

EFL Trophy Rules

Season 2025/26

1 Definitions and Interpretation

1.1 Throughout these Rules, unless the context otherwise requires:

'Away Club' means the Club which should play or should have played a Match on the ground of a Home Club.

'Broadcast Partner(s)' means any broadcaster and/or media rights partner of the League and/or any production partner of the League, in each case as the League may permit to broadcast or otherwise make available matches (whether on an audio and/or audio-visual basis) on the League's behalf from time to time.

'Board' means the Board of directors of the League.

'Club' means an EFL Club or an Invited Club, as the context requires.

'Close Season' has the meaning given to it in the Regulations.

'Competition' means the competition organised by the League pursuant to these Rules.

'Competition Pool' means an account established to collate the proceeds of Matches played in the Competition and which will be distributed in accordance with the provisions of Rule 26.4 of these Rules.

'EFL Clubs' means those Member Clubs of the League that will, in the applicable Season, participate in the League One and League Two Divisions of the League.

'Full Available Strength' means the EFL Club must include at least four Qualifying Players in the ten outfield Players named in the starting eleven on the Team Sheet.

'Group Match' means a Match played in the group stage of the Competition.

'Home Club' means the Club on whose ground any Match should be or should have been played or where ground sharing is in operation, the Club whose name appears first.

'Invited Club' means any club operating a Category One Academy (pursuant to the Youth Development Rules) which accepts the invitation to take part in the Competition in accordance with the provisions of Rule 4.2.

'Knock-out Match' means a Match played in the knock-out stage of the Competition.

'Match' means a match in this Competition.

'Participating Clubs' means the EFL Clubs and the Invited Clubs.

'Player' has the meaning given to it in the Regulations.

'Premier League' means the Football Association Premier League Limited.

'Premier League Rules' means the Rules of the Premier League from time to time in force.

'Regulations' means the Regulations of the League from time to time in force.

'Rules' means these Rules of the Competition (as updated, amended or replaced from time to time).

'Season' has the meaning given to it in the Regulations.

'Team Sheet' has the meaning given to it at Rule 8.1.

'the League' means The Football League Limited.

'Youth Development Rules' means the rules relating to youth development adopted by the Premier League and the League as in force from time to time.

2 Competition Title

- 2.1 The Competition shall be given such title as the Board shall from time to time determine.

3 Organisation of the Competition

- 3.1 The Competition shall be organised by the Board, and the Board shall control the Competition in accordance with these Rules and the Regulations.
- 3.2 The Board shall have power at any time to alter, delete or add to these Rules in such manner as it in its absolute discretion deems appropriate. Such alterations shall not be deemed to be an alteration to the Regulations for the purposes of Regulation 2.
- 3.3 In the case of any inconsistency between these Rules and the Regulations, these Rules shall prevail.

4 Participation in the Competition

- 4.1 All EFL Clubs (as defined in these Rules) shall take part in the Competition.
- 4.2 An additional sixteen clubs shall be invited to take part in the Competition on the following basis:
- 4.2.1 the first clubs to receive an invitation will be up to sixteen Clubs that will be participating in the Premier League in the current Season and which operate a Category One Academy (in accordance with the Youth Development Rules). The order of priority will be based on first team finishing position in the immediately preceding Season (across both the Premier League and Championship Division of the League).
- 4.2.2 if less than sixteen Premier League clubs qualify and/or accept the invitation pursuant to Rule 4.2.1, the League shall then invite:
- (i) firstly the three Clubs relegated from the Premier League in the previous Season (provided they operate a Category One Academy); and
 - (ii) then if required the next highest placed Club(s) operating a Category One Academy,

until such time as there are no more than sixteen clubs (or Clubs) accepting the invitation to participate,

and any club (or Club) accepted into the Competition in accordance with this Rule is an Invited Club.

4.3 All Participating Clubs in the Competition shall:

4.3.1 be bound by;

4.3.2 undertake to observe; and

4.3.3 comply with,

these Rules.

5 Competition Format

5.1 The format of the Competition shall be as follows:

5.1.1 Group Stage.

- (i) The Participating Clubs will be divided into 16 groups of four with eight northern groups and eight southern groups.
- (ii) If the number of Participating Clubs is less than 64, the League shall be entitled to adjust the number of Clubs in any particular group as necessary.
- (iii) Subject to Rule 5.1.1(ii) above, each group will be made up of one Invited Club and three EFL Clubs.
- (iv) Each Club will play against each other Club once.
- (v) Subject to the requirements above, the League shall determine the format of, and conduct any draw(s) required to finalise, the groups and the allocation as Home Club and Away Club.
- (vi) Invited Clubs will be the Away Club in each Match in the Group Stage (unless otherwise determined by the League).
- (vii) Group Matches will be of ninety minutes duration, with no extra time.
- (viii) Three points are awarded for a win and none for a defeat.
- (ix) If the scores are level at the end of the Group Match then each Club is awarded one point. In addition the Match will be followed immediately by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with procedures as approved by the International Football Association Board (IFAB) and the Club that wins the penalty shootout will be awarded an additional one point.
- (x) If two or more Clubs are equal on points on completion of the Group Matches the following criteria are applied in the order give to determine their rankings:
 - (A) goal difference;
 - (B) higher number of goals scored in the Group Matches;

- (C) number of wins (after normal time i.e. not the result of any drawn match followed by penalties);
- (D) the record against each other in the Group Match, taking into account in order of precedence, points gained, goal difference, higher number of goals scored;
- (E) if the Clubs still have an equal ranking after the application of (A) to (D), by the drawing of lots.

