must ensure that the terms of the agreement and Professional registration forms are read over by the player and that he understands the nature of his contract and further that he is subject to the Rules, Regulations and Bye-Laws of The Association and the National League. If signing for a club other than an FAI National League Club, a separate Registration form must be signed by the player and returned the Chief Executive Officer.
- (f) A copy of the Agreement and Registration Form must be retained by the player and the Club.

RULE 43. LIMITATION ON PLAYERS PARTICIPATION

- (a) In Competition games (Cup-Ties and League Matches) a player shall play for the Club for which he is registered. In "friendly" games a player may play only for another Club with the written consent of the Club for which he is registered.
- (b) A player who has been transferred to another National Association shall not be re-registered with this Association by his former Club for a period of eight weeks from the date of his transfer.
- (c) Any player having signed a registration form may not sign another form unless as provided in these Rules.
- (d) Registered players (Amateur or Professional) are prohibited from playing in Football Competitions for which permission has not been granted. Players so doing shall be subject to penalties decided by the Association.

RULE 44. PROFESSIONAL CONTRACT STABILITY

The terms and conditions of contracts between professional players and clubs should be respected at all times.

RULE 45. CANCELLATION OF REGISTRATION OF PROFESSIONAL

- (a) The Council shall, subject to these Rules, have power to cancel the registration of a Professional, with the exception of professional players contracted to participant clubs in the FAI National League, at any time upon the application of the player or his Club, or may transfer him from one Club to another.
- (b) A Professional who is transferred must be re-registered by the Club to which he is transferred.

RULE 46. REINSTATEMENT & RE-GRADING

- (a) The FAI Domestic Committee shall have the power to reinstate any Professional player to Amateur status.
- (b) Any Professional player may apply to be reinstated as an Amateur player provided at least 30 days has elapsed since his/her last match as a Professional. Applications for reinstatement must be forwarded in writing to the FAI Domestic Football Department for consideration by the FAI Domestic Committee. Only after the reinstatement has been approved can a player sign as an amateur.
- (c) No compensation is payable upon reacquisition of Amateur status. If a player re-registers as a Professional within 30 months of being reinstated as an Amateur, his new club shall pay Training Compensation in accordance with FIFA directives.

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(d) Re-grading to Junior Status

Any player who has played (5) five or more matches in the current season at Senior / Intermediate level may be re-graded by his league to play at junior level.

All Leagues must facilitate application for re-grading, which must be submitted before 31st January.

RULE 47. PROFESSIONAL REFEREES OR PLAYERS INELIGIBLE

- (a) A Professional player or referee, during the period of their registration, or a paid representative of a Club outside the jurisdiction of The Association is not eligible to act as a Director of a Club or as a member of the Management Committee of a Club or sit on Council or act as a representative at any meeting of National Associations, Divisional Associations or Affiliated Leagues.
- (b) Nominated representatives from The Society shall be permitted to serve on Council and Standing Committees as provided for elsewhere in these Rules.
- (c) Amateur and Associate Referees are also exempt from this rule.
- (d) Players, who are registered with an affiliate, shall be entitled, upon successful completion of the appropriate FAI refereeing course(s), to officiate at fixtures, except those involving their own club and those in any competition in which they are playing or have played in that season or any fixture the refereeing of which may carry a conflict of interest.

RULE 48. PLAYERS ENTERING & LEAVING THE AREA OF JURISDICTION OF THE ASSOCIATION

- (a) Any player wishing to leave the area of jurisdiction of The Association to play for a club in the area of jurisdiction of another National Association must obtain a certificate of clearance from The Association. Before The Association can provide such certificate it must have received the agreement to provide same from the club within the area of jurisdiction with whom the player was last registered.
- (b) Should a club withhold such agreement, thereby resulting in the non-issue of a certificate of clearance by The Association, the club must indemnify The Association for all damages, costs and for all expenses accrued by The Association as a result of the non-issue of the certificate of clearance. Should it be established that a club withheld agreement without reasonable cause, The Association shall be empowered to deal as it sees fit with such clubs.
- (c) An International Transfer Certificate shall only be granted by The Association for players under the following conditions:
 - (i) The Player is aged between 16 and 18 and the transfer takes place within the EU or EEA and the new club comply with the obligations provided by FIFA in the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players.
 - (ii) The Player is under 18 but the Players parents move to the Country in which the new club is located for reasons not linked to football.
 - (iii) The Player is under 18 but the Player lives no further than 50km from a national border and the new club is also within 50km of that border. The maximum distance between the players domicile and the clubs headquarters shall be 100km. In such cases the player must continue to live at home and both Associations must give explicit consent.
 - (iv) The Player is aged 18 years of age or over.
- (d) Players leaving the jurisdiction of the Football Association of Ireland may not be permitted to return to the jurisdiction of The Association until a period of 8 weeks has elapsed from date of clearance from The Association.
- (e) Any player wishing to be registered within the jurisdiction of the Football Association of Ireland having last been registered within another jurisdiction must obtain an International Transfer Certificate. If the Association does not receive a response to the ITC Request within thirty days, it shall immediately register

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the player with the New Club on a provisional basis ("Provisional Registration"). A Provisional Registration shall become permanent one year after the ITC Request. The Association may withdraw a Provisional Registration, if, during this one-year period, the Former Association presents valid reasons explaining why it did not respond to the ITC Request.

RULE 49. TRAINING COMPENSATION AND SOLIDARITY MECHANISM

The FAI shall regulate a system for domestic training compensation and a solidarity mechanism which shall be governed by specific binding regulations as amended from time to time

RULE 50. TESTIMONIALS TO BE SANCTIONED

- (a) No player or official of a Club can accept or receive any testimonial whatever, without the sanction of The Association and no Club, or Council, or member of same, or player of any Club is permitted to contribute to any testimonial that does not receive the sanction of The Association.
- (b) No Honorary Officer or member of The Association may accept or receive any testimonial, honorarium, grant or such like, from The Association without the consent of The Council.
- (c) Any application for a Testimonial game must be accompanied by a list of the Testimonial Committee members, a list of all persons and companies whose services are to be used by the Committee and any other information which The Association may request.

RULE 51. CHARITY AND BENEFIT MATCHES

Benefit matches for Amateur players, may, under special circumstances, be sanctioned by The Council.

- (a) The promoter of every charity or benefit match must furnish to The Association particulars of the charity and/or benefit match on official forms available from the Chief Executive Officer. All such promoters shall observe the Rules and Regulations of The Association and no Club shall play or take part in any charity or benefit match until same has been sanctioned by The Association. The Secretary of every charity and/or benefit match committee shall within fourteen days after the close of a match or competition forward to the Chief Executive Officer a duly audited balance sheet and the voucher from the beneficiary, together with a list of the Clubs, with secretaries' names and addresses, that have played in the match or competition. No charity or benefit match can be approved by The Association unless the promoter or promoters is or are a member or members of The Association. Charity or Benefit Matches may be played on any date approved of by The Association.
- (b) A Professional player must have five years continuous service as such with his Club before being eligible for a benefit match. Applications for permission for such matches should be made by each Club on or before the three months before date of match.

RULE 52. ARTIFICIAL LIGHTING & ARTIFICIAL TURF

a) Artificial Lighting

Matches under the jurisdiction of the Football Association of Ireland can be played with the use of artificial lighting provided that they are installed as per FIFA directives for Leagues and Clubs (class 2) as may be revised from time to time.

b) Artificial Turf

Matches under the jurisdiction of the Football Association of Ireland can be played on an artificial turf surface only where the surface has been certified in accordance with the FIFA/IATS (International Artificial Turf Standard) or FAI Standards appropriate to the relevant competition.

RULE 53. GROUNDS, PLAYERS AND ARRANGING OF MATCHES

- (a) Each Club, League and Divisional Association shall, when required, place its players and grounds at the disposal of The Association.
- (b) Terms and conditions of ground rental to be negotiated between the parties.
- (c) No matches shall be arranged in a Divisional Association's area which is hosting a designated game which would finish less than 2 hours before the kick-off of that game or would start less than 2 hours after the end of that game unless express permission is given by The Association.
- (d) For the purpose of this rule a designated game shall be a Senior International, the FAI Cup Final or Replay, or any other game which the Board shall declare as designated.

RULE 54. POWER TO DEAL WITH PLAYERS REFUSAL TO PLAY IN REPRESENTATIVE MATCHES

Any player selected to play in any International or other match arranged by The Association and who without good and sufficient cause refuses to comply with the arrangements for the playing of the match, or fails to play in such match, may be adjudged to be guilty of misconduct, and such player, or any Club which may be deemed to have encouraged such player to such misconduct, may be dealt with as the Disciplinary Bodies shall deem appropriate.

RULE 55. CLUBS AND PLAYERS CANNOT PLAY UNDER RULES OTHER THAN THOSE OF THE ASSOCIATION

- (a) All Clubs and Players in membership of The Association shall play under the Rules of The Association and Clubs or players playing under Rules other than those of The Association or playing with Clubs and players not members of The Association, without permission, shall be liable to be expelled, suspended, fined or otherwise dealt with as The Association shall deem fit.
- (b) In cases of emergency, the Chief Executive Officer may - after consultation, where feasible, with the Board - grant permission to a player or players wishing to play outside the jurisdiction of The Association, but all such cases must be reported at the next ensuing meeting of the Board.

RULE 56. ASSOCIATIONS AND LEAGUES TO BE APPROVED BY COUNCIL

- (a) Associations, Leagues or other Combinations of Clubs, Players or Officials, shall not be formed without the consent of The Association.
- (b) All applications for formation shall be made through the Divisional Associations or on application to the relevant National Bodies. Any Associations or Leagues formed shall be subordinate to the Association.

RULE 57. MEMBER'S AGM

No affiliate of The Association may hold its AGM later than the 3rd Monday in June of each year unless by special permission of The Association.

RULE 58. FREE ADMISSION TO MATCHES

- (a) Members of Council and Junior Council of this Association, Members of Council and Junior Council of Leinster, Munster, Connaught & Ulster Football Association shall on production of current membership card be admitted without payment to all matches under the jurisdiction of this Association.
- (b) Leagues, Clubs and others organising matches in the Republic of Ireland must provide seating accommodation if available, for all members as enumerated above.

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RULE 59. KEEPING OF BOOKS

Councils, Leagues, Divisional Associations, National Affiliates, The Society and/or Clubs and similar organisations shall keep minutes of their meetings and the election of members and shall enter in detail in their cash books all financial transactions.

