

EFL Cup Rules 2025/26

1 Definitions and Interpretation

1.1 Throughout these Rules, unless the context otherwise requires:

'**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.

'**Club**' means each member from time to time of The League and each member from time to time of The Premier League.

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

'**Competition Match**' means any Association Football Match in the Competition.

'**Cup**' means the trophy awarded to the winner of the Final.

'**Final Tie**' means the final Competition Match in the Competition.

'**Home Club**' means the Club on whose ground any Cup Competition match should be or should have been played or where ground sharing is in operation or the Clubs agree to play on a neutral ground the Club whose name appears first.

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

'**Return to Play/Return to Training Protocols**' means the return to play and return to training protocols applicable in The League Regulations and/or Premier League Rules as updated from time to time.

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

'**Semi-Final**' means the two Competition Matches immediately preceding the Final Tie.

'**the League**' means The Football League Limited.

'**the Competition**' or '**the Cup Competition**' means the EFL Cup competition organised by The League, by whatever title it shall from time to time be given by the Board.

'**the League Competition**' means the annual league competition organised by The League for Clubs in membership of The League.

'**the Premier League Competition**' means the annual league competition to be organised by The Premier League for clubs in membership of The Premier League.

'**the Board**' means the Board of Directors from time to time of The League.

'**the Management Committee**' means the Management Committee of the Competition which shall comprise the Board.

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

'**these Rules**' means the Rules of the Competition as from time to time altered.

'**the FA Rules**' means the rules and regulations for the time being of The Football Association.

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

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

'Visiting Club' means the Club which should play or should have played any Competition Match on the grounds of a Home Club.

2 Control of the Competition

- 2.1 The Cup Competition shall be organised by the Board of the League for all Clubs and shall be given such title as shall be nominated from time to time by the Board.
- 2.2 The control of the Competition shall be vested in the Board of the League who shall in all ways act as the Management Committee of the Competition, and who shall have power at any time to alter, delete or add to these Rules in such manner as they in their absolute discretion deem appropriate.
- 2.3 Prior to making any alteration or addition to or deletion from these Rules, the Management Committee shall consult with the Premier League in the joint standing committee consisting of representatives of the League and the Premier League that is to be established in relation to the Competition and give consideration to any views expressed or proposals made by them.
- 2.4 If at any time, the Premier League shall object to any alteration or addition to or deletion from these Rules, it shall so notify the Management Committee in writing. If the subject matter of the objection is not resolved between the Management Committee and the Premier League within thirty one days of the date of such notice, the matter may be referred by either party to The Football Association Leagues Sanction and Registrations Committee whose decision upon such point shall be final and binding between the parties.

3 Competition Format

- 3.1 The Competition shall be a knock out competition and the Management Committee shall make the draw for each tie in the Competition which shall be drawn in couples. These couples shall compete and the winners shall be drawn and shall compete in the same manner, and this shall be continued until the final two Clubs are left in the Competition and shall compete in the Final Tie. The winner of the Final Tie will be declared the winners of the Competition. Immediately after each draw is made notice shall be given to each Club of the name of its opponents, together with a date on which the tie shall be played.

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For Seasons 2024/25 and 2025/26, the draw for Round 3 of the Competition shall be seeded in order to avoid fixture clashes for those Clubs also participating in the UEFA Champions League or the UEFA Europa League.

- 3.2 The Management Committee shall have the power to order the playing of any preliminary round(s) necessary to manage the number of Clubs participating in Round 1 so as to enable the completion of the Competition across the 5 rounds, semi-finals and final.

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Preliminary Rounds will operate on a seeded basis and ordinarily be contested by Clubs in their first Season following promotion into the EFL and if necessary the lowest placed EFL Clubs from the prior Season that were not relegated to the National League. The exact format will be adjusted to address the number of Premier League Clubs participating in UEFA Club Competitions in the current Season. For Season 2025/26 this involves a preliminary round involving four Clubs (the two promoted from the National League and those finishing in 22nd and 21st place in League Two in Season 2024/25) in single leg ties (with a draw for home advantage) on a north and south basis.

- 3.3 In rounds one, two, three, four and five, Competition Matches shall, unless otherwise agreed by the Management Committee after consultation with both Clubs involved, be played on the ground of the first Club drawn. In the event of any match being played on a neutral ground, the Management Committee shall be responsible for the negotiation of ground and other expenses and shall determine how such expenses are distributed between the Clubs.

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The neutral ground provisions do not relate to situations where a Club is temporarily playing away from 'home' due to, for example, ground redevelopment.