5.1.2 Round of 32.

- (i) The eight winners and eight runners up of the north and south group stages qualify for the round of 32. All other Clubs are eliminated from the Competition.
- (ii) The round of 32 pairings are determined by means of a draw whereby the winner of a group will be drawn at home and will play a runner up of a group from the same region (but not from the same group).
- (iii) Subject to the requirement above, the League shall determine the format of, and conduct, the draw to determine the round of 32.
- (iv) Matches will be of ninety minutes duration, with no extra time. If the scores are level then the winners shall be determined by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with procedures as approved by IFAB.

5.1.3 Round of 16.

- (i) The 16 winners from the Round of 32 will contest the round of 16.
- (ii) The round of 16 pairings are determined by means of an unseeded draw but on a regionalised basis (North and South). The League shall determine the placing of Clubs in each of the two regions prior to the draw.
- (iii) The Club drawn first is the Home Club.
- (iv) Matches will be of ninety minutes duration, with no extra time. If the scores are level then the winners shall be determined by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with procedures as approved by IFAB.

5.1.4 Quarter Finals.

- (i) The eight winners from the Round of 16 will contest the quarter-finals.
- (ii) The Quarter Final pairings are determined by means of an unseeded draw but on a regionalised basis (North and South).

The League shall determine the placing of Clubs in each of the two regions prior to the draw.

- (iii) The Club drawn first is the Home Club.
- (iv) Matches will be of ninety minutes duration, with no extra time. If the scores are level then the winners shall be determined by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with procedures as approved by IFAB.

5.1.5 Semi Finals.

- (i) The four winners from the quarter-finals will contest the semi-finals.
- (ii) Semi-final pairings are determined by means of an unseeded draw with no regionalisation.
- (iii) The Club drawn first is the Home Club.
- (iv) Matches will be played by way of only one leg and be of ninety minutes duration with no extra time. If the scores are level at the end of the Match then the winners shall be determined by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with procedures as approved by IFAB.

5.1.6 Final.

- (i) The two winners from the semi-finals will contest the final.
- (ii) The final shall be played on a date and at a time to be determined by the League.
- (iii) The Match will be of ninety minutes duration. If the scores are level at the end of the Match then there will be a period of extra time of thirty minutes duration. If the scores remain level after extra time then the winners shall be determined by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with procedures as approved by IFAB.

6 Arrangement of Fixtures

- 6.1 Immediately after each draw is made, notice shall be given to each Club of the name of its opponent, together with a note of the week in which the Match is to be played. The League reserves the right to schedule Matches on alternative dates.

Guidance

Circumstances where the EFL would consider to schedule matches on alternative dates include but are not limited to the avoiding clashes with UEFA club competitions for development squads and/or FIFA / UEFA international windows.

- 6.2 The actual date of the Match shall be determined by the League after consultation with both Clubs involved.

- 6.3 Matches may not be postponed due to Players having been called up to play for their national association's representative matches.
- 6.4 All Matches (other than the final) shall unless otherwise agreed by the League (in its absolute discretion) be played at the venue registered by the Home Club:
 - 6.4.1 in the case of EFL Clubs, pursuant to Regulation 13.5; and
 - 6.4.2 in the case of Invited Clubs, as the first teams' Stadium (as that term is defined in the Premier League rules).

[Guidance](#)

The EFL reserves the right to 'reverse' any fixture on application of the Home Club but in its absolute discretion.

- 6.5 The final shall be played at a neutral venue determined by the League.
- 6.6 Clubs are not permitted to play any Match behind closed doors so that the public are excluded from the stadia unless:
 - 6.6.1 the League has provided its written consent to the same; and/or
 - 6.6.2 playing behind closed doors is a consequence of any disciplinary or regulatory proceedings; and or
 - 6.6.3 any order, direction or requirement of the UK Government and/or any other public authority prevents the Club from being able to admit supporters to its stadia.
- 6.7 The time of kick-off shall be fixed by the Home Club in accordance with the Regulations, except in the final, when the kick-off time will be fixed by the League.
- 6.8 The League shall adjudicate in the event of any Match interfering with other first team matches.
- 6.9 Dislocation of Matches for any cause whatsoever shall be immediately reported to the League by the Clubs concerned and it shall be the duty of the Home Club in each instance immediately to notify the appointed Match officials of such dislocation.
- 6.10 All re-arrangements of Matches must be arranged for the earliest reasonable opportunity and submitted to and approved by the League. Any Match not so arranged shall have its date fixed by the League.

