

1. NATIONAL LEAGUE SYSTEM REGULATIONS

No.	REGULATION	PROPOSED AMENDMENTS	RATIONALE
1.	Throughout	Amend references to “ground grading” to “Stadium Accreditation” or “Stadium Accreditation Programme”, depending on context.	To reflect the change in terminology/process.
2.	Regulation 5.2	Remove any sections relating to the promotion/relegation process to be carried out in 2023/24.	<p>The existing NLS Regulations set out the promotion/relegation process at Steps 4, 5 and 6 for both the 2023/24 and 2024/25 seasons.</p> <p>The 2023/24 sections can therefore be removed ahead of the 2024/25 season.</p>
3.	Regulation 6.2	<p><u>If a Club wishes to move to either: (a) another division at the Step of the NLS at which its current division operates, or (b) another division at a Step of the NLS below that at which its current division operates, Any that Club wishing to move from one League to another</u> must make an application in writing to the Committee on or before 31st March in each year to be effective for the following Playing Season. In the event of such application being successful, the League from which the Club is moving <u>(if applicable)</u> shall not levy a financial penalty on that Club.</p>	To clarify that an application to move from one division to another can be made in relation to lateral movement within a Step and also downwards to a Step below that which the Club currently participates (i.e. voluntary relegation).

2. STANDARDISED RULES

TABLE 1

No.	RULE	PROPOSED AMENDMENTS	RATIONALE
1.	Throughout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typographical amendments. • Update cross-references (including in Fees Tariff / Fines Tariff / Index). 	General permission sought to make these non-substantive amendments.
2.	Rule 1 Definitions	<p>“Criteria Document” means the document entitled “National Ground Grading Stadium Accreditation Criteria Document” issued by The FA from time to time and shall, unless stated to the contrary, mean the latest edition of the document.</p> <p>“Stadium Accreditation Programme” means the accreditation programme through which a Club’s stadium is assessed against the relevant requirements set out in the Criteria Document.</p>	Updated terminology and new related definition.
3.	Rule 2.2 Membership Requirements	<p>All Clubs shall have Grounds and headquarters situated in England, the Channel Islands, Isle of Man if applicable or Wales and the Competition Secretary shall send their names and particulars to The FA annually by the date appointed by, and in the format required by, The FA. Clubs playing in England shall be duly affiliated at all times to a recognised County Football Association. Welsh Clubs shall be affiliated to The FA of Wales. Each Club shall notify the Competition Secretary of its affiliation number each year as soon as practicable after it has received same. Each Club shall return to the Competition Secretary a fully completed questionnaire relating to Form “D” required by The FA by the date given in the circular letter accompanying the questionnaire issued by the Competition Secretary.</p>	Clubs are no longer issued with an affiliation number and instead their League completes their affiliation on The FA’s Competition portal.
4.	Rule 2.4 Membership Requirements	<p>The Club as at 31 March in any year shall either:</p> <p>(i) Own the freehold of the Ground, or</p> <p>(ii) Have a lease for the Ground that extends uninterrupted for a minimum of the current and following Playing Season; or</p> <p>(iii) Possess an agreement for the use of the Ground that is acceptable to The Football Association following consultation with the relevant Competition.</p>	To signpost through guidance a proposed enhancement to the membership requirement for Step 1 Clubs regarding Grounds with leases, whereby from the 2025/26 Season a Club at Step 1 will be required to have a lease that extends for a minimum of the current and following five playing seasons.