- 3.4 The Semi-Finals shall be played on a two-leg basis, the first leg to be played on the ground of the first Club drawn and the second leg played on the ground of the Club drawn second.
- 3.5 The Final Tie shall be played on a neutral ground to be fixed by the Management Committee. The Management Committee shall have the authority to decide that the Final Tie be played on a Sunday.

4 Arrangement of Fixtures

- 4.1 All Competition Matches shall be arranged as soon as practicable.
- 4.2 The date of a Competition Match shall be determined by the Management Committee after consultation with both Clubs involved. The time of kick off shall be fixed by the Home Club, except in the Final Tie and where a Competition Match is played on a neutral ground, when the kick off time will be fixed by the Management Committee after consultation with both Clubs.
- 4.3 The Management Committee shall adjudicate and/or take any necessary steps in the event of any ties interfering with competition rounds or ties either clashing with UEFA club competitions, Football Association Challenge Cup, League or Premier League matches. If required, this may involve the introduction of seeding arrangements as necessary or other such action as the Management Committee deem appropriate in the circumstances.
- 4.4 International, representative and Football Association Cup matches take precedence over matches in the Competition. Any Club qualifying for a place in a UEFA club competition, up to a maximum of eight such Clubs, shall be exempt from participating in this Competition until round three. When the remaining number of Clubs entered is other than sixty-four the Management Committee shall arrange for byes where necessary. Save for as provided in Rules 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3, no Club shall have a bye in successive rounds of the Competition.

- 4.5 In arranging matches in the Competition, Clubs shall not improperly interfere with home league matches of other Clubs, whether such Clubs are in membership of the League or Premier League.

5 Non-fulfilment of Fixtures

- 5.1 Each Club will use its best endeavours to ensure that each Competition Match takes place on the date and at the time fixed for it.
- 5.2 Dislocation of Competition Matches caused by any reason whatsoever shall be immediately reported to Management Committee by the Clubs concerned and it shall be the duty of the Home Club in each instance immediately to notify the appointed referee and assistant referees of such dislocation.
- 5.3 If, a Club is unable to fulfil its obligation to complete a Competition Match for any reason then the Management Committee shall use its reasonable endeavours to rearrange the fixture for the earliest reasonable opportunity (including but not limited to arranging for the Competition Match to be played at a neutral venue) which will not be later than the date of the first Competition Match scheduled to take place in the immediately following round. Where the Management Committee determine that the Competition Match cannot be rearranged the Management Committee shall have the power to declare that the Competition Match shall be abandoned. Where the Management Committee declare that the Competition Match shall be abandoned, the Club shall forfeit the Competition Match, pay the opposing Club's expenses in accordance with Rule 5.7 and the opposing Club shall receive a bye into the next round of the Competition.

[Guidance – Rearrangement](#)

For example the Second Round of the Competition is scheduled to take place on 27/28 August. In the event that a First Round Competition Match was postponed, the rearranged match must take place by a date that would reasonably allow the winning Club to participate in the following round on the scheduled date. In the event that the match cannot be rearranged for a suitable date to allow the winning Club to participate in the following round then the Management Committee will award a bye in accordance with Rule 5.3.

- 5.4 If, both Clubs are unable to fulfil the obligation to complete a Competition Match for any reason then Management Committee shall use its reasonable endeavours to rearrange the Competition Match for the earliest reasonable opportunity (including but not limited to arranging for the Competition Match to be played at a neutral venue) which will not be later than the date of the first Competition Match scheduled to take place in the immediately following round. Where the Management Committee determines that the Competition Match cannot be rearranged the Management Committee shall have the power to declare that the Competition Match shall be abandoned. Where this results in an uneven number of Clubs being entered into the next round, the Management Committee 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 - Rearrangement](#)

For example the Second Round of the Competition is scheduled to take place on 23/24 August in the event that a First Round Competition Match was postponed, the rearranged match must take place by a date that would reasonably allow the winning Club to participate in the following round on the scheduled date. In the event that the match cannot be rearranged for a suitable date to allow the winning Club to participate in the following round then the Management Committee will award a bye in accordance with Rule 5.3.

- 5.5 Failure to fulfil any Competition Match will constitute a breach of these Rules unless the Club can demonstrate that:
- 5.5.1 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
 - 5.5.2 the Club could not remedy the consequences of the Event prior to the Competition Match despite using its best endeavours to do so.
- 5.6 Where a Club has breached these Rules in accordance with Rule 5.5 the Management Committee shall have the power to:
- 5.6.1 require that Club to forfeit the Competition Match and award to the opposing Club a bye into the next round; and/or
 - 5.6.2 impose penalties against the Club in accordance with Rule 22.1; and/or
 - 5.6.3 delegate the matter to a Disciplinary Commission in accordance with Rule 22.3.
- 5.7 A Club which breaches these Rules in accordance with Rule 5.5 shall be liable to pay compensation for any expenses actually incurred by the opposing Club as a direct result of the failure. The amount of compensation will be at the discretion of the Management Committee who will consider each such case on its merits. The Management Committee may refer the amount of compensation to be paid to a Disciplinary Commission appointed under Rule 22 dealing with the misconduct by the Club failing to fulfil its fixture.