RULE 60. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS

The Association at the AGM shall appoint a firm who are members of a recognised body of Accountants and they shall hold office as Auditors until the next AGM.

RULE 61. AUDITOR'S FEES

The remuneration of the Auditor shall be agreed by the Finance Committee and the Board.

RULE 62. PRODUCTION OF BOOKS

- (a) The Association shall have power to call upon Councils, Clubs, Divisional Associations, Leagues, National Affiliates, The Society and other Organisations, Officers and members of same and players of a Club to produce any books, letters or documents and other evidence which The Council may desire.
- (b) Affiliated Leagues and Divisional Associations and the Society must notify the Football Association of Ireland of the date on which their financial year ends and must submit to the FAI a copy of their appropriately certified or audited accounts within three months of the end of their financial year together with a relevant tax clearance certificate if applicable.

RULE 63. MEMBERS TO VARIOUS BODIES

The Council shall elect each year from their number:

- (a) 3 members to the Schoolboys Football Association of Ireland.
- (b) 1 member to the Women's Football Association of Ireland.
- (c) It may elect members to other affiliates, as it may deem desirable from time to time.

RULE 64. INDEMNITIES

The Board shall, be empowered to provide indemnities, where it sees fit, to any Officer, Member of Council, Commission or Committee, Secretary or other Official or Servant of The Association in pursuit of the discharge of the objectives and functions of the Association by them, such indemnity to be recorded in a Register of Indemnities of the Association.

RULE 65. SMALL SIDED MATCHES

- (a) Small-Sided Matches and Competitions, Indoor or Outdoor, can only be arranged provided permission is obtained from The Association, through Divisional Associations or Affiliates.
- (b) The Association may from time to time give directions in relation to the participation of teams at under age level in small-sided games. The Association may also direct in relation to the Rules under which small-sided games are to be played.

RULE 66. FRIENDLY MATCHES

- (a) Friendly matches involving clubs affiliated to the Association held inside or outside the jurisdiction of The Association must be sanctioned in advance by the FAI. The FAI may delegate this function as it deems appropriate.

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- (b) Friendly matches involving clubs not affiliated to the Association, intended to be held inside the jurisdiction of the Association, must be sanctioned in advance by the FAI. The FAI may delegate this function as it deems appropriate, with the exception of professional clubs.
- (c) Domestic Friendly matches shall be sanctioned by the League of the hosting team.

RULE 67. MATCH AUTHORISATION

- (a) The Association and its leagues shall comply with the International Match Calendar as compiled by the FIFA Executive Committee after consultation with the Confederations. The FIFA Executive Committee shall be responsible for issuing provisions for organising international matches and competitions between Association teams and between Leagues and/or club teams. No such match or competition shall take place without the prior permission of FIFA. The FIFA Executive Committee may draw up further technical provisions.
- (b) The Association, League or club that is affiliated to the Association cannot belong to another Association or participate in competitions on the territory of another Association without the authorisation of its current and prospective Association and of FIFA or UEFA, except in exceptional circumstances.
- (c) Domestic Competitive Matches (with the exception of any matches played in the City of Derry involving teams from the FAI licensed entity from that City) shall not take place outside the jurisdiction of the Association without the approval of the FAI.

RULE 68. LEAGUE TRANSFERS

- (a) A team or club desiring to transfer to a different league at the end of a season must obtain a transfer on an official form (supplied by the Divisional Association) and signed by the Club, the League from which they are departing and the League they propose to enter. Such a request must be made on or before 1st May for the Winter Season and on or before 1st December for the Summer Season.
- (b) Clubs and teams shall not be unreasonably refused such a release and they shall have the statutory rights of Appeal to their Divisional Association and/or the FAI, in accordance with the Rules of Appeal of these bodies.

RULE 69. MANDATORY OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE INSURANCE

- (a) The Association accepts no responsibility for any member of the public (which shall be deemed to include members of The Association) for any personal injury or damage to property sustained at any football ground whatsoever, unless arising directly from an actual match organised by this Association.
- (b) Every affiliated club must have in force Public Liability Insurance including, where appropriate, Property Owners Insurance providing insurance cover in respect of all the clubs activities. In addition, where a club engages any person under a contract of service or apprenticeship, the club must have in force an appropriate Employers Liability Policy.
- (c) No team/club/affiliate shall be admitted to membership of The Association or to any affiliate of The Association that fails to comply with (b) above. Where a team/club/affiliate are already in membership but subsequently allow the insurance referred to in (b) above to lapse or discontinue they are liable to be expelled from membership at the discretion of the Board.

RULE 70. ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY FOR FOOTBALL

- (a) As the Governing Body of Association Football in Ireland, The Association 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. Our commitment is to confront and eliminate discrimination whether by reason of gender, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or disability.

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- (b) The Association is an equal opportunities employer. They are committed to equality of opportunity within the organisation and to encouraging similar commitment for every organisation or individual acting within the game.
- (c) Equality of opportunity at the FAI means that in all our activities we shall not discriminate or in any way treat anyone less favourably, on grounds of gender, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or disability. This includes:
 - (1) The advertisement of jobs
 - (2) The selection of candidates for employment or promotion
 - (3) Job location or working environment
 - (4) Pay and employment terms and conditions
 - (5) Internal training and development activities
 - (6) external coaching and education activities and awards
 - (7) Football development activities
 - (8) Selection for representative teams
 - (9) Appointment to honorary positions
- (d) The FAI shall not tolerate sexual or racially-based harassment or other discriminatory behaviour, whether physical or verbal, and shall work to ensure that such behaviour is met with appropriate disciplinary action in whatever context it occurs.
- (e) The FAI is committed to the development of a programme of ongoing training and awareness –raising events and activities to promote the eradication of discrimination within its own organisation and, in the wider context within football as a whole.

RULE 71. THE PROTECTION AND WELFARE OF CHILDREN

- (a) In line with legislation and Government Guidelines (The Child Care Act 1991 and the Protection for Persons Reporting Abuse Act 1998) in relation to child protection and welfare, it is mandatory that all participants, clubs, leagues, divisional associations and other football bodies shall be bound by the FAI recommended codes of conduct and best practice guidelines
- (b) 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.
- (c) Breaches shall become a disciplinary offence. Any member issued with a ban from football activity shall have their name notified to all League Secretaries for onward dissemination to all Club Secretaries. The notification shall state the name of the individual and the fact a ban has been issued.
- (d) Any participant who is the subject of a Statutory Inquiry in relation to any child welfare concern must stand down from all football activities pending the outcome of that inquiry and any subsequent internal disciplinary proceedings.
- (e) Any member convicted of an offence by the Irish Courts or Courts of any other jurisdiction involving the welfare of children shall be automatically banned from membership of the Association. For the avoidance of doubt no disciplinary or other hearing shall be necessary in order to implement this automatic ban.

RULE 72. SCOUTING

The regulation of Scouts and Scouting under the jurisdiction of the Football Association of Ireland shall be governed by FAI scouting regulations, which may be amended from time to time, as approved by The Board.

RULE 73. FAI NATIONAL LEAGUE

- (a) The FAI National League is the annual League competitions owned, run and promoted by the FAI.
- (b) The policy and operations of the FAI National League shall be the exclusive responsibility of the FAI National League Executive Committee. All Disciplinary matters of the FAI National League shall be under the remit of the FAI Disciplinary Bodies.
- (c) The FAI shall convene an Annual Convention for the FAI National League Clubs at which all current participant FAI National League Clubs shall be entitled to attend and participate. At this Annual Convention, the FAI National League clubs shall elect a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the FAI National League Executive Committee.
- (d) The FAI National League Executive Committee shall comprise the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson as elected at the participating Clubs' Annual Convention, the Chief Executive Officer, one nominee of the FAI Council who shall not be an active member of any of the participating clubs and two external specialists to be co-opted by the Committee and approved by the FAI Board.
- (e) The Terms of Reference of the FAI National League Executive Committee shall be established by the FAI Board in consultation with the Chairperson of the Committee and the Chief Executive Officer.
- (f) At its opening meeting each year, the Committee shall consider its terms of reference as handed down by the FAI Board. In the event that a change is required, such changes must be approved by the FAI Board.
- (g) The Chairperson of the FAI National League Executive Committee shall report on the work of the Committee to the FAI Board.
- (h) In the event of any discrepancy between the FAI National League Rules or the Participation Agreement and the FAI Rules, the FAI Rules shall prevail.
- (i) Clubs accepted as participants in the FAI National League are deemed to be Members of the FAI.

RULE 74. MULTI- OWNERSHIP OF CLUBS

The FAI Board is competent to lay down specific rules prohibiting any commercial enterprise (including holding companies and subsidiary companies), private persons, or any other legal entity from exercising control or influence over more than one club participating in the same competition organised by the FAI.

RULE 75. REFEREES REGULATIONS

The regulation of Referees under the jurisdiction of the Football Association of Ireland shall be governed by FAI Referee Regulations, which may be amended from time to time, as approved by The Board.

DISCIPLINARY

PART I DISCIPLINARY RULES

SECTION 1 GENERAL

RULE 76. SCOPE OF DISCIPLINARY RULES

1. The rules set out in the Disciplinary section of this rulebook apply:
 - a) to every match and competition under the jurisdiction of the FAI;
 - b) if the rules, codes or rules of the FAI are violated;
 - c) to Appeals from all affiliated bodies.
 - d) to Arbitrations
2. The following are subject to these rules:
 - a) members of the FAI;
 - b) participants;
 - c) affiliates;
 - d) officials;
 - e) players;
 - f) managers;
 - g) match officials;
 - h) licensed match and players' agents;
 - i) anyone with an authorisation from the FAI, in particular with regard to a match, competition or other football activity or event under the jurisdiction of the FAI;
 - j) spectators.
3. These rules do not apply to club licensing which has an independent and separate disciplinary and appeals system as provided for under club licensing rules. These rules do not apply to Doping Offences which are sanctioned by the Irish Sports Council.
4. If there are any omissions in these rules, the disciplinary bodies shall decide in accordance with the FAI's custom or, in the absence of custom, in accordance with the rules as a whole.
5. In order to protect the integrity of competitions, amendments made to disciplinary sanctions during the course of any competition shall not apply for the duration of the said competition.
6. Every Affiliate, League and Club is responsible for the actions of its players, officials and spectators. In particular, clubs are required to take all precautions necessary to prevent spectators threatening or assaulting officials and/or players while in the vicinity of their playing ground.
7. Time limits referred to in these rules shall begin from the day after receipt of notification.