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		<p>Guidance: <i>From the 2025/26 Season, Clubs at Step 1 with a lease for their Ground shall be required to have a lease that extends uninterrupted for a minimum of that season and the following five Playing Seasons.</i></p> <p>In each case the Club must provide to the Competition of which it is a member and to The Football Association:</p> <p>If the Ground is freehold either currently dated Official Copies of the freehold title at the Land Registry in the name of the entity in membership of the Competition or, if unregistered, a Certificate of Title from the Club's solicitor showing that the Ground is owned by the entity in membership of the Competition, or</p> <p>If the Ground is held leasehold a copy of the signed and dated lease in the name of the entity in membership of the Competition; if the expiry date of the lease has already passed or is dated before the end of the next full Playing Season, a certificate from the Club's solicitor as to whether or not a notice has been given by the landlord to terminate the lease. In addition the Club must provide evidence of registration at the Land Registry, or explain why the Lease is not registered.</p> <p>If the Ground is subject to an acceptable agreement a copy of the signed and dated agreement for the use of the Ground together with confirmation from The Football Association, following consultation with the relevant Competition, that the agreement is acceptable.</p> <p>The Club must disclose whether the Club's occupation of the Ground is subject to any third party option, whether the ground is charged by way of security and whether or not any break clauses in the lease or agreement have been exercised either by the landlord or the tenant.</p> <p>In all cases The Football Association and the Competition of which it is a member have the right to call for further information.</p>	<p>This future change is proposed by the National League following discussions with the EFL, as the EFL has proposed an amendment to its Regulations ahead of the 2024/25 Season to reduce its equivalent requirement on entry from 10 years to 5 years (providing a short period for promoted clubs to meet the 10 year requirement).</p> <p>This change will ensure that all Step 1 Clubs meet this aspect of the EFL's entry requirements by default, whilst acknowledging the need for a one-season grace period in which Clubs can make the necessary arrangements to meet this future membership requirement.</p>

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5.	Rule 2.7 Membership Requirements	<p>Clubs seeking membership or applying to retain membership of the Company must comply with the requirements provided for in the Criteria Document for <u>the step at which the club is seeking to play or</u> the step at which the Club is playing. Only clubs which meet these criteria in full will be eligible for membership. All clubs visited by representatives of the <u>Competition Stadium Accreditation Programme</u> in pursuance of the document <u>Criteria Document</u> will pay a non-returnable fee. In the absence of a procedure for application for membership being established by The FA, the Board shall establish such procedure.</p> <p>The Board <u>FA</u> shall establish a procedure for inspecting Clubs' grounds from time to time to ensure that the grade attained by that ground is maintained.</p>	<p>Clarificatory drafting amendments and those related to the change in process whereby the Football Foundation will be collecting a fee from Clubs who are assessed under the new Stadium Accreditation Programme.</p> <p>The final amendment clarifies that it will now be The FA (through the Stadium Accreditation Sub-Committee & Executive) that will determine who is to be assessed, not each League.</p>
6.	Rule 4.6 Power of the Board	<p>If a Club fails to comply with a Board Directive within fourteen days of the timescale set out in the notification of such order or instruction, or within fourteen days of an operative date specified in that order or instruction, it shall not be allowed to play or take part in the business of the Company until the expiry of 7 days from the day the order or instruction is complied with.</p>	<p>To enable a League to vary the time available to a Club to comply with a Board Directive – e.g. to enable the timescale to be shortened for smaller requests or increase the timescale commensurately where a request may reasonably require more than 14 days.</p>
7.	Rule 6.1.1 Registration of Players	<p>A Player is one who has been registered via the relevant Online Player Registration System and such registration has been: <u>(a)</u> approved by the Competition, <u>and (b) in the case of a:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) <u>Contract Player – approved by the league the player is transferring from and The FA.</u> (ii) <u>Loan player (if loaned from a club participating in the Premier League or the EFL) – approved by the league the player is transferring from and The FA.</u> (iii) <u>Loan player (if loaned from a club participating in the NLS) – approved by The FA.</u> 	<p>To clarify that in the case of contract or loan players approval is required by other organisations.</p> <p>This does not need to include non-contract registrations as there is no 'releasing' league.</p>