6 Players

- 6.1 In all rounds of the Competition a Player must be a "Registered Player" of his Club, as defined in Rule 6.2 below, in order to be eligible to participate in a Competition Match.
- 6.2 A Registered Player is one who would be registered and eligible to participate in a Premier League match and/or League Match (as defined in the League Regulations) commencing at the same time and on the same date as the Competition Match in accordance with the Premier League Rules and/or the League Regulations, or would have been but for the operation of Premier League Rule U.1.1 or League Regulation 44.9 (as amended from time to time).
- 6.3 Players registered on a temporary basis will not be eligible to play unless the Club holding his full registration gives its written consent (also subject to any restrictions on the number of loan players prescribed by applicable Premier League Rules or League Regulations).
- 6.4 A Registered Player shall be permitted to play for up to two Clubs (or clubs) in the Competition in any one Season where such Player;

- 6.4.1 has appeared for his parent or loan Club (or club) in the Competition prior to the closure of the Summer Transfer Window and has either been recalled by the parent Club or subsequently moved to a different Club (or club) on a Temporary Loan Transfer (or Temporary Transfer where a Premier League Club) or permanent Transfer prior to the end of that Summer Transfer Window; or
- 6.4.2 has appeared for his parent or loan Club in the Competition prior to the closure of the Winter Transfer Window or the first leg of the Semi-Final (whichever is sooner) and has either been recalled by the parent Club or subsequently moved to a different Club on a Temporary Loan Transfer (or Temporary Transfer where a Premier League Club) or permanent Transfer prior to the closure of the Winter Transfer Window, or the first leg of the Semi-Final (whichever is sooner); or
- 6.4.3 such Player moves on an Emergency Goalkeeper Loan at any time during the Season.

Guidance

Matches in the Competition are first team fixtures and will 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).

- 6.5 Each Club shall play its full available strength in and during all Competition Matches, unless some satisfactory reason is given. The Management Committee may from time to time issue a policy as to what constitutes 'full available strength'. In the event of the explanation not being deemed satisfactory the Management Committee shall have power to impose such penalties as they shall think fit. The provisions governing disciplinary matters in relation to the Competition are contained in Rule 22.

Guidance

Clubs must ensure that they comply with Rule 6.5 and play its full available strength in Competition Matches. However, where it is necessary for a Club to rely on its full squad of Registered Players in order to fulfil a fixture due to the circumstances described in Rules 5.1 – 5.3 then that Club shall be deemed to have fulfilled the "full available strength" requirements.

7 Team Sheets/Pre-Match Briefing and Replacement of Substitute Players

- 7.1 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 Competition Match (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 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.

- 7.2 Each Club shall (via the online reporting system provided for this purpose) submit a copy of its Team Sheet together with the result of the Competition Match to the League within 48 (forty-eight) hours of the conclusion of the Competition Match.
- 7.3 At least 60 (sixty) minutes before the advertised time of kick-off of a Competition Match:
- 7.3.1 the captain; and
 - 7.3.2 the person in charge of the team on the day (i.e. the manager); or
 - 7.3.3 where the person described in Rule 7.3.2 is subject to a ban preventing them from attending, another senior representative of the coaching staff,
- shall attend a briefing with the referee.

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A breach of this Rule 7.3 is designated a strict liability offence as detailed in Regulation 88 of the EFL Regulations.

- 7.4 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.

8 Substitutes

- 8.1 Subject to Rule 8.3, in all Competition Matches, each Club is permitted to name up to nine substitutes on the Team Sheet, of whom not more than five may take part in the Competition Match. Each Club is only permitted a maximum of three opportunities to make substitutions during the Competition Match. Clubs may make substitutions at half time and any substitutions made will not count towards the maximum of three opportunities. A Club may make more than one substitution at each of its three opportunities.
- 8.2 Where either the Semi-Final 2nd leg or Final Tie goes to extra time (in accordance with the provisions of Rule 12.5), then during extra time only each Club participating in that Competition Match will be permitted an additional opportunity to make an additional substitution from those substitutes listed on the Team Sheet.

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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).