SECTION 2 OFFENCES

RULE 77. MATCH AND COMPETITION REPORTS/CARDS

1. Disciplinary offences may be reported in a Referee's Report. Referees may be requested to clarify their report.

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2. Disciplinary offences may be reported in a Match Delegate's report. Match Delegates may be requested to clarify their report.
3. It shall be an offence for any person to intentionally complete a match card/team sheet/ report/ inaccurately.

RULE 78. MISCONDUCT BY PLAYERS

1. Including the automatic suspension incurred, the overall suspension imposed on any player receiving a direct red card shall be for:
 - a) at least one match for denying the opposing team a clear goal-scoring opportunity (particularly by deliberately handling the ball);
 - b) at least two matches for serious foul play (particularly in the case of the use of excessive or brute force);
 - c) at least two matches for unsporting conduct towards an opponent or a person other than a match official;
 - d) at least two matches for unsporting conduct towards a match official;
 - e) at least three matches for assaulting (deliberately pushing, pulling, , striking, butting, elbowing, punching, kicking etc. Touching is not an assault) an opponent or a person other than a match official;
 - f) at least six matches for assaulting by spitting at an opponent or a person other than a match official.
 - g) at least 12 months for assaulting (deliberately pushing, pulling, spitting, striking, butting, elbowing, punching, kicking etc. Touching is not an assault) a match official.
2. A fine may also be imposed in all cases.
3. The right is reserved to punish an infringement which has escaped the match official's attention.
4. A player whom the referee has reported as having committed an assault on a match official before, during or immediately after a match shall automatically stand suspended until the disciplinary process has been completed.
5. All suspensions imposed by affiliates relating to assaults on match officials must be notified by them immediately to the Disciplinary Control Unit of the FAI and to all other relevant bodies.

RULE 79. MISCONDUCT BY OFFICIALS

1. The overall suspension imposed on any Official shall be for:
 - a) at least two matches for unsporting conduct towards a person other than a match official;
 - b) at least two matches for unsporting conduct towards a match official;
 - c) at least three matches for assaulting (deliberately pushing, pulling, striking, butting, elbowing, punching, kicking etc. Touching is not an assault) an opponent or a person other than a match official;
 - d) at least three months for assaulting by spitting at an opponent or a person other than a match official.
 - e) at least 12 months for assaulting (deliberately pushing, pulling, spitting, striking, butting, elbowing, punching, kicking etc. Touching is not an assault) a match official;
2. An official whom the referee has reported as having committed an assault on a match official before, during or immediately after a match shall automatically stand suspended until the disciplinary process has been completed.
3. A fine may also be imposed in all cases.
4. The right is reserved to punish an infringement which has escaped the match official's attention.
5. All suspensions imposed by affiliates relating to assaults on match officials must be notified by them immediately to the Disciplinary Control Unit of the FAI and to all other relevant bodies.

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RULE 80. MISCONDUCT BY MATCH OFFICIALS

1. Match Officials are subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the FAI Rules and FAI Referee Regulations. Match Officials shall be sanctioned as a minimum in accordance with Rule 79 but the disciplinary bodies may impose any other sanction they deem appropriate.
2. Sanctions issued against Match Officials must be notified immediately to the Disciplinary Control Unit of the FAI, the Referees Committee and to all other relevant bodies.

RULE 81. BRAWL / FIGHTING

1. Involvement in a brawl / fight is sanctioned with a suspension for at least six matches.
2. Anyone who has tried merely to prevent a brawl / fight, shield others or separate those involved in a brawl is not subject to punishment.

RULE 82. UNIDENTIFIED AGGRESSORS

If it is not possible to identify the perpetrator(s) of an offence, the body may sanction the club to which the aggressors belong.

RULE 83. TEAM MISCONDUCT

1. The following constitute misconduct by a team and are sanctioned by a fine:
 - a) when at least five players are cautioned or sent from the field of play during one match;
 - b) when at least three players are sent off during one match;
 - c) when several players together make threats or show force against a match official.
2. When determining the amount of the fine, the type of competition shall be taken into account.

RULE 84. INCITING HATRED AND VIOLENCE

A player or official who publicly incites others to hatred or violence may be sanctioned with a suspension and/or a fine.

RULE 85. PROVOKING THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Any player or official who provokes the general public shall be suspended for two matches and sanctioned with a fine.

RULE 86. INELIGIBILITY

1. If a player takes part in an official match despite being ineligible, his team shall be sanctioned by forfeiting the match and paying a fine. A sanction may also be imposed on a player and/or the person in charge of the team if they knew or ought to have known of the ineligibility.
2. If a player takes part in a friendly match despite being ineligible, his team shall be sanctioned by forfeiting the match and paying a fine.
3. Unregistered Players and Suspended Players are deemed to be ineligible.

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RULE 87. FAILURE TO PLAY AND ABANDONMENT

1. If a team refuses to play a match or refuses to continue playing one which it has begun, it shall be sanctioned with a fine and shall forfeit the match.
2. In serious cases, the team shall also be disqualified from the competition in progress and may be disqualified from future competitions.
3. Any player selected to play in any International or any other match arranged by the FAI or its Affiliates and who without good and sufficient cause refuses to comply with the arrangements for the playing of the match, or fails to play in such match, may be adjudged to be guilty of misconduct, and such player, or any Club which may be deemed to have encouraged such player to such misconduct, may be dealt with as the Disciplinary Bodies shall deem appropriate.

RULE 88. OFFENSIVE BEHAVIOUR

Any Participant who insults someone in any way, especially by using offensive gestures or language, may be sanctioned with a suspension and/or fine and/or a ban on performing any football related activity.

RULE 89. RACISM

1. Any Participant, who publicly disparages, discriminates against or denigrates someone in a derogatory manner on account of race, colour, language, religion or ethnic origin, or perpetrates any other racist and/or contemptuous act, shall be subject to disciplinary sanction. The relevant disciplinary body shall consider and have the power to impose a suspension, fine and/or other sanction as deemed appropriate. In the case of individuals, the minimum suspension shall be for a period of five matches.
2. If spectators engage in racist behaviour, including chanting or displaying racist slogans at a match, the relevant disciplinary body shall sanction the affiliate or club which these spectators support. If the spectators can not be identified as supporters of one or other club/affiliate the host club/affiliate may be sanctioned.
3. Spectators engaging in racist behaviour may be subject to a disciplinary sanction.

RULE 90. INTIMIDATION / THREATS

Anyone who intimidates a match official with serious threats shall be sanctioned with a fine and a suspension.

RULE 91. COERCION

Anyone who uses violence or threats to pressurise a match official into taking certain action or to hinder him in any other way from acting freely shall be sanctioned with a fine and a suspension.

RULE 92. DISCRIMINATION

The FAI shall not tolerate sexual or racially-based harassment or other discriminatory behaviour, whether physical or verbal, and such behaviour shall result in disciplinary action.

RULE 93. BRINGING THE GAME INTO DISREPUTE

Any member who has brought the game of football or the FAI into disrepute by any means, written, verbal, by action or otherwise shall be sanctioned with a suspension and/or fine and/or a ban on performing any football related activity or other sanction deemed appropriate.

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RULE 94. DISPARAGING COMMENTS

Public comment of the following nature may result in disciplinary sanction:

1. Comments which are offensive or threatening in any way;
2. Comments causing damage to the game or bringing the game into disrepute;
3. Unsubstantiated allegations which question any person or bodies integrity or are disparaging in any way.

RULE 95. PROTECTION AND WELFARE OF CHILDREN

1. All participants, clubs, leagues, divisional associations and other football bodies shall be bound by the FAI rules, codes of conduct and guidelines governing the protection and welfare of children, and breaches of such rules, codes and guidelines shall be subject to disciplinary sanction.
2. The disciplinary body may impose any sanction it deems appropriate.
3. 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.
4. Any participant who is the subject of a statutory inquiry in relation to any child welfare concern must stand down from all football activities pending the outcome of that inquiry and any subsequent internal disciplinary proceedings.

RULE 96. FORGERY / FALSIFICATION

1. Anyone who, in football-related activities, forges a document or falsifies an authentic document or uses a forged or falsified document to deceive in contractual or legal relations shall be sanctioned with a suspension of at least six matches.
2. If the perpetrator is an official, the body shall impose a ban on taking part in any football-related activity for a period of at least twelve months.
3. A fine may also be imposed.

RULE 97. CORRUPTION

1. Anyone who offers, promises or grants an unjustified advantage to a body or employee of the FAI, a match official, a player or an official on behalf of himself or a third party in an attempt to incite it or him to violate the rules of the FAI, the Confederations or FIFA shall be sanctioned:
 - a) with a fine, and/or;
 - b) with a ban on taking part in any football-related activity and/or;
 - c) with a ban on entering any stadium.
2. Passive corruption (soliciting, being promised or accepting an unjustified advantage) shall be sanctioned in the same manner.
3. In serious cases and in the case of repetition, sanction 1b) may be imposed for life.
4. In any case, the disciplinary bodies may order the confiscation of any assets involved in committing the infringement which are within the remit of the FAI or of any assets which may be due to the offender from the FAI for any other football activities. These assets shall be used for football development programmes.

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RULE 98. DOPING

1. The Anti-Doping Rules of the Football Association of Ireland are the Irish Anti-Doping Rules as amended from time to time. Doping and doping offences are sanctioned under the Irish Sport Anti-Doping Programme Rules and Procedures as provided by the Irish Sports Council.
2. Decisions of the Irish Sport Anti-Doping Disciplinary Bodies are recognised by the FAI and such decisions shall be rendered effective by the FAI.
3. In the event of any contradictions between national regulations and the FIFA Anti-Doping Regulations, the provisions set out in the FIFA Anti-Doping Regulations shall prevail.

RULE 99. MANIPULATING MATCH RESULTS

Anyone who conspires to influence the result of a match in a manner incompatible with sporting ethics shall be sanctioned with a suspension and a fine. The disciplinary body may also impose a ban on taking part in any football-related activity; in serious cases this sanction shall apply for life.

RULE 100. BETTING / GAMBLING

Anyone who directly or indirectly bets, instructs someone to bet on their behalf, or provides others with information for the purpose of betting or gambling on a result, conduct or progress of a match or competition in which that person or his club is participating or has control over, shall be subject to disciplinary sanctions.

RULE 101. COMPLAINTS

Any complaint made in writing may be investigated by the Disciplinary Regulations Officer (DRO) and may result in disciplinary sanction if not otherwise provided for.