7 Players

- 7.1 In all rounds of the Competition a Player must be a "Registered Player" of his Club.
- 7.2 For the EFL Clubs, a Registered Player is one who:

- 7.2.1 would be registered and eligible to participate in a match in the League Competition for that EFL Club commencing at the same time and on the same date as the Match in accordance with the provisions of the Regulations or would have been but for the operation of Regulation 44.9 (Squad Lists) (as amended from time to time); or
- 7.2.2 would be so eligible but for the fact that they are registered on a Long Term Loan at a club playing in the National League (National Division, North Division or South Division) but by the agreement of the Club, the National League club and the Player has permission to return to play in this Competition.
- 7.3 Each EFL Club shall play its Full Available Strength in and during all Matches.
- 7.4 **Qualifying Player** means any Player who:
 - 7.4.1 had started the immediately preceding First Team Fixture (as defined below);
 - 7.4.2 subsequently starts the immediately following First Team Fixture;
 - 7.4.3 is in the list of ten Players at the Club with the highest number of starting appearances in First Team Fixtures in the same Season;
 - 7.4.4 has made forty or more starting appearances in First Team Fixtures or international equivalents (and not limited to the same Club or Season); or
 - 7.4.5 is on standard loan from a Premier League Club or any EFL Club operating a Category One Academy.
- 7.5 **First Team Fixture** means the League Competition, Premier League, EFL Cup or FA Challenge Cup (but shall, in the context of Rules 7.4.3 and 7.4.4 only, also include this Competition).
- 7.6 Any EFL Club failing to meet the requirement to play Full Available Strength will be required to pay a fine of up to £5,000.
- 7.7 For the Invited Clubs, a registered player is one who would be registered and eligible to participate in a Premier League and/or, subject to Rules 7.9 and 7.10, Premier League 2 match commencing at the same time and on the same date as the Match in accordance with the provisions of the relevant Premier League rules.
- 7.8 Each Invited Club must ensure that in each Match:
 - 7.8.1 at least six of the starting eleven players named on the Team Sheet are players who were aged under 21 as at the 30th June in the year in which the Season concerned commenced; and
 - 7.8.2 no more than two players who:
 - (i) are aged 21 or over; and
 - (ii) have made 40 or more appearances in a First Team Fixture (either in the starting eleven or as a playing substitute)

in each case as at the 30th June in the year in which the Season concerned, shall be named on the Team Sheet.

- 7.9 A Player sent out on a Temporary Loan Transfer (or Temporary Transfer where a Premier League Club) but who remains eligible to participate in non-first team football for his parent club (which would include Premier League 2 matches) will be eligible to participate in this Competition.
- 7.10 Players registered only on a PDL8 or other 'non-first team' registration form are not eligible to participate in the Competition.
- 7.11 A maximum of 5 Players registered on a Temporary Loan Transfer (or Temporary Transfer where a Premier League Club) can be named in the Players listed on a Team Sheet for any individual match played in this Competition. This maximum shall reduce to 4 Players where a Club names a Player on the Team Sheet who is registered on an Emergency Goalkeeper Loan (or any equivalent Temporary Transfer where a Premier League Club).
- 7.12 Players registered on a Temporary Loan Transfer (or Temporary Transfer where a Premier League Club) will be eligible to play unless the loaning Club (or club) expressly indicates it does not consent as part of the applicable loan agreement.
- 7.13 A Registered Player shall be permitted to play for up to two Clubs (or clubs) in the Competition in any Season where such Player:
- 7.13.1 has appeared for an Invited Club or EFL Club in the Competition prior to the closure of the Summer Transfer Window and has subsequently moved to an EFL Club on a Temporary Loan Transfer or permanent Transfer prior to the end of the Summer Transfer Window; or
 - 7.13.2 has appeared for one Invited Club or EFL Club in the Competition in either a Group Match or in the round of 32 and prior to the closure of the Winter Transfer Window and;
 - (i) transfers (either permanently or on a Temporary Loan Transfer) to another Invited Club or EFL Club during the Winter Transfer Window which is still competing in the Competition; or
 - (ii) is recalled from a Temporary Loan Transfer to an Invited Club or EFL Club which is still competing in the Competition; or
 - (iii) due to the expiry of a Temporary Loan Transfer returns to his parent club (whether an Invited Club or an EFL Club) which is still competing in the Competition.

Guidance

Matches in the Competition are first team fixtures. However, appearances in the Competition will not count towards the application of Article 5.3 of the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players (the so-called '3+2' Rule), save for where a Player has appeared in the Competition and subsequently moves to an International Club in the same Season.

8 Team Sheet

- 8.1 A representative of each Club must hand copies of and/or provide via the 'match day application' (or such other electronic means as the League may

direct from time to time) a list of names of Players taking part in the game (including the name of the nominated substitute or substitutes) ('Team Sheet') to the referee and a representative of the opponents in the presence of the Referee in the referee's dressing room (or an agreed alternative location) at least 75 (seventy five) minutes before the advertised time of kick-off. The Team Sheet shall indicate the full names of Players and shall indicate the colour of the Goalkeeper's shirt. Neither Club shall publish the teams or otherwise provide details of the teams to any third party (other than The League's appointed broadcast partners) until 75 (seventy five) minutes before the advertised time of kick-off.