No.	RULE	PROPOSED AMENDMENTS	RATIONALE
8.	Rule 6.1.2 Registration of Players	<p>NATIONAL LEAGUE ONLY</p> <p>A Player will only be eligible to play in a match organised by The National League if his registration form; transfer form, or loan transfer form, has been received by The National League via the Online Player Registration System, by 5pm on the last normal business Day before the day of the match when a match is played on a Saturday, Sunday or a Bank or Public Holiday or not less than four hours before the scheduled kick-off of the match when a match is played on a midweek Day in which the player is required to play and found to be in order, and so registered. It is the responsibility of all Clubs to ensure any player signing a registration form has, where necessary, the required International Transfer Certificate and in the case of Contract Players, including those on loan, must have approval from The Football Association. Clubs are also responsible for all players being correctly registered before fielding any player. Failure to do so constitutes misconduct and the Club will be charged with fielding an ineligible player.</p> <p>COMPETITIONS OTHER THAN NATIONAL LEAGUE</p> <p>A Player will only be eligible to play in a match organised by the Competition if his registration form; transfer form, or loan transfer form, has been received by the Company, via the Online Player Registration System, not less than four hours before the scheduled kick-off of the match in which the player is required to play and found to be in order, and so registered. It is the responsibility of all Clubs to ensure any player registering, has, where necessary, the required International Transfer Certificate and in the case of Contract Players, including those on loan, must have approval from The Football Association. Clubs are also responsible for all players being correctly registered before fielding any player. Failure to do so constitutes misconduct and the Club will be charged with fielding an ineligible player.</p>	<p>To delete/harmonise content which is duplicative of the text set out at SR 6.4.1 (which is being amended – see below).</p>

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		<p><u>ALL COMPETITIONS</u></p> <p><u>It is the responsibility of all Clubs to ensure any player signing a registration form has, where necessary, the required International Transfer Certificate and in the case of Contract Players, including those on loan, must have approval from The FA.</u></p> <p><u>Any relevant registration/transfer/loan forms must be uploaded onto the Online Player Registration System within five (5) days of the Player signing the forms.</u></p> <p>The Registration of Players are subject to fees in accordance with the fees tariff.</p> <p>The status of a player must be clearly stated on the registration information submitted. Hard copies of the registration form are not required to be submitted to the Competition. However, these must be completed, signed and retained by Clubs in case of dispute or in case requested by The FA and/or the Competition. The registration of a Player will be valid from the date of registration to the end of that Playing Season only or, if in the case of <u>save for (a) a Contract or Loan Player whose contract or loan expires before the end of the Playing Season, or (b) a Contract Player registered with a club participating at Steps 1 to 4), where in each case the registration shall be valid</u> for the term of the said <u>applicable</u> contract or loan.</p> <p><u>There must be a minimum gap of 14 days between the commencement date of a Player's registration with one Club and the commencement date of a Player's registration with any subsequent Club (save where that Player is to register and play as a goalkeeper).</u></p>	<p>To ensure forms are submitted in a timely manner.</p> <p>To clarify that registrations of players on multi-year contracts at Steps 1 to 4 do not need to be extended annually given this happens automatically via iFAS.</p> <p>This relocates current Rule 6.5.3 and clarifies that the principle of the Rule applies regardless of how the Player's previous registration ended (e.g. via a transfer or where it is terminated or cancelled).</p>