RULE 102. SPECTATOR CONDUCT

1. The home club / team is liable for any improper conduct among all spectators, regardless of the question of culpable conduct or culpable oversight and depending on the situation, may be fined. Further sanctions may be imposed in the case of serious disturbances.
2. The visiting club / team is liable for improper conduct among its own group of spectators, regardless of the question of culpable conduct or culpable oversight and depending on the situation, may be fined. Further sanctions may be imposed in the case of serious disturbances. Supporters occupying the away sector of a stadium are regarded as the visiting supporters, unless proven to the contrary.
3. Improper conduct includes but is not limited to violence towards persons or objects, letting off incendiary devices, throwing missiles, use of smokebombs, flares or fireworks, displaying insulting slogans in any form, uttering insulting sounds, racist behaviour or invading or encroaching onto the pitch.
4. The liability described in par. 1 and 2 also includes matches played on neutral grounds, especially during finals of competitions.

RULE 103. MATCH AND PLAYER SAFETY OBLIGATIONS

When organising matches members shall also:

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1. Assess the degree of risk posed by matches and notify the bodies of the FAI of those matches that are especially high-risk;
2. Comply with and implement existing safety rules and take every safety precaution demanded by circumstances before, during and after the match and if incidents occur;
3. Ensure the safety of players and officials of the visiting team;
4. Keep authorities informed and collaborate with them actively and effectively to that law and order are maintained in the stadiums / grounds and immediate surroundings and that matches are organised properly;
5. Vet the age of players at competitions that are subject to age limits;

Any member that fails to fulfil its obligations may be fined or in the case of a serious infringement the body may impose other sanctions, such as a stadium ban or order a team to play on neutral ground.

The right is reserved to impose certain sanctions for safety reasons, even if no infringement has been committed.

RULE 104. OTHER OBLIGATIONS

Members should ensure no one is involved in their management who is under sanction or has been found guilty of an offence of corruption, forgery, serious misconduct or other serious behaviour or other offences which would bring the game into disrepute.

SECTION 3 SANCTIONS

RULE 105. CULPABILITY

1. Unless otherwise specified, infringements are punishable regardless of whether they have been committed intentionally or negligently.
2. Exceptionally, a match may have to be played without spectators or on neutral ground, or a certain stadium may be banned purely for safety reasons, without any infringement having been committed.

RULE 106. INVOLVEMENT

1. Anyone who intentionally takes part in committing an infringement, either as instigator or accomplice, is subject to disciplinary proceedings.
2. The disciplinary body shall take account of the degree of guilt of the party involved and may reduce a sanction accordingly. It shall not go below the minimum sanction applicable.

RULE 107. SANCTIONS APPLICABLE

1. The following sanctions are applicable only to natural persons:
 - a) caution;
 - b) expulsion;
 - c) match suspension;
 - d) ban from dressing rooms and/or substitutes' bench;
 - e) ban from entering a stadium;
 - f) ban on taking part in any football-related activity.

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2. The following sanctions are applicable only to legal persons:

- a) transfer ban;
- b) playing a match without spectators;
- c) playing a match on neutral territory;
- d) ban on playing in a particular stadium;
- e) annulment of the result of a match;
- f) exclusion;
- g) forfeit;
- h) deduction of points;
- i) demotion to a lower division;
- j) suspension from membership of the FAI.

3. In addition to the sanctions listed above the following sanctions are applicable to both natural and legal persons;

- a) a warning;
- b) a reprimand;
- c) a fine;
- d) the return of awards.

RULE 108. WARNING

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

RULE 109. REPRIMAND

A reprimand is an official written pronouncement of disapproval sent to the perpetrator of an infringement.

RULE 110. FINES

- 1. The body that imposes the fine decides the terms and time limits for payment and the level of the fine if not otherwise provided for in these rules or in specific competition rules.
- 2. Clubs are liable for fines imposed on players or officials from their teams. The fact that the person subject to the fine has left the club will not negate the responsibility of the club to pay the fine.

RULE 111. RETURN OF AWARDS

The person or body required to return an award shall return all of the benefits received, in particular sums of money and symbolic objects (medal, trophy etc.).

RULE 112. CAUTION (YELLOW CARD)

- 1. A caution (yellow card) is a warning from the referee to a player during a match to sanction offences as identified by Law 12 of the Laws of the Game. Cautions shall result in fines. One point shall be recorded against the player. Fines may be applied on an accumulative basis. A caution in any game must be reported to the League concerned and a record must be kept by that league. No caution may be appealed.
- 2. Two cautions received during the same match incur an expulsion and, consequently, an automatic suspension. The two cautions that incurred the red card are rescinded.

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3. The following also incur a one (1) match suspension:
 - a) 4 cautions received in the season (4 Points);
 - b) 8 cautions received in the season (8 Points);
4. The following incur a two (2) match suspension:
 - a) 12 cautions received in the season (12 Points);
5. The following incur a three (3) match suspension:
 - a) 16 cautions received in the season (16 Points);
 - b) Every four cautions following the 16th caution.
6. If an abandoned match is to be replayed, any caution issued during that match shall be annulled. If the match is not to be replayed, the cautions received by the team responsible for causing the match to be abandoned are upheld; if both teams are responsible, all of the cautions are upheld.
7. If a player is guilty of an offence as defined by Law 12 of the Laws of the Game and is sent off (direct red card), any other caution he has previously received in the same match is upheld and incurs the relevant suspension, fine and point as referred to above.
8. At the end of the season, players with up to three (3) cautions shall not have these cautions carried forward to the next season. A player's accumulated points total will be automatically brought back to zero.

RULE 113. EXPULSION

1. An expulsion is the order given by the referee to someone to leave the field of play and its surroundings, including the substitutes' bench, during a match. The person who has been sent off may be allowed into the stands unless he is serving a stadium ban.
2. Expulsion takes the form of a red card for players including substitutes. The red card is regarded as direct if it sanctions offences as defined by Law 12 of the Laws of the Game; it is regarded as indirect if it is the result of an accumulation of two yellow cards.
3. In all FAI National League competitions, FAI National Cup Competitions and Divisional Associations Competitions, an expulsion automatically incurs a one match suspension from the subsequent match of the same competition.

If it is not possible to impose the automatic one match suspension on a player in the current season, the automatic one match suspension shall be served in the next domestic competitive match.
4. In all other matches played under the auspices of the FAI an expulsion automatically incurs a one match suspension from the next domestic competitive match. A player sent from the field of play shall serve an automatic suspension at the same level of football i.e. a player sent from the field of play in a 1st team fixture may not serve an automatic suspension in a reserve team fixture or U20 fixture and vice-versa.
5. In all friendly matches sanctions imposed shall be applied as directed by the body making the decision.
6. An Official dismissed from the Technical area by the Referee must take no further part in the match by managing, directing, assisting or communicating with his team in any way.
7. The automatic suspension applies notwithstanding the pending decision of the Disciplinary Committee.
8. Should the same player be dismissed again in the same season the following overall minimum suspension shall apply:-

2nd sending off	suspended for 1 match
3rd sending off	suspended for 2 matches
4th sending off	suspended for 4 matches

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5 or more dismissals suspended for 6 matches

9. A player who has been sent off in a match will be notified, through his club, of the offence reported by the Referee, and at the same time advised that he will be subject to a decision of the appropriate disciplinary body.
10. In the case of a claim of alleged mistaken identity concerning a player sent off in a match, the Player concerned and his Club must, within 24 hours of receiving the referee's report, submit in writing to the Disciplinary Control Unit, particulars upon which the claim is founded. If the Disciplinary Committee is satisfied that the claim warrants further investigation, the Disciplinary Committee shall be convened to meet before any automatic penalty is due to take effect. If the Disciplinary Committee is satisfied that mistaken identity has been proved in a case, the record of the offence will be transferred to the appropriate offender, who shall be subject to disciplinary action, in accordance with the provisions of the current procedures. Video or independent authoritative evidence must be produced by person(s) seeking the appeal.
11. An expulsion automatically incurs an automatic suspension even if imposed in a match that is later abandoned and/or annulled. The Disciplinary Committee may extend the duration of the suspension.

RULE 114. MATCH SUSPENSION

1. A suspension from a match is a ban on taking part in a future match or competition and on attending it in the area immediately surrounding the field of play.
2. The suspension is imposed in terms of matches, days or months.
3. Suspensions of 12 months duration or longer must be notified immediately to the Disciplinary Control Unit of the FAI and to all other relevant bodies by any affiliate handing down such a suspension. Such suspension shall be accompanied by a copy of the Referees Report. No such suspension can be amended or cancelled without the express approval of the FAI and not before 12 months of the suspension has elapsed.
4. If the suspension is to be served in terms of matches, only those matches actually played count towards execution of the suspension. If a match is abandoned or forfeited, suspension is only considered to have been served if the team to which the suspended player belongs is not responsible for the facts that led to the abandonment or forfeiture of the match.
5. If a suspension is combined with a fine, the suspension may be prolonged until the fine has been paid in full.
6. A player must be eligible to have played in a match in order to have the suspension served.
7. Any suspension or part thereof which remains outstanding at the end of the season must be served at the commencement of the following season.
8. Suspensions can only be served in matches and on the terms as determined by the decision of the Disciplinary Bodies taking into account the competition rules applicable. A suspension may be deemed not served by a Disciplinary Body if a match has been rearranged for the primary purpose of enabling a player to complete a suspension.
9. All of the foregoing suspensions are the minimum penalties. The Disciplinary Bodies or Leagues may impose suspensions above this minimum depending on the nature of the offences committed.
10. All suspensions with the exception of the Automatic one match suspension may be appealed through the various Divisional Associations and in accordance with the Rules of the FAI, FIFA and UEFA.
11. Players or other technical staff, including managers under suspension are not permitted to be included in the list of officials on the Technical Bench. Breaches of this regulation will be reported to the Disciplinary Committee for further possible sanction.

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12. Officials suspended by the Disciplinary Committee shall have the terms of the suspension clearly outlined to them in the notice of suspension.

RULE 115. BAN FROM DRESSING ROOMS AND/OR SUBSTITUTES BENCH

A ban from dressing rooms and/or substitutes' benches deprives someone of the right to enter team's dressing rooms and/or the area immediately surrounding the field of play, and in particular to sit on the substitutes' bench.

RULE 116. STADIUM BAN

A stadium ban prohibits someone from entering the confines of one or several stadiums.

RULE 117. BAN ON TAKING PART IN FOOTBALL-RELATED ACTIVITY

Any Participant may be banned from taking part in all or any part of football-related activity. The Disciplinary Body issuing such a ban shall ensure the extent and remit of the ban is clearly provided for in the decision.