- 8.3 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 8.3 shall not count towards the five substitutions permitted to take part in the Competition Match in accordance with Rule 8.1 or towards the permitted number of opportunities to make a substitution in accordance with Rules 8.1 and 8.2. 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.
- 8.4 All substitutes must be nominated and included on the Team Sheet handed to the referee prior to the Competition Match. Not more than five substitutes of each Club may warm up or down at the same time on the perimeter of the pitch on which the match is being played.

9 Players' Clothing

- 9.1 The Players' shirts and shorts must be clearly numbered in accordance with the Premier League Rules and League Regulations respectively.
- 9.2 The captain shall wear a distinguishing armband provided by the League to indicate his status.
- 9.3 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 9.4, the 'home kit' so registered by each Club shall be worn for all home Competition Matches during the next following Season and no changes either in the kit or combination of kit shall be permitted during the course of the Season.
- 9.4 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 home Competition Match.
- 9.5 Visiting Clubs shall play in a registered kit which is clearly distinguishable (shirts and socks) from those of their opponents. 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.
- 9.6 When playing on neutral ground Clubs will determine either by agreement or the toss of a coin which of them should be deemed to be the Home Club.
- 9.7 Upon receipt of the match official appointments it is the responsibility of both Home and Visiting Clubs to provide the 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 Competition Match.

- 9.8 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.
- 9.9 'Shirt' in the context of this Rule shall also include 'Jersey' where applicable.
- 9.10 The colours of clothing worn by those individuals responsible for returning the ball to Players (if having gone out of play) must not clash with the kit of either of the competing Clubs.
- 9.11 In Competition Matches, the Players' shirts may carry advertising subject to:
 - 9.11.1 the regulations relating to the clothing of players laid down by the Football Association; and
 - 9.11.2 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), Premier League Rules and League Regulations respectively; and
 - 9.11.3 for Competition 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.
- 9.12 The shirts of all Players Competition Matches shall include such sleeve badge(s) in such format as the League shall prescribe. There shall be no form of words, advertising, badge or other logo above or below the sleeve badge(s) except as permitted by the League.

10 Giant Screens

- 10.1 Except with prior written consent of the Management Committee, giant screens or the like at a Club's stadia shall not be used to relay to spectators closed circuit pictures of the Competition Match at which they are present. Any consent given under this Rule shall be subject to the following conditions:
 - 10.1.1 the screen shall be located so that it does not interfere with the Competition Match at which it is used or distract the Players and match officials;
 - 10.1.2 the screen shall be operated by a responsible person who is fully aware of the conditions covering its use; and
 - 10.1.3 the screen may be used to show live action and, when the ball is not in play, action replays of positive incidents, decisions issued by goal line technology (in such format as the League may specify from time to time) and / or any other systems intended to aid the decision of match officials on the field of play.
- 10.2 The screen shall not be used to show:
 - 10.2.1 action replays of negative or controversial incidents;
 - 10.2.2 any incident which may bring into question the judgement of any match official;
 - 10.2.3 the area of the trainers' bench;

- 10.2.4 until substitute boards have been displayed, pictures of any substitute Player warming up or preparing to enter the field of play; and
- 10.2.5 any material which would tend to criticise, disparage, belittle or discredit The League, any Club or any official, Player or match official or to bring the game into disrepute,
- unless utilised in connection with the use of goal line technology and/or video assistant referees in accordance with Rule 12.6.

11 Commencement of the Match

- 11.1 For all Competition 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.

12 Laws of the Game

- 12.1 The Competition shall observe the League Regulations and The Football Association Rules and all Competition Matches shall be played under the Laws of the Game (as defined in The League Regulations). In the event of any conflict between any such Rules, Regulations, Bye-Laws and Laws as aforesaid, the Rules of the Football Association shall prevail.
- 12.2 In all Competition Matches the half-time interval shall be fifteen minutes.
- 12.3 All Competition Matches shall be of ninety minutes' duration but any Competition Match which from any cause whatever falls short of 90 minutes' duration may be ordered to count as a completed fixture or be replayed in full or in part as the Management Committee may in their absolute discretion determine.
- 12.4 In the event of the scores being level at the end of ninety minutes' play in rounds one, two, three, four and five no extra time shall be played, and the winners shall be determined by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with procedures as approved by IFAB.
- 12.5 If the aggregate score is level at the end of ninety minutes in either:
- 12.5.1 the second leg of the Semi-Final; or
- 12.5.2 in the Final Tie,
- an extra half hour shall be played and if the aggregate score is still level at the end of extra time the winner of that Competition Match shall be determined by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with procedures as approved by IFAB.
- 12.6 **Use of Technology.** Where the venue at which any Competition Match is to be played has:
- 12.6.1 a goal line technology system installed; and/or
- 12.6.2 such equipment as is necessary to enable the use of video assistant referees,
- in compliance with the Laws of the Game, the Management Committee shall be entitled to determine whether any such system(s) should be used, and its decision shall be final. The Management Committee may also mandate the installation of temporary systems for a Semi-Final at home grounds of League Clubs.