9 Pre Match Briefing with the Referee.

9.1 At least 60 (sixty) minutes before the advertised time of kick-off of a match:

9.1.1 the captain; and

9.1.2 the person in charge of the team on the day (i.e. the manager); or

9.1.3 where the person described in Rule 9.1.2 is subject to a ban preventing them from attending, another senior representative of the coaching staff,

shall attend a briefing with the referee.

Guidance

A breach of this Rule 9 is designated a strict liability offence as detailed in Regulation 88 of the EFL Regulations.

10 Substitutes

10.1 In all Matches, each Club is permitted to name up to seven substitutes on the Team Sheet of whom not more than five may take part in the Match. Each Club is only permitted a maximum of three opportunities to make substitutions during the Match. Clubs may make substitutions at half time and any substitutions made then will not count towards the maximum of three opportunities. A Club may make more than one substitution at each of its three opportunities. Each Club participating in the final Match will be permitted an additional opportunity to make a substitution from those remaining substitutes listed on the Team Sheet during extra time.

Guidance

For example, a Club having used 5 substitutes before extra-time shall still only be permitted the opportunity the use of 1 further substitute making 6 in total. The use of the additional substitute shall commence on the final whistle of regular (inclusive of injury time).

By way of further example, a Club having used 3 substitutes before extra-time shall still only be permitted one additional opportunity the use up to 3 further substitutes making 6 in total. The use of the additional substitutes shall commence on the final whistle of regular (inclusive of injury time).

In the event that a Club has used all seven substitutes named on the Team Sheet during normal time as a result of the using a 'concussion substitute' and an 'additional substitute' (where the opponent has also used two substitutes) the Club will not be permitted to use an additional substitute in extra time.

10.2 Each Club shall also be permitted to utilise up to one 'concussion substitute' and/or one 'additional substitute' (as appropriate) from those substitutes listed on the Team Sheet, strictly in accordance with the provisions of the International Football Association Board's 'Additional permanent concussion substitutes – Protocol ('IFAB Protocol') and any associated guidance issued by the League. Use of either a 'concussion substitute' or an 'additional substitute' in accordance with this Rule 10.3 shall not count towards the five permitted to take part in the Competition Match in accordance with Rule 10.1 or towards the permitted number of opportunities to make a substitution in accordance with Rule 10.1 and 10.2. Each Club must provide the League with such information as is necessary to ensure compliance with the IFAB Protocol in respect of any 'concussion substitute' made within 10 days of receiving such a request from the League.

10.3 All substitutes must be nominated and included on the official Team Sheet handed to the referee prior to the Match. Substitutes not on the Team Sheet may not take part in the Match.

10.4 Not more than five substitutes / Players of each Club shall warm up or warm down at the same time on the perimeter of the pitch on which the Match is being played.

11 Replacement of Injured Players Prior to Kick-off

11.1 Should any nominated Player or substitute sustain an injury or become otherwise incapacitated after the submission of the Team Sheet to the referee and before the kick-off, he may be replaced and the referee shall be informed. Should there be any other extenuating circumstances which require a nominated Player or substitute to be replaced during the aforementioned period, the referee shall allow such replacement and report the full circumstances to the League. The League shall then initiate any inquiries it may deem fit so as to satisfy itself as to the bona fide nature of the replacement.

12 On Field Discipline

12.1 The Competition is a 'First Team Competitive Match' for the purposes of the Football Association's Regulations for Disciplinary Procedures. However, the automatic sanctions in relation to cautions and dismissals are treated separately under The FA Disciplinary procedures from other First Team matches.

13 Match balls

13.1 All Clubs shall utilise the match balls supplied by the League.

13.2 **Towels / Drying Aids.** No Club shall be entitled to utilise towels or other articles (including articles obtained from spectators) to dry footballs during any Match.

- 13.3 **Multiple Balls.** Clubs must use a system of replacement balls for all Matches in accordance with Law 2.3 of the Laws of the Game and any guidance issued by the League or in conjunction with PGMOL.