RULE 118. TRANSFER BAN

A transfer ban prevents a club from registering any player during the period in question.

RULE 119. PLAYING A MATCH WITHOUT SPECTATORS

The obligation to play a match behind closed doors requires a member or club to have a certain match played without spectators.

RULE 120. PLAYING A MATCH ON NEUTRAL GROUND

The obligation to play a match on neutral ground requires a member or club to have a certain match played in another venue.

RULE 121. BAN ON PLAYING IN A PARTICULAR STADIUM

A ban on playing in a certain stadium deprives a member or club of the right to have their teams play in a certain stadium.

RULE 122. ANNULMENT OF THE RESULT OF A MATCH

The result of a match is annulled if the result reached on the field of play is disregarded.

RULE 123. EXCLUSION FROM A COMPETITION

Exclusion is the deprivation of the right of a member or club to take part in the current and/or a future competition.

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RULE 124. DEMOTION TO A LOWER DIVISION

A club may be demoted to a lower division.

RULE 125. DEDUCTION OF POINTS

A club may have points deducted from those already attained in the current or a future competition.

RULE 126. FORFEIT

1. Teams sanctioned with a forfeit are considered to have lost the match by 0-3.
2. If the goal difference at the end of the match in question is greater than 0-3, the result on the pitch is upheld.

SECTION 4 RULES RELATING TO SANCTIONS

RULE 127. COMBINED SANCTIONS

Unless otherwise specified, the sanctions provided for may be combined.

RULE 128. PARTIAL SUSPENSION OF IMPLEMENTATION OF SANCTION

1. The body that imposes a match suspension, a ban on access to dressing rooms and/or the substitutes' bench, a ban on taking part in any football-related activity, the obligation to play a match without spectators, the obligation to play a match on neutral ground or a ban on playing in a certain stadium, may examine whether it is possible to suspend the implementation of the sanction partially.
2. Partial suspension is permissible only if the duration of the sanction does not exceed six matches or six months and if the relevant circumstances allow it, in particular the previous record of the person sanctioned.
3. The body decides which part of the sanction may be suspended. In any case, half of the sanction is definite.
4. By suspending implementation of the sanction, the body subjects the person sanctioned to a probationary period of from six months to two years.
5. If the person benefiting from a suspended sanction commits another infringement during the probationary period, the suspension is automatically revoked and the sanction applied; it is added to the sanction imposed for the new infringement.

RULE 129. CALCULATION OF TIME SANCTIONS

The duration of a time sanction can be interrupted by rest periods during or between seasons.

RULE 130. LIMITATION PERIOD FOR PROSECUTION

1. Offences committed during a match may no longer be prosecuted after a lapse of two years. As a general rule, other offences may not be prosecuted after a lapse of ten years.
2. Prosecution for offences against children or for corruption are not subject to a limitation period.

RULE 131. COMMENCEMENT OF THE LIMITATION PERIOD

The limitation period runs as follows:

1. From the day on which the perpetrator committed the offence;
2. If the offence is recurrent, from the day on which the most recent offence was committed;
3. If the offence lasted a certain period, from the day on which it ended.

RULE 132. INTERRUPTION

The limitation period no longer applies if the Disciplinary Committee commences proceedings before it has expired.

RULE 133. LIMITATION PERIOD FOR THE ENFORCEMENT OF SANCTIONS

1. The limitation period for the enforcement of sanctions is five years.
2. The limitation period for the enforcement of sanctions begins on the day on which the decision comes into force.

SECTION 5 DETERMINING THE SANCTION

RULE 134. GENERAL RULES

1. The body pronouncing the sanction decides the scope and duration of it provided it does not fall below the minimum sanction applicable.
2. Sanctions may be limited to a geographical area or to one or more specific categories of match or competition.
3. Unless otherwise specified, the duration of a sanction is always defined.
4. The body shall take account of all relevant factors in the case and the degree of the offender's guilt when imposing the sanction.

RULE 135. REPEATED INFRINGEMENTS

Unless otherwise specified, the body may increase the sanction to be imposed as deemed appropriate if an infringement has been repeated.

RULE 136. CONCURRENT INFRINGEMENTS

1. If several fines are imposed against someone as a result of one or more offences, the relevant body bases the fine on the most serious offence committed first and, depending on the circumstances, may increase the sanction.
2. The same applies if a person incurs several time sanctions of a similar type (two or more match suspensions, two or more stadium bans etc.) as the result of one or several infringements.
3. The body that determines the fine is not obliged to adhere to the general upper limit of fines in cases of concurrent infringements.

PART 2. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

A ORGANISATION

SECTION 6 DISCIPLINARY AUTHORITIES

RULE 137. REFEREE

1. During matches, disciplinary decisions are taken by the referee. These decisions are final.
2. In certain circumstances, the jurisdiction of the disciplinary bodies may apply, for example in decisions involving an obvious error such as mistaken identity.

RULE 138. DISCIPLINARY BODIES

1. The organs for the administration of discipline are:
 - (a) The disciplinary bodies of the FAI:
 - (i) the Disciplinary Committee;
 - (ii) the Appeal Committee.
 - (b) The Disciplinary Regulations Officer
2. Disciplinary matters relating to FAI competitions currently under the jurisdiction of another FAI disciplinary committee or body shall remain under the jurisdiction of that body until the disciplinary remit of that body is transferred to the FAI Disciplinary Bodies.
3. Disciplinary matters relating to other competitions currently under the jurisdiction of another disciplinary committee or body shall remain under the jurisdiction of that body.

RULE 139. ARBITRATOR

1. Any decision of the Appeal Committee may be referred to arbitration by any party to the appeal procedure.
2. Any other dispute between two or more members or affiliates of the FAI may be referred to Arbitration provided all parties agree to proceed to arbitration and to be bound by the Arbitration decision. Disciplinary matters must proceed through the FAI Appeals process prior to proceeding to Arbitration.

RULE 140. COURT OF ARBITRATION FOR SPORT (CAS)

Decisions of certain bodies may be appealed to the CAS in Lausanne, Switzerland as provided under the rule of such bodies.

SECTION 7 JURISDICTION OF FAI DISCIPLINARY BODIES

RULE 141. DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

1. The Disciplinary Committee is authorised to sanction any breach of the rules of the FAI and its competitions which do not come under the jurisdiction of another body.

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2. The Disciplinary Committee is responsible for:
 - a) sanctioning offences recorded in all Referee and Match Delegate reports not otherwise automatically dealt with;
 - b) sanctioning all breaches of these Disciplinary Rules;
 - c) sanctioning serious infringements which have escaped the match officials' attention;
 - d) rectifying obvious errors in the referee's disciplinary decisions;
 - e) extending the duration of a match suspension incurred automatically by an expulsion;
 - f) imposing additional sanctions, such as additional suspensions or fines or other sanctions.

RULE 142. APPEAL COMMITTEE

The Appeal Committee is responsible for:

- a) deciding appeals against decisions of the Disciplinary Committee;
- b) deciding appeals against decisions of any league, national association, divisional association or other FAI body with the exception of Club Licensing bodies and bodies ruling on Doping Offences.

SECTION 8 JURISDICTION OF FAI DISCIPLINARY REGULATIONS OFFICER

RULE 143. DISCIPLINARY REGULATIONS OFFICER (DRO)

The Disciplinary Regulations Officer is responsible for:

- a) representing the FAI in all FAI disciplinary proceedings;
- b) conducting investigations and charging persons or bodies with breach of rules;
- c) lodging appeals against decisions of FAI disciplinary bodies;
- d) settling disputes where appropriate;

SECTION 9 COMPOSITION OF FAI DISCIPLINARY BODIES

RULE 144. COMPOSITION

1. The FAI Board appoints persons to a Disciplinary Pool. The members of this pool shall be made up of Council members, other football persons not otherwise members of Council, and qualified members of the legal profession. Procedures shall be adopted to ensure members of this pool are appointed in a fair, equitable and transparent manner.
2. The Disciplinary Pool members shall be appointed for a renewable one-year period.
3. Members of the Disciplinary Pool shall be required to provide details of their football and professional background and a list of football interests and/or any conflicts of interest they may have.

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4. Members of each Disciplinary Committee and each Appeal Committee shall be drawn from the Disciplinary Pool based on their availability, independence and professional and football background, to meet the needs of each specific case. The composition of any Disciplinary or Appeal Committee shall be a decision made by the Disciplinary Control Unit of the FAI.
5. Each committee shall consist of a panel of three persons: one member of Council, one other football person and one member of the legal profession. The Chairperson of each Committee shall be the person from the legal profession.
6. In order to facilitate the expeditious and consistent handling of disciplinary matters, the Chairperson may be selected from a panel of chairpersons who are not legally qualified persons.

SECTION 10 PROVISIONS

RULE 145. HEARINGS

1. The committee hearings are deemed to be valid if the three selected members are in attendance or available pursuant to Rule 145.4 below.
2. Hearings shall be arranged by the FAI Disciplinary Control Unit.
3. A Disciplinary Committee hearing shall take place every week to deal with match reports. Additional hearings of the Disciplinary Committee may be convened should the need arise.
4. If the circumstances so require, the secretariat may arrange for the deliberations and decision-making to be conducted via telephone conference, videoconference or any other similar method.

RULE 146. MAJORITY

The Disciplinary and Appeals Committees shall decide by simple majority.

RULE 147. SECRETARIAT/ DISCIPLINARY CONTROL UNIT

1. The Disciplinary Control Unit (DCU) of the FAI provides the disciplinary bodies with a secretariat.
2. The DCU designates the secretary for every hearing.
3. The secretary takes charge of the administrative work and writes the minutes of the hearing.
4. The decisions issued by the Disciplinary and Appeal Committee and a copy of the relevant files shall be kept by the DCU for at least ten years.

RULE 148. PUBLICATION OF DECISION

1. The decision issued in each case shall be provided to all parties to the procedure.
2. The DCU may decide to publish decisions on the FAI website or to issue press releases in relation to decisions.

RULE 149. INDEPENDENCE

1. The disciplinary bodies of the FAI issue their decisions entirely independently; in particular, they shall not receive instructions from any other body of the FAI in relation to decision making.

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2. A member of another body of the FAI may not stay in the meeting room during the disciplinary bodies' deliberations unless they have been explicitly summoned to attend.

RULE 150. INCOMPATIBILITY OF OFFICE

The members of the disciplinary bodies may not be an employee of the FAI or belong to the FAI Board.