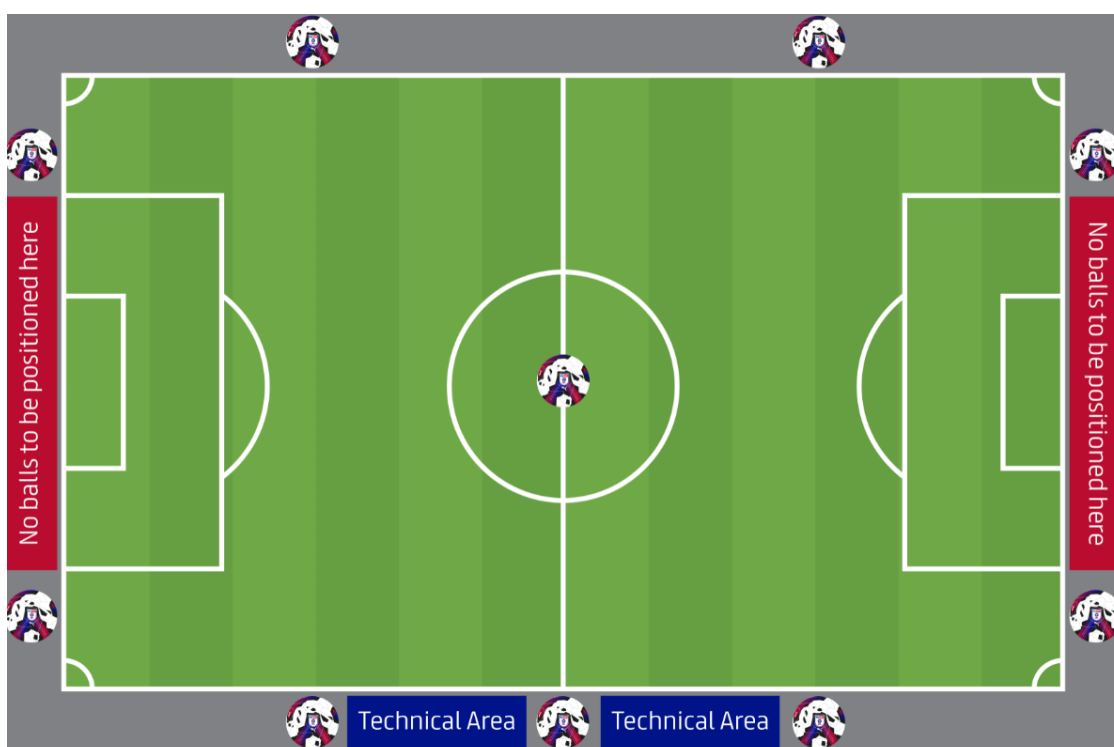
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Costs of installation would be borne centrally. Costs of operations fall under Rule 18.1.

- 12.7 **Towels / Drying Aids.** No Club shall be entitled to utilise towels or other articles (including articles obtained from spectators) to dry footballs during any Competition Match.
- 12.8 **Multiple Balls.** Clubs must use a system of replacement balls for all Competition 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.

Guidance

A full guidance note will be provided by the League in conjunction with PGMOL but we helpfully set out a diagram below for ease of reference:



13 Trainers' Benches and Technical Area Participants Behaviour Charter

- 13.1 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 Participant Behaviour Charter 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.

14 Match Officials

- 14.1 The appointment of referees and assistant referees shall be made by the Management Committee from the list of referees compiled pursuant to Regulation 40 of The League Regulations.
- 14.2 The remuneration payable to referees and assistant referees shall be determined by the Board of Professional Game Match Officials Limited.
- 14.3 The Management Committee shall present souvenirs to the match officials in the Final Tie.

15 Match Footage

- 15.1 Both Clubs and PGMOL officials will be provided by The League either a high-resolution and/or low resolution copy of the match footage of any Competition Match. Clubs shall not be permitted to:
 - 15.1.1 use any footage for financial gain; or
 - 15.1.2 connect any recording device to any camera(s) or any other broadcast related network or equipment installed and/or operated by or on behalf of The League without first obtaining the written permission of The League.

16 Medical Practitioners

- 16.1 Each Club in each Competition Match shall ensure that it has such medical provisions in place as would be required for league matches by the Regulations or Rules of the League in which it normally participates.

17 Referee Reports

- 17.1 Each Club shall submit the marking of the referee's performance to The League within six days of the Competition Match.