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9.	Rule 6.2.1 Registration Periods	<p>6.2.1 [At Steps 1 to 4, the The Registration Period shall be the period commencing commence at midnight on the last day of the immediately preceding Playing Season and ending end at 5.00pm on the fourth Thursday in March.] following dates:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="551 416 1218 855"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="551 416 770 448">STEP</th> <th data-bbox="770 416 994 448">COMMENCES</th> <th data-bbox="994 416 1218 448">ENDS</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="551 448 770 576"><u>1 & 2</u></td> <td data-bbox="770 448 994 576"><u>On the day after a Club's final Match of the Playing Season</u></td> <td data-bbox="994 448 1218 576"><u>Fourth Thursday in March</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="551 576 770 727"><u>3 & 4</u></td> <td data-bbox="770 576 994 727"><u>On the day immediately following the AGM of the Competition</u></td> <td data-bbox="994 576 1218 727"><u>Fourth Thursday in March</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="551 727 770 855"><u>5 & 6</u></td> <td data-bbox="770 727 994 855"><u>On the day when the online registration process opens</u></td> <td data-bbox="994 727 1218 855"><u>[Fourth Thursday in March] [31st March]</u></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>After 5.00pm on the [fourth Thursday in March] [31st March] new registrations, new loans, and transfer of registrations will be declined or will be approved subject to such limitations and restrictions as the Board may determine and, if so determined, the Player shall only be eligible to play in the matches for which permission is granted by the Board.</p>	STEP	COMMENCES	ENDS	<u>1 & 2</u>	<u>On the day after a Club's final Match of the Playing Season</u>	<u>Fourth Thursday in March</u>	<u>3 & 4</u>	<u>On the day immediately following the AGM of the Competition</u>	<u>Fourth Thursday in March</u>	<u>5 & 6</u>	<u>On the day when the online registration process opens</u>	<u>[Fourth Thursday in March] [31st March]</u>	<p>To amend the registration periods for Clubs participating at Steps 3/4 and Steps 5/6.</p>
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10.	Rule 6.4.1 Registrations and Registration Procedures	<p>6.4 Registrations and Registration Procedures</p> <p>6.4.1 Registration Deadlines / Player Eligibility</p> <p>NATIONAL LEAGUE ONLY STEPS 1 TO 4 ONLY</p> <p>A player will only be eligible to play in a match organized by the Company under these Rules if the appropriate information is provided via the Online Registration System received by the Company at least four (4) hours before the schedules kick-off time of such match. No Player whose registration,</p>	<p>To harmonise the registration deadlines at Steps 1 to 4.</p> <p>To clarify that a releasing League (such as EFL) would need to approve in iFAS.</p>												

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		<p>including Loan registrations, is received by the Company less than four (4) hours before the match organized by the Company in which he is required to play will be eligible.</p> <p><u>A Player will only be eligible to play in a Competition Match if the appropriate information is provided via the Online Player Registration System and received by the Company by either: (a) 5pm on the last normal business Day before the day of the Competition Match when it is scheduled to be played on a Saturday, Sunday or a Bank or Public Holiday, or (b) at least four (4) hours before the scheduled kick-off time when a Competition Match is scheduled to be played on a midweek Day (each a "Registration Deadline").</u> No Player whose registration, including Loan registrations, is received after the <u>applicable</u> Registration Deadlines will be eligible to play. Any loan registration must also be approved by <u>the Football Association-The FA, and in the case of a loan player whose registration is being transferred from a Premier League or EFL club the relevant releasing league,</u> before that Player can be considered eligible to play.</p> <p><u>ALL STEP 5 & 6 COMPETITIONS OTHER THAN NATIONAL LEAGUE</u></p> <p>A Player will only be eligible to play in a match organised by the Company under these Rules if the appropriate information is provided via the Online Registration System and received by the Company at least four (4) hours before the scheduled kick-off time of such match. No Player whose registration, including Loan registrations, is received by the Company less than four (4) hours before the match organised by the Company in which he is required to play will be eligible. Any loan registration must also be approved by <u>the Football Association-The FA and relevant releasing league</u> before that Player can be considered eligible to play.</p> <p>The registration of a Player is not automatically valid and it is the responsibility of the Club to ensure the player is NOT registered with any other Club. When the Player involved was previously registered with another Club it is necessary for that Club to complete a transfer form via the Online Player Registration System or for the players' original registration to have</p>	

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		<p>been cancelled prior to or at the same time as the registration to the new Club.</p> <p>ALL COMPETITIONS</p> <p><u>Clubs are responsible for all players being validly registered before fielding any player in a Competition Match.</u> Any Club found to have been in breach of any part of Rule 6.4.1 will be deemed to have played an ineligible player and will be dealt with in accordance with Rule 6.9.</p>	
11.	<p>Rules 6.4.10-6.4.11</p> <p>Registration of Players</p>	<p><u>Registration Embargo / Clubs in Default of Payment Obligations</u></p> <p>6.4.10 The Company may, at its discretion, refuse any further registration of players, i.e. place under a registration embargo, any Club which has not completed payment of a transfer or loan arrangement made with another Club (or club) or arranged for the payment to be adequately secured. The Club (or club) which holds the Player's Contract will continue to pay the Player in accordance with his Contract.</p> <p><u>Additional Goalkeeper Registrations</u></p> <p>6.4.11 The Company at its discretion may approve at any time the registration of an additional goalkeeper on a short-term basis if none of the Clubs' registered goalkeepers are available ahead of a Competition Match.</p> <p><u>NATIONAL STEP 1 to 4 LEAGUES ONLY</u></p> <p>The Company at its sole discretion may approve the registration of a Player after the Registration Deadline for fixtures scheduled for a bank holiday or a public holiday.</p> <p>ALL LEAGUES RESUME HERE</p>	<p>To add sub-headings above these Rules to make them stand out more clearly.</p> <p>To align with the proposed change in registration deadlines.</p>