RULE 151. WITHDRAWAL

1. Members of the disciplinary bodies of the FAI shall decline to participate in any hearing concerning a matter where there are serious grounds for questioning their impartiality.
2. This applies in the following cases (among others):
 - a) if the member in question has a direct or indirect interest in the outcome of the matter;
 - b) if he is associated with any of the parties;
 - c) if he has already dealt with the case under different circumstances.
3. Members against whom an objection might be raised shall notify the DCU and the Chairperson immediately. Each party may also raise an objection to a member. The DCU shall make a final decision in such a case.

RULE 152. CONFIDENTIALITY

1. The members of the disciplinary bodies shall ensure that disclosures made to them remain confidential to the disciplinary body and the relevant staff of the DCU involved in the case.
2. Only the contents of those decisions already notified to the parties may be made public.

RULE 153. EXEMPTION FROM LIABILITY

Members of the disciplinary bodies of FAI may not be held personally liable for any deeds or omissions relating to any disciplinary procedure.

B. PROCEDURE

SECTION 11 PROCEDURE OF DISCIPLINARY BODIES

RULE 154. INVESTIGATION

1. The Disciplinary Regulations Officer (DRO) investigates violations of FAI Rules and decisions which are not otherwise automatically dealt with by the rules.
2. Such investigations are conducted by written and oral inquiries and by the examination of individuals if necessary. Expert opinion may be sought and an inspection of documents or files may be necessary. The DRO may conduct any enquiry he deems necessary in order to fully investigate a case.
3. The DRO may request the DCU to provide secretarial support in this regard.
4. On completing his investigation the DRO shall decide if a charge for breach of a rule or regulation needs to be issued against anyone. In the event such a charge is brought, the case will be submitted for consideration at a Disciplinary Committee hearing.
5. A case may be reopened by the DRO if new evidence emerges, subject to the time limits set down in these rules.

RULE 155. DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE PROCEDURE

A GENERAL RULES

1. The Disciplinary Committee shall deal with disciplinary matters as follows:
 - a) on the basis of match reports;
 - b) if a complaint or protest is lodged;
 - c) reported violations of FAI rules.
2. Proceedings are initiated by way of request from the DRO to the Disciplinary Committee following any of the matters arising under (1) above.
3. Time limits referred to in these rules shall begin from the day after receipt of notification.

B. PROCEDURE

1. The DCU must inform all parties to the case of the venue, date and time of the hearing.
2. All parties are entitled to attend the hearing and shall be notified at least four days in advance of the date, venue and time of such hearing. Notification is not required in the case of cautions and expulsions. A period of less than four days notice may be given in cases of an urgent nature.
3. A Player shall not be afforded a personal hearing in respect of an individual caution except in the case of mistaken identity.
4. Personal hearings shall not be permitted in respect of strict liability offences.
5. A party shall not be prejudiced if they do not wish to attend a hearing unless they have specifically been requested to attend by the Disciplinary Body and fail to do so.
6. All parties involved in the hearing must confirm to the DCU in writing, at least two days prior to the hearing, the name and the role within, or relationship to the party, of all persons who will be attending the hearing on their behalf, or at their request.
7. All parties shall be notified by the DCU within three days by fax and/or electronic mail and/or registered post, of the decision of the Disciplinary Committee. In urgent matters the Chairperson may issue or direct the DCU to issue an oral decision in advance of the written notification.

C. REMIT

1. The Disciplinary Committee shall make its decision and may issue a sanction pursuant to these rules.
2. The Disciplinary Committee may adjourn or suspend proceedings for further deliberation or to seek further or additional evidence or expert advice, provided an adjournment does not unduly prejudice any party. Following an adjournment the Disciplinary Committee must reconvene within ten days.
3. The Disciplinary Committee shall consider all evidence that it deems relevant to the case.
4. The Disciplinary Committee shall hear all witnesses' evidence that it considers relevant to the case.
5. The Disciplinary Committee shall give reasons for its decisions, with reference to any relevant rules.

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RULE 156. APPEAL COMMITTEE PROCEDURE

A. General Rules

1. An appeal may be lodged to the Appeal Committee against any decision passed by the Disciplinary Committee, unless the sanction imposed is:
 - a) a warning;
 - b) a reprimand;
 - c) a match caution;
 - d) an automatic suspension;
 - e) relating to a strict liability offence.
2. Decisions of any League, National Association, Divisional Association or other FAI body, with the exception of Club Licensing bodies and bodies ruling on Doping Offences, may be appealed to the Appeal Committee.
3. The DCU has discretion to rule an appeal 'out of order' if it is clear that such appeal was legitimately ruled "out of order" by a lower body.
4. An Appeal will be ruled out of order if the appeal is not filed correctly in accordance with the provisions of 156(B)(1-4). The Appeal fee will be returned in such cases.
5. No appeal can be made, under any circumstances, regarding the appointment of Referees, Assistant Referees or Fourth Officials to matches under the jurisdiction of the FAI or its affiliates.
6. The scheduling or rescheduling of all fixtures and re-arranged matches, shall not be subject to appeal.
7. Clubs may appeal against decisions sanctioning their players, officials or members, unless the person concerned submits a written objection to this.

B. PROCEDURE

1. Appeals must be sent by registered post within four days of the date on which the written notification of the decision being appealed against was received by the appellant. For the avoidance of doubt time limits begin from the day after receipt of the notification. Appeals must be addressed to the FAI Disciplinary Control Unit. In the event of a postal dispute or similar emergency, the appellant shall contact the DCU to ascertain what temporary alternative arrangements have been put in place by the DCU. The initial appeal documents must include a copy of the decision being appealed against and the appellant must indicate the date upon which such decision was received by the appellant, and must confirm that an exact copy of all documentation has been sent in accordance with Rule 156(B)(2), and that the Appeal Fee has been enclosed in accordance with Rule 156(B)(3).
2. An exact copy of all documents submitted to the DCU in connection with the appeal must be simultaneously sent by registered post to the body whose decision is the subject of the appeal, unless the decision being appealed against is a decision of the FAI Disciplinary Committee. Additional copies of all documents shall be supplied to any other parties to the procedure by the DCU, who shall determine the relevant parties.
3. Appeals must be accompanied by a Bank Draft or Postal Order for the Appeal Fee of €500, made payable to the FAI. This fee shall be refunded only if the appeal is successful.
4. Within two days of sending the initial appeal documents, the appellant must submit to the DCU, by registered post, proof of the time and date of posting the initial appeal documents to the DCU and the exact copy to the appropriate body. The appellant must also submit all additional documentation or submissions upon which it

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intends to rely at the Appeal Committee hearing and must confirm that an exact copy of such additional documentation has been sent to the other parties to the procedure, as determined by the DCU, by registered post, in accordance with Rule 156(B)(2).

5. The body against whose decision the appeal is made must send to the DCU, by registered post, within three days following receipt of notification of the appeal from the DCU, a true copy of the minutes of the meeting in which the decision being appealed against was made and any proof of notification or delivery of such decision to the appellant. Such body shall also send reasons for making that decision, any requested documentation or other documentation relevant to the appeal, and all additional documentation or submissions upon which it intends to rely at the Appeal Committee hearing. An exact copy of all documentation submitted to the DCU should also be sent to the appellant and any other party to the procedure by registered post. Failure to comply with the correct procedure as outlined above may result in disciplinary action being taken.
6. Any other party to the appeal must send to the DCU, by registered post, within three days following receipt of notification of the appeal from the DCU, any documentation or submissions upon which it intends to rely at the Appeal Committee hearing. An exact copy of all documentation submitted to the DCU should also be sent to the appellant and any other party to the procedure by registered post.
7. All appeal hearings shall commence within fifteen days of receipt of the appeal by the DCU. The DCU shall inform all parties to the appeal of the venue, date and time of the Appeal Committee hearing.
8. All parties involved in the appeal must, at least three days before the hearing, confirm in writing, by post, fax or email to the DCU the name and the role within, or relationship to the party, of all persons who will be attending the hearing on their behalf, or at their request.
9. Any party involved in the appeal, which fails to attend an Appeal hearing if requested to do so by the Appeal Committee may be subject to disciplinary action.
10. All parties in an appeal shall be notified by the DCU within three days by fax and/or electronic mail and/or registered post, of the decision of the Appeals Committee. In urgent matters the Chairperson may issue or direct the DCU to issue an oral decision in advance of written notification.
11. In cases of urgency, the Appeal Committee, or if the Appeal Committee has not yet been appointed, the DCU, may amend the time limits indicated above, with the exception of the time limit to file an appeal, in order to facilitate an expedited appeals process.

C. Remit of the Appeal Committee

1. The Appeal Committee shall re-hear the case in question.
2. The Appeal Committee shall consider all evidence that it deems relevant to the case.
3. The Appeal Committee shall hear all witnesses' evidence that it considers relevant to the case.
4. The Appeal Committee shall have the power to uphold or reject the appeal and/or to replace or vary the decision of the previous decision making body, provided the decision of the Appeal Committee is not in conflict with any of the rules of the FAI, which shall take precedence at all times. The Appeal Committee shall also have the power to send a case back to a previous decision making body to be re-heard, where appropriate in exceptional circumstances.
5. The Appeal Committee may adjourn or suspend proceedings for further deliberation or to seek further or additional evidence or expert advice, provided an adjournment does not unduly prejudice any party. Following an adjournment the Appeal Committee must reconvene within ten days.

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RULE 157. CONCLUSION TO THE APPEALS PROCEEDINGS

1. The Appeal Committee makes its decision, in principle, as a body of final instance.
2. Notwithstanding the above, Appeal Committee decisions may be appealed to an Arbitrator or, where the applicable regulations provide, to the CAS.

SECTION 12 GENERAL PROCEDURAL RULES FOR FAI DISCIPLINARY BODIES

RULE 158. EVIDENCE / PROOF

1. Any type of proof may be produced unless it violates human dignity or does not serve to establish relevant facts.
2. The following are, in particular, admissible: reports from referees, assistant referees, match delegates and referee observers, declarations from the parties and witnesses, material evidence, expert opinions and unedited audio or video recordings.
3. The disciplinary bodies will have absolute discretion regarding proof.
4. The disciplinary bodies decide on the basis of the rules and the proof before them.
5. The disciplinary bodies may request a party or any other body to submit information or documentation. Such a request shall be complied with.
6. Facts contained in match officials' reports are presumed to be accurate.
7. Proof of the inaccuracy of the contents of match officials' reports may be submitted for consideration by the disciplinary bodies.
8. If there is any discrepancy in the reports from the various match officials and match delegates and there are no means of resolving the different versions of the facts, the referee's report is considered authoritative regarding incidents that occurred on the field of play; the match delegate's report is considered authoritative regarding incidents that took place outside the field of play.
9. The disciplinary bodies may draw on principles and precedents already established by sports doctrine and jurisprudence.