14 Kit Requirements

- 14.1 The players' shirts and shorts must be clearly numbered in accordance with the Regulations and Premier League Rules respectively.
- 14.2 Clubs participating in the semi-finals and final will be required to wear such sleeve badges (which may include sponsor branding) as supplied by the League.
- 14.3 The Captain shall wear a distinguishing armband provided by the League to indicate his status.
- 14.4 During the Close Season, each Club shall notify the League, in writing, details of its 'home' and 'away' kits (shirts, shorts and socks). The League shall inform all other Clubs, Referees and Assistant Referees of such details. Save as provided for in Rule 14.5, the 'home kit' so registered by each Club shall be worn for all Home Matches during the next following Season and no changes either in the kits or combination of kit shall be permitted during the course of the Season.
- 14.5 A home Club will be able to wear any combination of its registered kit in order to avoid a potential kit clash, including but not limited to wearing an 'away' or 'third' shirt for a Match.
- 14.6 When away from home a Club shall play in a registered kit which is (shirts, shorts, and socks) clearly distinguishable from those of their opponents. The League reserves the right to relax this requirement in respect of shorts where appropriate and after consultation with match officials. In circumstances where an 'away' Club cannot wear any of its kits without causing a potential kit clash, that Club shall be able to wear any combination of its registered kit in order to avoid the potential kit clash. Where both Clubs request to play in the same, or similar, coloured shorts then an application to do so shall be made to the appointed match referee whose consent shall not be unreasonably withheld.
- 14.7 Upon receipt of the match official appointments it is the responsibility of both Home and Away Clubs to provide the Match Referee and their opponents with details of the colours of shirts, shorts and socks of both outfield players and goalkeeper to ensure that any issues can be addressed before the match date.
- 14.8 The colour of the Goalkeeper's shirt must, in all cases, be clearly distinguishable from the colours of the shirts worn by the Match Officials and all other Players.
- 14.9 The colour of clothing worn by those individuals responsible for returning the ball to Players (if having gone out of play) must, in all cases be clearly distinguishable from the colours of the shirts worn by the Match Officials and all other Players.
- 14.10 In all Matches, the Players' shirts may carry advertising subject to:
- 14.10.1 the regulations relating to the clothing of players laid down by the Football Association; and the approval of the Football Association and

being in accordance with The FA Rules (including but not limited to the Kit and Advertising Regulations as updated from time to time within The FA Rules), the Premier League Rules and the Regulations respectively; and

14.10.2 for Matches covered by television, not being in contravention of any provision in the contract between the League and the television company, such provision to be notified to the Clubs by the League.

15 Commencement of Match

15.1 For all Matches Clubs shall be required to take the field of play as instructed by the Match officials not less than 5 (five) minutes before the advertised time of kick-off.

16 Laws of the Game

16.1 All Matches shall be played in conformity with the Laws of Association Football as authorised by IFAB.

17 Use of Technology

17.1 Where the venue at which any Match is to be played has:

17.1.1 a goal line technology system installed; and / or

17.1.2 such equipment as is necessary to enable the use of video assistant referees,

in compliance with the Laws of the Game, the League shall be entitled to determine whether any such system is used, and its decision shall be final.

18 Match Officials

18.1 The appointment of Referees and Assistant Referees shall be made by the League from the list of Referees compiled pursuant to Regulation 40.

18.2 The remuneration payable to Referees and Assistant Referees shall be determined by Professional Game Match Officials Limited.

19 Notification of Results etc.

19.1 Clubs must send:

19.1.1 the results of Matches with the names of the Players competing therein to the League within 24 hours of the conclusion of the Match; and

19.1.2 the marking of the Referee's performance and (in the case of the Visiting Club, the pitch marks) within six days of each Match.

20 Non Fulfilment of Fixtures

20.1 Each Club will use its best endeavours to ensure that each Match takes place on the date and at the time fixed for it.

20.2 Dislocation of any Match caused by any reason whatsoever shall be immediately reported to The League by the Clubs concerned and it shall be the duty of the Home Club in each instance to immediately notify the appointed referee and assistant referees of such dislocation.

- 20.3 Where only one of the Clubs scheduled to play in a Group Match is unable to fulfil its obligation to complete that Group Match for any reason The League shall use its reasonable endeavours to rearrange the fixture for the earliest reasonable opportunity (including but not limited to arranging for the Match to be played at a neutral venue) and in any case before 20 November 2024. Where The League determines that the fixture cannot be rearranged The League shall have the power to declare that the fixture shall be abandoned. Where the League declares that the fixture shall be abandoned, that Club shall forfeit the fixture and be deemed to have lost the Match 1-0, and the opposing team shall be awarded 3 points.
- 20.4 If both Clubs are unable to fulfil their obligation to complete a Group Match for any reason:
- 20.4.1 The League shall use its reasonable endeavours to rearrange the fixture for the earliest reasonable opportunity (including but not limited to arranging for the Match to be played at a neutral venue) and in any case before Wednesday 20 November 2024. Where The League determines that the fixture cannot be rearranged The League shall have the power to declare that the fixture shall be abandoned. Where the League declares that the fixture shall be abandoned, both Clubs shall forfeit the fixture and be awarded zero points.
- 20.4.2 Where only one of the Clubs scheduled to play in a Knock-out Match is unable to fulfil its obligation to complete that Match for any reason The League shall use its reasonable endeavours to rearrange the fixture for the earliest reasonable opportunity (including but not limited to arranging for the match to be played at a neutral venue) which will not be later than the date of the first Match scheduled to take place in the immediately following round. Where The League determines that the fixture cannot be rearranged The League shall have the power to declare that the fixture shall be abandoned. Where The League declares that the fixture shall be abandoned, the Club shall forfeit the fixture and the opposing team shall be awarded a bye into the next round of the Competition.

Guidance

The League considers that the earliest reasonable opportunity means that the fixture will need to have been rearranged by no later than a date that would reasonably allow the winning Club to participate in the following round on the scheduled date. If that is not possible, The League will consider using its discretionary power to declare that the fixture be abandoned and that the Club forfeit the fixture.