18 Financial Rules

- 18.1 The proceeds of all Competition Matches (including replayed matches, admittance to the Visiting Club's home ground where a beam back is provided) after paying thereout the travelling expenses of the Visiting Club, the ground and other expenses of the Competition Match including Value Added Tax, 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 incurred pursuant to Rule 12.6, and clearing the ground of snow, provided in the case of the last mentioned item the Visiting Club is notified in advance of the Competition Match in question of the approximate cost (such net proceeds being hereinafter referred to as '**the Net Cup Competition Gate**') shall save as set out below be divided as follows:
 - 18.1.1 45 per cent to each Club taking part in such Competition Match; and
 - 18.1.2 10 per cent to the Cup Competition Pool (hereinafter called '**the Pool Account**') the proceeds of which are to be divided at the end of the Competition in the ratio 1:1 between:
 - (a) the Clubs in The Premier League; and

(b) the Clubs in The League.

- 18.2 In the Semi-Final and Final Tie only, a sum of up to 6.3 per cent of the Net Cup Competition Gate shall be paid to the League (to be utilised by the League as appropriate). The remaining proceeds of each such Competition Match shall be divided between the two Clubs in question and the Pool Account in the proportions referred to in Rule 18.1 above provided always that as regards the Final Tie and any replay thereof, where a Club sells match tickets, it does so on behalf of the League and shall pay forthwith into the Pool Account the proceeds of sale and shall send to the League within 28 days of the said Competition Match a final statement of account and ticket reconciliation and shall pay into the Pool Account any balance due whether the Club has received payment or not. Within seven days of the Final Tie the League shall send to each Club participating in such Competition Match 50% (fifty per cent) of the estimate of the amount which that Club will be entitled to receive out of the net gate receipts for that Competition Match.
- 18.3 Each Home Club shall send the appropriate shares of the Net Cup Competition Gate to the Visiting Club and to The League, together with a statement of the calculations thereof within ten days of the match.
- 18.4 For all Competition Matches (other than the Final Tie), the Visiting Club may claim travel expenses incurred (and the amount claimed shall be an expense of the Competition Match) at the following rates:
- 18.4.1 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
- 18.4.2 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
- 18.4.3 actual cost of motor coach hire (not exceeding £2,400).
- 18.5 For all Competition Matches (other than the Final Tie), subject to Rule 18.6, the Visiting Club may also claim hotel expenses incurred (and the amount claimed shall be an expense of the match) at the following rates:
- 18.5.1 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
- 18.5.2 where there is no overnight stay, a maximum of £450 (where necessarily incurred).
- 18.6 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 5 hours (including a stop of not more than 45 minutes) of the conclusion of the Competition 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.
- 18.7 In respect of the Final Tie, each Club shall be entitled to claim (and the amount claimed shall be an expense of the Competition Match):
- 18.7.1 travel expenses incurred in accordance with the rates set out in Rule 18.4; and

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

18.8 In cases where the receipts are not sufficient to cover the expenses of the Competition Match, the Home Club shall share the losses with the Visiting Club, with the Visiting Club paying to the Home Club the relevant proportion of the loss within fourteen days of notification by the Home Club of such losses, accompanied by a detailed statement setting out the receipts and expenses in connection with such Competition Match, signed by a duly authorised officer of the Home Club. The Management Committee shall, however, be empowered to reimburse both Clubs for such loss, at its discretion.

18.9 The Management Committee retains the right to amend the provisions of Rule 18 at any time during the Competition provided that it provides Clubs with not less than 2 days' written notice of such amendments.

19 Postponement and Abandonment

19.1 Save where otherwise provided for in Rule 5, when a Competition Match is abandoned or postponed the Visiting Club shall be entitled to receive from the Home Club, out of the gate of the abandoned or postponed Competition Match, one set of travelling expenses and/or hotel expenses (at the rate and as determined by the League from time to time), which in the opinion of the League are caused solely by the postponement or abandonment. This amount shall be a charge against the gate when calculating the 3% levy under Article 36. A Club shall only be entitled to claim hotel expenses where it would be necessary for the Visiting Club to leave its headquarters within five hours travelling time, including a stop of not more than 30 minutes, of the conclusion of the League Match.

19.2 For any Competition Match ordered to be replayed in consequence of a breach of Rule, the Club in default shall not receive any share of the proceeds of such replayed Competition Match (except travelling expenses and hotel expenses calculated in accordance with Rules 18.4 to 18.6) without the consent of the Management Committee and such consent shall only be given in special circumstances. If consent is not given, the share shall be taken by the Management Committee and placed in the Pool Account.