RULE 159. DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED IN PROTESTS & DISCIPLINARY HEARINGS

Any party who is protesting or taking a case to an FAI Disciplinary Hearing, may request in writing, appropriate information from any body necessary to substantiate their case. Any fee imposed to supply such requested information should not exceed €30 per individual request.

RULE 160. REPRESENTATION AND ASSISTANCE

1. The parties may arrange to be assisted by a third party.
2. Parties may be represented at a hearing by a third party, but should appear personally where requested to do so by the disciplinary body.
3. The parties are free to choose their own assistance and representation.

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RULE 161. OBVIOUS ERRORS

A disciplinary body may, at its discretion, rectify any obvious calculation error or typographical error contained in its decision. Any request by a party for such a rectification must be submitted to the DCU within five days of receipt of the decision in question.

RULE 162. COSTS AND EXPENSES

All parties shall bear their own costs.

RULE 163. NOTIFICATION OF DECISIONS

1. The DCU shall notify a copy of each decision to all parties to the procedure.
2. Decisions and other documents intended for players or officials may be addressed to the club, league, association or other body concerned.
3. Decisions shall be communicated by fax and/or electronic mail and/or by registered post. A fax or electronic delivery report or registered post receipt is sufficient evidence that a decision has been properly notified.
4. Notification by the DCU of cautions, accumulated points and expulsions shall be sent by fax and/or, electronic mail and/or registered post within two days of the disciplinary hearing if a hearing has taken place.
5. Time limits referred to in these rules shall begin from the day after receipt of notification.

RULE 164. ENFORCEMENT OF DECISIONS

Decisions come into force as per the terms of the decision.

RULE 165. FORM AND CONTENTS OF THE DECISION

1. The decision contains:
 - a) the composition of the committee;
 - b) the names of the parties;
 - c) a summary of the facts;
 - d) the reasons for the decision;
 - e) the terms of the decision, including the date of coming into force;
 - f) notice of the channels for appeal.
2. The original decision is signed by the members of the Disciplinary Body and a typed notification of decision shall be forwarded to all parties by the Disciplinary Control Unit.

RULE 166. FAILURE TO RESPECT DECISIONS

1. It shall be an offence not to comply with a decision of the disciplinary bodies, and any party that fails to respect such a decision may be fined.
2. In addition to imposing a fine, the disciplinary bodies of the FAI may grant a final deadline in which the party must comply with the decision. If the party does not comply with the decision within the final deadline, the disciplinary bodies may impose a further sanction, including an additional fine, deduction of points, relegation to a lower division, a transfer ban, or a ban on any football-related activity.

SECTION 13. ARBITRATION

RULE 167.

ARBITRATION PROCEDURE

A. General Rules

1. Any decision of the Appeal Committee or DRC may be appealed to an arbitrator by any party to the appeal procedure.
2. Any other dispute between two or more members or affiliates of the FAI may be referred to Arbitration provided all parties agree to proceed to arbitration and to be bound by the Arbitration decision. Disciplinary matters must proceed through the FAI Appeals process prior to proceeding to Arbitration.
3. In accordance with the FIFA Statutes and the UEFA Statutes, members undertake not to refer disputes with any other members or the FAI to a Court of Law. Such disputes must be processed in the first instance through the Appeals System of the FAI then, where applicable, by way of referral to FAI Arbitration and finally where applicable through CAS.
4. At its opening meeting each year, the Board shall appoint a panel of Five Arbitrators all of whom must have dispute resolution experience and none of whom shall be members of Council.

B. Procedure

1. Any party referring a dispute to Arbitration arising out of a decision of the Appeal Committee must do so within ten days of the notification of the Appeal Committee decision.
2. When seeking Arbitration, the requesting party must do so in writing by registered post to the DCU, setting out the basis upon which Arbitration is sought and sending a bank draft or money order for €3000, together with a separate bank draft or money order of €2000 by way of surety in respect of costs.
3. An exact copy of this request shall be sent to all other interested parties in the dispute by registered post.
4. The registered post receipt shall be proof of time and date of posting in all cases.
5. Prior to the hearing, the Arbitrator shall fix his own terms of reference and determine the issues to be heard, direct who the appropriate parties to the Arbitration are and who is entitled to be heard.
6. The Arbitrator may, at his discretion, invite all relevant parties to attend a preliminary hearing to deal with any preliminary issues.
7. Prior to the hearing commencing, the Arbitrator shall obtain written confirmation from all of the parties to the Arbitration that the decision of the Arbitration is final and binding on all parties provided the decision is not in breach of any of the Rules of the FAI.
8. The Arbitration hearing shall take place within ten days of the appointment of the Arbitrator and a decision shall be issued within five days of the date of the hearing.
9. At the conclusion of the arbitration, the Arbitrator shall decide which party shall bear the arbitration costs, or in what proportion the arbitration costs shall be borne by the parties.
10. In all cases, the Arbitration shall be subject to the provisions of the Arbitration Acts 1954-1998.

INTRODUCTION

The FAI lists among its objectives the promotion, development and fostering of the game of Association Football within Ireland. It also confirms its affiliation to UEFA and FIFA and its commitment to be bound by the rules of both bodies.

An essential aspect of the promotion, development and fostering of the game is the promotion and implementation of best practices and pursuits by all involved in the game at every level, permeating down through each of the affiliates, thereby ensuring that the rules of the game are upheld in spirit and in fact and that the manner in which those associated with the game do business, is a positive advertisement for the game in the wider community.

To this end the Association has endorsed the following as its Code of Best Practice for all involved in every level of the game and has enshrined it within the rules of the FAI. The purpose of the code is to assist in attaining the objectives of the Association, to promote and foster the continued development of right relationships between those involved in the game and to promote and safeguard a positive image for the game in the wider community.

Where it is alleged that a body, a person or persons have by virtue of an act or utterance violated the Code of Best Practice, an injured or interested party may make a complaint pursuant to Rule 27 of the Rules of the Association and the matter shall be dealt with by the Rules Compliance Commission. Where the complaint is upheld, the body, person or persons shall be deemed to have brought the game into disrepute.

APPENDIX 1

CODE OF BEST PRACTICE FOR ADMINISTRATORS

Administrators at all levels in the game be they committee members in a league or members of Senior Council, have a responsibility to act to uphold the highest standards of integrity within the game and to ensure that the reputation of the game and the Association and each Affiliate is and remains beyond reproach. It is their duty to ensure that the game is run in an orderly and seemly manner, thereby encouraging the maximum levels of participation and enjoyment by all players and spectators, regardless of the level of the game at which they compete or support. It is further the duty of Administrators to ensure that the Association maximises the earning potential which the game enjoys, thereby providing the finance required to improve standards and facilities throughout the entire game.

1. An Administrator must appreciate that football is an important part of the community at large and accordingly must take into account community feelings when making decisions.
2. An Administrator must emphasise that the Association is opposed to discrimination of any form and promote whatever measures are necessary to prevent discrimination, either direct or indirect from infiltrating the game.
3. When called upon to represent the game in the wider community an Administrator should seek to promote a positive view of the game.
4. Administrators are there to firstly serve the interests of the game and not their own self interests or any particular sectional interest.
5. Administrators must be constantly mindful of the best interests of the game in the decisions they make.
6. The appropriate Administrators must ensure that monies spent in the name of the game and in the pursuit of the interests and objectives of the game are monies well spent.
7. All monies spent must be fully accounted for within the game.
8. Administrators must carry on the business of the game in a seemly and orderly fashion.
9. Meetings must be carried on in a cordial and businesslike manner through the chair.
10. An Administrator must abide by the standing orders regulating the conduct of meetings.
11. It is the duty of the appropriate Administrator to ensure that a complete and accurate set of minutes is available in respect of all meetings held in the name of the game.
12. An Administrator must recognise the sense of ownership felt by those who participate at all levels in the game including players, mentors, those who help out in many different ways, those who officiate as well as supporters.
13. An Administrator must acknowledge that public confidence demands the highest standards of financial and administrative propriety within the game and accordingly shall not tolerate corruption or improper practices of any kind at any time.
14. An Administrator must seek to foster and uphold a relationship of trust and respect between all involved in the game.
15. An Administrator must abhor and reject the use of violence of any nature by anyone involved in the game.
16. An Administrator must be committed to fairness in dealing with all involved in the game.
17. An Administrator must set a positive example for others particularly players, supporters and mentors.
18. An Administrator must promote and develop the game of Association Football, having particular regard to the interest of players, supporters, mentors and the reputation of the game in Ireland.
19. An Administrator must share knowledge and experience when invited to do so, taking into account the interests of the body that has requested these rather than personal or sectional interests.
20. An Administrator must show due respect to others involved in the game.
21. An Administrator must avoid all forms of inappropriate behaviour and must be seen to challenge the use of inappropriate behaviour within the game.
22. An Administrator must refrain from making contributions to the media which **are** likely to lead to unfair criticism of other people within the game.
23. An Administrator must refrain from making contributions to the media which are likely to portray the game unfairly, incompletely or inaccurately.
24. Administrators must safeguard the confidentiality of information imparted to them in the exercise of their functions.
25. Administrators should promote adherence to the Code of Practice by those within the game with whom they come into contact.

APPENDIX 2

CODE OF BEST PRACTICE FOR MENTORS

Managers/Coaches are key to the establishment of good practices in football. Their attitude to the game directly informs the attitude of the players under their supervision. Mentors must speak and act in a manner consistent with this reality.