- 20.5 If both Clubs are unable to fulfil their obligation to complete a Knock-out Match for any reason The League shall use its reasonable endeavours to rearrange the fixture for the earliest reasonable opportunity (including but not limited to arranging for the match to be played at a neutral venue) which will not be later than the date of the first Match scheduled to take place in the immediately following round. Where The League determines that the fixture cannot be rearranged The League shall have the power to declare that the fixture shall be void. Where The League declares that the fixture shall be abandoned, both

Clubs shall forfeit the fixture. Where this results in an uneven number of Clubs being entered into the next round, The League shall exercise its discretion as to which Club progresses through to the next round including but not limited to arranging for byes where necessary.

Guidance

The League considers that the earliest reasonable opportunity means that the fixture will need to have been rearranged by no later than a date that would reasonably allow the winning Club to participate in the following round on the scheduled date. If that is not possible, The League will consider using its discretionary power to declare that the fixture be abandoned and that the Club forfeit the fixture.

20.6 Any Match which, for any cause whatsoever, falls short of 90 (ninety) minutes duration may be ordered to count as a completed fixture, or be replayed in full or in part as The League may, in its absolute discretion, determine.

20.7 Failure to fulfil any Match will constitute a breach of these Rules unless the Club can demonstrate that:

20.7.1 the dominant and effective cause of the non-fulfilment was the occurrence of an event which was outside the control of the Club (an “Event”); and

20.7.2 the Club could not remedy the consequences of the Event prior to the Competition Match despite using its best endeavours to do so.

20.8 Where a Club has breached these Rules in accordance with Rule 20.7, The League shall have the power to:

20.8.1 require that Club to forfeit the Match and either

- (i) where this is a Group Match, a 1 – 0 loss will apply; or
- (ii) where this is a Knock-out Match, be expelled from the Competition,

20.8.2 order that the Club pay a compensatory payment of £5,000; and

20.8.3 order that compensation is paid to their opponents.

21 Tickets

21.1 The League shall have the right to amend or suspend Rules 21.2 – 21.13 at any time during the Competition provided that it provides Clubs with not less than 2 days’ written notice of such amendments.

21.2 In all Matches the Visiting Club shall have the right to claim up to 10 per cent of all tickets reserved or otherwise sold in advance, subject to the consent of the League and on the following conditions:

21.2.1 subject to the provisions of Rule 21.10, the Home Club shall determine the ticket prices for each Match;

21.2.2 the request for tickets shall be made within three days of the draw;

21.2.3 the provisions of Regulations 35.7.8 to 35.7.11 (inclusive) shall apply;

- 21.2.4 discounts or special promotions made available to supporters of the Home Club (other than discounts for Season Ticket holders as described in Rule 21.11) must also be made available on a similar basis to Visiting supporters; and
- 21.2.5 unless otherwise mutually agreed in writing all tickets shall be on a sale or return basis.
- 21.3 Further, a minimum of 10% of the total disabled spectator accommodation must be made available to disabled supporters of the Visiting Club.
- 21.4 All disputes shall immediately be referred to the League for settlement and whose decision will be final.
- 21.5 A Visiting Club shall be entitled to a minimum of 25 Complimentary Stand Tickets.
- 21.6 Rules 21.2 – 21.5 shall not apply where any order, direction or requirement of the UK Government or public authority prevents the Home Club from admitting any supporters of the Visiting Club to its stadia.
- 21.7 A Visiting Club shall also be entitled to not less than 16 or one third of the seats usually reserved and known as the 'Home and Visiting Directors' Seats' up to a maximum of 24 seats.
- 21.8 Payment for tickets sold shall be made in accordance with Regulation 35.7.14.
- 21.9 A maximum number of 100 complimentary tickets, excluding those covered under Rules 21.5 and 21.7, tickets for visiting scouts, press box tickets and any tickets required to be made available under any commercial agreement entered into by the League, will be allowed per Match.
- 21.10 The League may determine the minimum and maximum ticket prices for all Matches prior to the final tie and where it does so this will be notified to Clubs prior to the start of the Competition.
- 21.11 Where the Home Club issues season tickets which allow holders of such tickets:
- 21.11.1 free admission to a match in the Competition then each season ticket holder that attends is treated as having bought a ticket at the same price as that allocated to that seat for that match; or
- 21.11.2 discounted admission to a match in the Competition then in calculating the amount to be included as Gross Receipts of the match any discount from the admission price shall be excluded.
- 21.12 Where the Home Club admits any person to the ground as part of its hospitality arrangements or to an executive box and there is no separate charge for admission, each person is treated as having bought a ticket at the highest price payable for a general admission ticket for that match.
- 21.13 All questions in dispute shall immediately be referred to the League for settlement.
- 21.14 Rules 21.2 to 21.6 and 21.8 to 21.13 shall not apply where supporters are not permitted to enter stadia and a Match is played behind closed doors as a result

of any orders, directions or requirements of the League, the FA, the UK Government and/or any public authority.

22 Broadcasting Rights

22.1 The permission of the League is required for broadcasting, televising, filming and making of sound recordings of all Matches in the Competition. The financial terms and other conditions shall be negotiated and contracts made with respective companies by the League.