20 Trophy

20.1 When the winning Club shall have been ascertained, the Management Committee shall deliver the Cup to such Club, which shall be responsible for its return to the Management Committee in good order and condition at least one month prior to the Final Tie in the following year, provided always that the winning Club shall, from time to time throughout the year, on request from the League, release the Cup to the League for such purposes as the League shall require.

20.2 In addition to the Cup, the Management Committee shall present thirty souvenirs to the winning Club in the Final Tie; and thirty souvenirs to the losing Club in the Final Tie. Additional souvenirs may be presented with the consent of the Management Committee but shall be at the cost of the requesting Club.

20.3 A Club that through the Competition qualifies for a UEFA Competition for the following Season must adhere to the rules and licensing requirements of UEFA applicable to that Season.

21 Tickets

- 21.1 Immediately after the draw is known the two Clubs concerned must mutually agree the prices. All questions in dispute must be immediately referred to the Management Committee for settlement.
- 21.2 In all Competition Matches, the Visiting Club shall have the right to claim 10 per cent of all tickets reserved or otherwise sold in advance (any variation to that figure shall be subject to the consent of the Management Committee) and on the following conditions:
- 21.2.1 the request for tickets shall be made within three days of the draw, with the exception of the first round where such request should be made no later than 14 days before the date of the match;
- 21.2.2 the admission prices to be charged to supporters of a Visiting Club shall not be higher than those charged to the supporters of the Home Club for comparable accommodation and in particular concessionary rates offered to senior citizens and junior supporters shall apply equally to both sets of supporters;
- 21.2.3 unless otherwise mutually agreed in writing, all tickets shall be on a sale or return basis; and
- 21.2.4 at every home match, a minimum of 10 per cent of the total disabled spectator accommodation must be made available to disabled supporters of the Visiting Club.
- 21.3 A Visiting Club shall be entitled to a minimum of 50 Complimentary Stand Tickets.
- 21.4 Rules 21.2 to 21.3 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.
- 21.5 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.
- 21.6 Complimentary tickets issued by the Home Club, other than those required pursuant to Rule 21.5 and any required to be supplied to Sponsors under any agreement entered into by The League, but including those supplied to the Visiting Club pursuant to Rule 21.3, in excess of 250 must be accounted for at the appropriate rate.
- 21.7 Where the Home Club issues season tickets which allow holders of such tickets:
- 21.7.1 free admission to a Competition Match 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 Competition Match; or
- 21.7.2 discounted admission to a Competition Match then in calculating the amount to be included as Gross Receipts of the Competition Match any discount from the admission price shall be excluded.
- 21.8 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 Competition Match.

- 21.9 All questions in dispute shall immediately be referred to The League for settlement.
- 21.10 All Clubs (and clubs) shall comply with the requirements of The League in respect of the sale of tickets to the Final Tie of the Competition. Failure to do so will constitute misconduct. Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, any entitlement to a share in the proceeds of such Final Tie may be reduced to reflect any financial penalty imposed for a breach of this Rule.
- 21.11 Management Committee shall have the right to amend this Rule 21 at any time during the Competition provided that it provides Clubs with not less than 2 days' written notice of such amendments.

22 Disputes

- 22.1 The Management Committee shall have full power to investigate alleged breaches of these Rules and impose against Clubs whom they shall deem guilty of having offended against or committed a breach of these Rules, such penalties by way of reprimand, fine or other penalty (or any combination thereof) as the Management Committee may think fit in the circumstances, and shall be entitled to order any Club to pay compensation to any other Club for any such offence against or breach of these Rules or misconduct.
- 22.2 The Management Committee may make such orders as it considers appropriate in relation to the costs incurred by the parties or the League.
- 22.3 The Management Committee shall have the power in their absolute discretion to delegate the matter to a Disciplinary Commission in accordance with the Regulations save that the time limit for the lodging of any defence to the protest or complaint is reduced to five business days.
- 22.4 The Management Committee shall be empowered, at any time and from time to time to designate any breach of these Rules as a strict liability offence, to impose in respect thereof fixed fines in such amount as they shall determine, and from time to time to increase, reduce or otherwise vary such fixed fine, on notice in writing to the Clubs. Such alterations shall not be deemed to be an alteration to these Rules for the purposes of Rules 2.3 and 2.4.
- 22.5 A Club will have the right to appeal the penalty imposed by the Management Committee or any decision of a Disciplinary Commission in accordance with Regulation 95 save that the time limit for lodging the notice and grounds of the appeal set out in Regulation 95.3 shall be reduced to five business days.
- 22.6 The designation of any such other offence and the fixing of any fine shall not prevent the Management Committee from taking such other disciplinary action or imposing any other penalty on a Club if it shall commit such offence more than the number of occasions in respect of which fixed penalties are prescribed, or, if no such number of occasions is specified, on more than one occasion.
- 22.7 The Management Committee shall be empowered, at any time and from time to time, to increase, reduce or otherwise vary any monetary payment, fee or penalty specified in these Rules, on notice in writing to the Clubs. Such

alterations shall not be deemed to be an alteration to these Rules for the purposes of Rules 2.3 and 2.4.