1. A Mentor must respect the rights, dignity and worth of each person and treat each equally within the context of the sport.
2. A Mentor must not subscribe to the ethos of “win at all costs”.
3. A Mentor must place the health, well-being and safety of each player above all other considerations.
4. A Mentor must abide by the rules of the game.
5. A Mentor must strive to develop an appropriate working relationship with each player based on mutual trust and respect.
6. A Mentor must have particular regard for the code when working with young players in the game.
7. A Mentor must not exert undue influence to obtain personal benefit or reward.
8. A Mentor must guide players to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance.
9. A Mentor must ensure that the activities and strategies they direct and advocate are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of players involved.
10. A Mentor must at the outset of each season, clarify with the players (and where the players are under the age of 18, their parents) exactly what is expected of them and also what they are entitled to expect from the Mentor.
11. A Mentor must co-operate with specialists within the game e.g. other coaches, officials, sport scientists, doctors, and physiotherapists etc. in the best interest of players.
12. A Mentor must honour the terms of the agreement with his/her club and shall eschew any interest in alternative employment within the game whilst under contract, save insofar as such interest enjoys the consent of that club.
13. A Mentor must not act or speak (directly or indirectly) so as to induce a mentor or an employee of any other club to breach the terms of their agreement with that other club.
14. A Mentor must be conversant with the laws of the game and the rules of any competition in which a team under his/her stewardship is participating.
15. A Mentor must exercise authority and control over the players under his/her stewardship particularly whilst on the field of play and with regard to the decisions of match officials.
16. A Mentor must observe the highest standards of integrity and fair dealing.
17. A Mentor must always promote a positive approach to the game e.g. fair play, honest endeavour and genuine teamwork.
18. A Mentor must not encourage or condone violations of the laws of the game, behaviour contrary to the spirit of the game, or the use of questionable strategies or tactics.
19. A Mentor must not encourage or condone the use of prohibited substances.
20. A Mentor must consistently display high standards of behaviour and comment.
21. A Mentor must not use or tolerate the use of inappropriate language.
22. A Mentor must demonstrate due respect towards match officials.
23. A Mentor must accept the decisions of the match officials.
24. In making public comments on a particular fixture or on the game in general a mentor must be mindful of upholding and promoting the good name of the game and others involved in it the wider community.

APPENDIX 3

CODE OF BEST PRACTICE FOR PLAYERS

As players are constantly in the glare of public attention and are widely recognised as the most important people in the sport, there is a considerable onus upon them to speak and act in a manner which promotes all that is good about the game.

1. A Player must make every honest effort to develop their sporting ability, to include fitness, skill, technique and tactical ability.
2. A Player must strive to set a positive example for younger players and supporters.
3. A Player should safeguard the physical fitness of opponents, avoid violence and rough play, and where possible help injured opponents.
4. A Player must give maximum effort and strive for the best possible performance during each game.
5. A Player must avoid all forms of gamesmanship, and time wasting.
6. A Player must refrain from using inappropriate language particularly to referees/officials and other players during games.
7. A Player must make every effort consistent with fair play and the laws of the game to help their own team win.
8. A Player must resist any influence which might, or might be seen to, bring into question their commitment to the team winning.
9. A Player should know and abide by the laws, rules of the game and of any given competition, both in fact and in spirit.
10. A Player should accept victory and defeat with equanimity.
11. A player must resist any temptation to consume or otherwise imbibe any banned substances.
12. A Player must treat opponents with respect at all times, irrespective of the outcome of any game.
13. A Player must demonstrate due respect towards match officials.
14. A Player must accept the decisions of the match officials without protest.
15. A Player must avoid words or actions which may mislead a match official.
16. A Player must abide by the lawful instructions and directions of mentors and team officials.
17. A Player must act towards the mentors and officials of the opposing side in a respectful manner.
18. A Player must demonstrate due regard for the interest of supporters.
19. A Player must not act or speak so as to incite or encourage supporters to act in a manner that may endanger the safety of anyone attending or participating in the game.
20. A Player should not either directly or indirectly place a bet on the outcome of any game in which he is involved.
21. A Player must always have regard to the best interests of the game when publicly expressing an opinion on the game or on others involved in the game.
22. In making public comments on a particular fixture or on the game in general a Player must be mindful of upholding and promoting the good name of the game and others involved in it in the wider community.

APPENDIX 4

*Code of Ethics & Professional Conduct
for
Referees
of the
Football Association of Ireland*

The Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct for Referees should guide all registered referees¹, Observers², association officials³ and members⁴ of the Football Association of Ireland with regard to ethical behaviour and professional conduct. The Code should be read in conjunction with the FAI Rules.

Preamble

Integrity in sport is a core value underpinning the notion of 'Fair Play.' Integrity is also a fundamental and core value underpinning the task of refereeing. Failure to uphold this value can result in the principles of objectivity, honesty and independence breaking down. Consequently everyone associated with the sport has a duty and responsibility to ensure that the core values associated with fair play are upheld.

It is not alone the practice and art of refereeing a football game that these values apply but also to all administrative, training and development functions.

The code equally applies and should be adhered to by all personnel immediately associated with these functions and also to all participants in the sport both actively and administratively.⁵

¹ Referee refers to a registered match official regardless of duties assigned in a particular game.

² Observer refers to all personnel involved in instruction, training and development of referees.

³ Association Official refers to all administrative personnel including appointments officers, disciplinary committee members, league officials and employees of the FAI.

⁴ Members of the FAI refers to registered players, technical staff, managers, directors and administrators of teams and clubs.

⁵ For ease of writing the term 'referee' is used throughout the code but all of the values principles and standards of behaviour referred to apply equally to the personnel mentioned in footnotes 1, 2, 3 & 4.

Code of Ethics & Professional Conduct for Referees

This Code consists of four overall ethical principles, which subsume a number of specific ethical standards.

1.0 Integrity

Principle: Referees are obliged to be honest, impartial, objective and professional in carrying out their duties as outlined in the Laws of the Game and in terms of representing the Football Association and the League to which they are assigned.

Specifically, referees shall: -

- 1.1 Conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times and carry out their duties to the best of their ability
- 1.2 Seek support/ guidance advice from peers, colleagues, mentors and / or Observers with regard to issues that may hamper their performance as a referee.
- 1.3 Avoid situations or engage in activities or behaviour, which might oblige them or lead to them contravening the provisions of this Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.
- 1.4 Ensure that they and others accurately represent and reflect the body of knowledge and training of their profession.
- 1.5 Not accept or attempt to secure fees or benefits over and above those agreed with the Football Association of Ireland and their representatives.
- 1.6 Honour all refereeing commitments except in the case of serious illness or unexpected circumstances whereby their ability to perform their duties would be impaired and in such circumstances to notify, in a timely manner, the appropriate personnel or where appropriate to make alternative arrangements.
- 1.7 Not exploit any relationship to further their own or others personal or professional interests including the soliciting of appointments.
- 1.8 Be aware of the nature of dual relationships and where possible avoid such positions that could lead to the undermining of the *Integrity of Refereeing* or the good name of the Football Association of Ireland.
- 1.9 Act to stop or limit the activities of a colleague, Observer or official that is clearly harmful or unethical and bring such actions to the attention of the association.

2.0 Competence

Referees shall strive to ensure and maintain high standards in the application of their duties. They shall adhere to the professional standards and attain the relevant competencies required appropriate to the level of football at which they are qualified to officiate. They must maintain and update their professional knowledge and skills in accordance with the licensing system. They shall recognise the limits of their competence in the context of the licensing system and take care not to exceed these limits by officiating at games outside the parameters of their particular license.

Specifically referees shall: -

- 2.1 Comply with the rules of the licensing system and develop the skills and knowledge required appropriate to the level they wish to officiate at.
- 2.2 Engage in continuing professional development in terms of all aspects of refereeing, e.g. physical fitness; knowledge, application and interpretation of the Laws of the Game.
- 2.3 Accept the obligation to know, understand and to operate the provisions of this Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.
- 2.4 Recognise the limits of their competence and take care not to exceed these limits by officiating at games outside the parameters of their particular license.
- 2.5 Participate in and contribute to the continuing development of refereeing.
- 2.6 Refrain from officiating when their ability to carry out their duties in a professional and competent manner is impaired by physical, medical or other reason.
- 2.7 Seek relevant, competent and professional assistance to ameliorate and remedy any difficulty that prevents or inhibits their ability to carry out their duties in a professional and competent manner.

3.0 Respect

Referees shall honour, respect and uphold the fundamental rights, dignity and worth of all participants, officials and spectators of the sport. They shall be mindful and respect difference based on age, gender, ethnicity, race, culture, religious belief or other difference.

Specifically, referees shall: -

- 3.1 Treat all players, coaches and officials as persons of intrinsic worth and respect any difference based on age, gender, ethnicity, race, culture, religious belief or other difference.
- 3.2 *In the course of their duties safeguard the respect of players and coaches based on age, gender, ethnicity, race, culture, religious belief or other difference and deal with any infringements of these rights in the context of the Laws of the game or the rules of the Football Association of Ireland.*
- 3.3 When involved with children adhere to Child Care Legislation, 'codes of conduct' and the policy and procedures of the Football Association of Ireland.
- 3.4 Take the necessary preventative actions so as not to allow themselves to be compromised by events or situations where individuals respect or dignity could be undermined in the context of age, gender, disability etc.

Football Association of Ireland Rules effective from 19 July 2010

4.0 Responsibility

The 'Laws of the Game' and the Football Association of Ireland bestows authority and power on Referees. Thus this privileged position must be taken seriously and managed with dignity, respect, responsibility and professionalism. Referees carry responsibility to themselves, their profession, the Football Association and the League in which they operate.

Specifically, referees shall: -

- 4.1 Be aware of their professional responsibilities to the players and teams in the game at which they are officiating and to the League to which they are assigned and to the Football Association of Ireland.
- 4.2 Shall be responsible for their actions, and assure themselves, as far as possible, that they carry out their duties to the best of their ability.
- 4.3 Shall carry out their duties in a responsible, professional and respectful manner.
- 4.4 Behave in professional activities in such a way as not to undermine public confidence in their profession.
- 4.5 Protect the reputation of the profession and the Football Association of Ireland by ensuring that all professional activities carried out conforms to the provisions of this Code of Ethics & Conduct.

APPENDIX 5

CODE OF BEST PRACTICE FOR PARENTS

Parents have a powerful influence on the level of fun and enjoyment which children derive from the game and on the degree of enthusiasm with which they participate in it. Positive encouragement is the key to a child's enjoyment of the game, their sense of personal achievement, the development of their skill levels and their self-esteem.

1. Parents should avoid coaching their child during the game.
2. Parents should not shout and scream.
3. Parents should respect the decisions of the match officials.
4. Parents should give attention to each participating child, and not just to the most talented.

APPENDIX 6

CODE OF BEST PRACTICE FOR SPECTATORS

Spectators convey to the wider community the values of the game.

1. Spectators should appreciate the opposition as well as their own team.
2. Spectators should be respectful towards all players whilst on the field of play, regardless of nationality, race, religion or other affiliations.
3. Spectators should show appreciation of the efforts of all players who are substituted.