22.2 Any monies received by the League from television, broadcasting, films or any other source in respect of these Matches shall be placed in the Pool Account (as defined in the Articles of the League) which shall be used to defray all expenses mentioned above and any balance shall:

22.2.1 first, be utilised to pay a facility fee to any Home Club participating in a Match televised live by a domestic broadcaster on a television channel within the United Kingdom, as follows:

- (i) for all Matches up to and including the quarter finals, £10,000 to each Club participating in the relevant Match
- (ii) for the semi-finals, £20,000 to each Club participating in the relevant Match;

22.2.2 any surplus to be distributed in accordance with the Articles of Association of the League.

23 Sponsorship and Promotion of the Competition

23.1 The provisions governing sponsorship for the Competition and the obligation of the Clubs to provide services and facilities to any such sponsor are contained in Regulation 79 and shall apply to this Competition and all Clubs as if set out herein.

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See also Rule 14.2 which deals with sleeve badges for the Semi Finals and Final.

23.2 The League shall have power to negotiate and administer sponsorship of the Competition. Any agreement entered into by the League in relation to such sponsorship shall be binding upon each Club and each Club shall comply with the requirements of the League in relation thereto.

23.3 Subject as aforesaid and without prejudice to the generality of Rule 23.1, each Club must, if required by the sponsor, make available the contracted services and facilities at the Club's Home ground, which will include as a minimum access to all perimeter advertising systems.

23.4 Each Club shall ensure that its senior representatives (playing staff and non-playing staff) support the Competition as reasonably required by the League from time to time.

23.5 Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, each Club participating in the final shall procure that their Club's Manager will wear a pin badge supporting the League's nominated charity partner for that Season (and no other branding relating to charities unless otherwise featured on the Club's

entire playing kit and/or training wear pursuant to the FA Kit Advertising Regulations).

24 Competition Trophy

- 24.1 A Trophy will be presented to the winners of the Competition and medals will be presented to the winners and runners-up.
- 24.2 There shall be 30 medals to each of the Clubs participating in the final, to be allocated as follows:
 - 24.2.1 18 for the Players nominated on the Team Sheet;
 - 24.2.2 one each for the Club's secretary (or nominated equivalent), Manager and Physiotherapist; and
 - 24.2.3 two for staff other than Players.
- 24.3 Medals will also be provided for the Match officials appointed to the final.
- 24.4 Additional medals may only be presented by consent of the League of the Competition but at the cost of the requesting Club.
- 24.5 The holders of the Trophy shall return it in like good order and condition to the League one month before the final of the next year's Competition, provided always that the winning Club shall, from time to time throughout the year, on request from the League, release the Trophy to the League for such purposes as the League shall require.

25 Travelling Expenses

- 25.1 Rule 25 shall apply where a Match is played and supporters are permitted to enter the stadia.
- 25.2 Subject to Rule 25.5, a Visiting Club may claim travel expenses incurred (and the amount claimed shall be an expense of the Match) at the following rates:
 - 25.2.1 standard class railway fares for up to 24 persons for the Players and officials of the Visiting Club at a maximum rate of £100 per person; or
 - 25.2.2 air fares for up to 24 persons for the Players and officials of the Visiting Club at a maximum rate of £100 per person; or
 - 25.2.3 actual cost of motor coach hire (not exceeding £2,400).
- 25.3 For all Matches (other than the final), subject to Rule 25.4, the Visiting Club may also claim hotel expenses incurred (and the amount claimed shall be an expense of the Match) at the following rates:
 - 25.3.1 for an overnight stay, for up to 24 persons for the Players and officials of the Visiting Club at a maximum rate of £100 per person; or
 - 25.3.2 where there is no overnight stay, a maximum of £450 (where necessarily incurred).
- 25.4 A Visiting Club shall only be entitled to claim overnight hotel expenses where it would not be possible for the Visiting Club to return to its home stadium or training ground (as applicable) within five hours (including a stop of not more than 45 minutes) of the conclusion of the Match. Any hotel expenses (overnight

or otherwise) shall be agreed between the Home Club and Visiting Club in advance. Any disputes shall immediately be referred to the League for settlement and whose decision will be final.

25.5 Invited Clubs may not claim travelling or hotel expenses of any kind for any Group Match.

25.6 In respect of the final, each Club shall be entitled to claim (and the amount claimed shall be an expense of the Match):

25.6.1 travel expenses incurred, in accordance with the rates set out in Rule 25.2 for a party of 24 (with maximum coach hire costs of £2,400); and

25.6.2 hotel expenses for one night, for up to 24 persons at a maximum rate of £100 per person.

25.7 The League retains the right to amend the provisions of Rule 25 at any time during the Competition provided that it provides Clubs with not less than 2 days' written notice of such amendments.