- 22.8 By participating in the Competition Clubs (including those Clubs who are members of the Premier League) are subject to the jurisdiction of the League in respect of matters relating to the Competition (but not otherwise) and the Clubs (including those Clubs who are members of the Premier League) are subject to the provisions of Sections 8 and 9 of the Regulations as if the same were set out herein.

23 Stadium Requirements

- 23.1 No Competition Match (other than the Final) shall take place at any stadium where the field of play is covered or partially covered without the prior written consent of the Management Committee after full consultation with all Clubs.
- 23.2 Any Club proposing to cover or partially cover the field of play shall be required to submit outline plans and copy of the planning application prior to such planning application being submitted to the appropriate statutory authority.
- 23.3 No matches shall be played on an artificial surface.
- 23.4 Each League Club shall comply with the provision of Regulation 13, Regulation 36.9 and Appendix 1 of The League Regulations, as regards registration of its ground, floodlighting, pitch dimensions. Each Premier League Club shall comply with the provisions of The Premier League Rules as regards registration of its ground, floodlighting, pitch dimensions.
- 23.5 Provided that a Premier League Club complies with the relevant Premier League Rules, it shall be deemed to comply with League requirements. Premier League Clubs may not alter the pitch dimensions for Competition Matches from those registered with The Premier League.
- 23.6 Clubs are not permitted to play any Competition Match behind closed doors so that the public are excluded from the stadia unless:
- 23.6.1 the Management Committee has provided its written consent to the same; and/or
- 23.6.2 playing behind closed doors is a consequence of any disciplinary or regulatory proceedings; and/or
- 23.6.3 any order, direction or requirement of the UK Government and/or any other public authority prevents the Club from being able to admit any supporters to its stadia.

24 Broadcasting

- 24.1 No Competition Match shall be televised or recorded or transmitted by satellite or cable or any similar method except with the written consent of the Management Committee.
- 24.2 The League or any subsidiary or associated company of the League or duly authorised agent or Broadcast Partner(s) (and its respective employees and agents) shall be allowed access to the grounds of all Clubs (and to the television gantries, camera positions and facilities) for the purpose of recording or broadcasting matches arranged under the jurisdiction of the League.

- 24.3 As a minimum, each Club participating in any Competition Match that is scheduled to be televised live in the United Kingdom shall ensure that:
- 24.3.1 in the week preceding the day of the match there is a continuous period of 2 hours during which the Broadcast Partner(s) and title sponsor (semi-final and final only) may conduct interviews with Players (and at least 1 Player) and the Manager, which interviews may be transmitted live and/or recorded; and
- 24.3.2 for the benefit of the UK domestic Broadcast Partner(s) only on the day of the Competition Match itself:
- (a) make a Player participating in that Competition Match available for interview pre-match (and shall use all reasonable endeavours to meet the first or second choice requests of the Broadcast Partner(s));
 - (b) make a Player participating in that Competition Match available for interview post match immediately (or as soon as practicable) after final whistle;
 - (c) make the 'Man of the Match' as nominated by the Broadcast Partner(s) available for interview post match as soon after the final whistle as reasonably practicable and in any event no later than 10 minutes after final whistle;
 - (d) make the manager available for interview post match as soon after the final whistle as reasonably practicable and in any event no later than 15 minutes after final whistle.

25 Sponsorship and Other Commercial Arrangements

- 25.1 The Management Committee shall have the power to negotiate and administer sponsorship and other commercial agreements (including broadcasting) relating to the Competition. Any such agreement entered into by the League shall be binding upon each Club and each Club shall comply with the requirements of the Management Committee in relation thereto.
- 25.2 Subject as aforesaid and without prejudice to the generality of Rule 25.1, each Club must, if required by the sponsor, commercial partner or broadcaster, make available the contracted services and facilities at the Club's home ground.
- 25.3 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 Clubs entire playing kit and/or training wear pursuant to the FA Kit Advertising Regulations).

[Guidance](#)

The EFL charity partner for Season 2025/26 is EFL in the Community.

Note: Clubs are reminded that the facilities required at each ground will depend upon the terms of each commercial contract and as agreed with The Premier League. Details will be circulated by The League's Commercial Department.