26 Distribution of Proceeds of Matches

26.1 Rule 26 shall apply where a Match is played and supporters are permitted to enter the stadia.

26.2 The proceeds of all Matches (including replayed Matches admittance to the away Club's ground where a beamback is provided) shall, after paying thereout the travelling expenses of the Visiting Club (determined in accordance with Rule 25), the ground and other expenses of the Match including VAT, floodlighting of the playing pitch and ancillary lighting (not to exceed £200), advertising, printing, postage, police charges, turnstile operators, stewards, contribution to first aid helpers, costs of any goal line technology, costs incurred in providing a live streaming service and clearing the ground of snow, (provided in the case of the last mentioned item the Visiting Club is notified in advance of the Match in question of the approximate cost) is referred to as the **Net Proceeds**.

26.3 Subject to Rule 26.4, for all Matches the Net Proceeds shall be allocated as follows:

26.3.1 45 per cent to each Club;

26.3.2 10 per cent to the Pool Account (and not, the Competition Pool).

26.4 The share payable to any Invited Club in accordance with Rule 26.3 will be reduced as follows:

26.4.1 for Matches in the group stage, to zero (with the full share of 45 per cent payable to the Competition Pool);

26.4.2 for Matches in the round of 32 and up to and including the quarter finals, to 25 per cent (with the remaining 20 per cent payable to the Competition Pool); and

26.4.3 for matches in the semi-finals and final, to 30 per cent (with the remaining 15 per cent payable to the Competition Pool).

- 26.5 Each Home Club shall send the appropriate share of the gate to the Visiting Club and to the League together with a statement of the gate within ten days of the Match in accordance with the Regulations.

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In addition to delivering any sponsor, broadcaster and/or EFL organised media or promotional commitments, Clubs are required to positively promote the Competition and matches in the Competition and procure that their employees (including Players, Managers, senior executives and coaching staff do not disparage the Competition). Clubs failing to honour this requirement will be liable to such action as determined by the Board and will be unlikely to be able to benefit from the underwrite provided for in this Rule. Further, Clubs charging less than £5 per adult or £1 per child will not qualify for the underwrite in any event.

- 26.6 Any losses (if any) incurred in the hosting of a Knock-out Match will be shared equally between the Clubs participating in the Match.
- 26.7 Any remaining balance (if any) of the Competition Pool shall be paid to the EFL Clubs in equal shares.
- 26.8 The League retains the right to amend the provisions of Rule 26 at any time during the Competition provided that it provides Clubs with not less than 2 days' written notice of such amendments.

27 Postponement and Abandonment

- 27.1 Save where otherwise provided for in Rule 20, when a Match is abandoned the Visiting Club (including any Invited Club) shall be entitled to receive from the Home Club, out of the gate of the abandoned game, travelling expenses and hotel expenses calculated in accordance with Rules 25.1 to 25.4. The Visiting Club shall have no further claim in respect of the replayed Match.
- 27.2 Save where otherwise provided for in Rule 20, when a Match is postponed (except by reason of an FA Cup Match, EFL Cup or a Club's league match) the Visiting Club may be entitled to receive from the Home Club, out of the gate of the re-arranged game, travelling expenses and hotel expenses calculated in accordance with Rules 25.1 to 25.4. Any payments will be at the discretion of the League and will take into account whether any expenditure had been incurred in respect of the postponed Match.

28 Proceeds of Sale of Tickets for the Final

- 28.1 Where a Club sells Match tickets on behalf of the League for the final, the Club shall have no rights in respect of the said proceeds and all proceeds shall be paid to the League in accordance with the provisions of Article 47.

29 Discipline

- 29.1 When in these Rules there is reference to the League having power to investigate alleged breaches of the Rules and impose sanctions the League shall have the power in its absolute discretion to refer the matter to a Disciplinary Commission (as defined in the Regulations) save that the time limit

for lodging of any defence to the protest or complaint is reduced to five business days.

- 29.2 A Club will have the right to appeal any decision of a Disciplinary Commission in accordance with Regulation 95 save that the time limit for lodging the notice and grounds of appeal set out in Regulation 95.3 shall be reduced to five business days.
- 29.3 By participating in the Competition, the Invited Clubs are subject to the jurisdiction of the League in respect of matters relating to the Competition (but not otherwise) and the Invited Clubs expressly acknowledge and agree that they are subject to the provisions of Sections 8 and 9 of the Regulations as if the same were set out herein.
- 29.4 **Trainers Benches and Technical Area Participants Behaviour Charter** - All Clubs must provide separate areas adjacent to the pitch for the exclusive use of team officials and substitute Players (and any substituted Players) for both the Home Club and Visiting Club. These areas shall have direct access to the pitch, shall be under cover and shall contain a minimum of fourteen seats. The layout, facilities and viewing positions for the Visiting Club bench shall be the same as for the Home Club. Only officials whose names appear on the Team Sheet are permitted to sit on the trainer's bench and they are the only persons who may communicate instructions to Players during the Competition Match. All Officials named on a Club's Team Sheet must ensure they adhere to the Technical Area Code of Conduct as prescribed by the EFL and PGMOL at the beginning of each Season.

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Each Club shall provide a maximum of eight positions for the sole use of coaching and medical staff of the Visiting Club. These positions must be in one self-contained area with access to the Visiting Club's trainers' bench.

30 Matters not Covered by the Rules

- 30.1 The League shall be empowered to make decisions on any matters not otherwise specifically provided for in these Rules.