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12.	Rule 6.5.3 Transfers	A Club cannot register the transfer of a Contract Player or Non-Contract Player unless that Player has been registered with the transferor Club for at least 14 days, unless that Player is a goalkeeper.	Relocated to Rule 6.1.2 and amended to provide greater clarity.
13.	Rule 6.6.1 Temporary Transfers (Loans)	<p>[...]</p> <p>Where a Short Term Loan, [or Youth Loan] expires, and is not renewed simultaneously so as to run continuously, any subsequent Short Term Loan, [or Youth Loan] of that Player to the same Club will be subject to a minimum duration of 28 days and will be considered a new loan (including for the purposes of Rule 6.4.7).</p> <p><u>Guidance</u></p> <p><i><u>A continuous renewal of a Short Term Loan (or Youth Loan) means that the start date of the renewal must commence from the date immediately following the date of the expiry of the last loan period. For example, if a loan expires on a Saturday, in order for it to be considered continuous, the extension must commence on the next day (i.e. the Sunday).</u></i></p> <p><i><u>Any such loan continuation will not be accepted if the registering Club does not submit the relevant documents within 5 days of signature, or if the registering Club has played a fixture in the period between the date of expiry of the last loan and the time the relevant documents are submitted."</u></i></p> <p>[...]</p>	To clarify the circumstances in which consecutive loans of a Player to the same Club will be deemed a new loan for the purposes of the Rules.

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14.	Rule 6.8 Substitute Players	<p>Substitute Players</p> <p>AT STEPS 1 TO 4 ONLY</p> <p>A Club at its discretion may use three substitute Players at any time in a match. Substitution can only be made when play is stopped for any reason and the Referee has given permission. When a Club is making a substitution it shall use a board to show the number of the Player to be substituted and the number of the substitute Player. The substitution board used shall be branded as determined by the Competition.</p> <p>A maximum of [] substitutes may be nominated and they must be included on the official Team Sheet handed to the Referee before the match in accordance with Rule 8.20. A substitute may not be used to replace a Player who has been suspended from the match by the Match Officials.</p> <p>AT STEPS 5 AND 6 ONLY</p> <p>A Club at its discretion may use five substitute Players at any time in a match, provided this is in accordance with the Laws of the Game. A substitution can only be made when play is stopped for any reason and the Referee has given permission. When a Club is making a substitution it shall use a board to show the number of the Player to be substituted and the number of the substitute Player. The substitution board used shall be branded as determined by the Competition.</p> <p>At Step 1, a maximum of [] substitutes may be nominated. At Step 2, a maximum of [] substitutes may be nominated. At Steps 3 to 6, a maximum of five substitutes may be nominated.</p> <p>and they <u>All nominated substitutes</u> must be included on the official Team Sheet handed to the Referee before the match in accordance with Rule 8.20. A substitute may not be used to replace a Player who has been suspended from the match by the Match Officials.</p>	<p>To clarify the maximum number of substitutes that may be nominated for matches at each Step.</p>

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15.	Rule 6.9 Playing an Ineligible Player	<p>Any Club found to have played an ineligible Player in a match or matches shall have any points gained from that match or matches deducted from its record, up to a maximum of 12 points <u>(save for in relation to a knock-out match or matches – e.g. the Play-Offs - in which case the Club shall be disqualified from the relevant knock-out competition(s))</u>, and have levied upon it a fine.</p> <p>The Board may also order that such match or matches be replayed on such terms as are decided by the Board which may also levy penalty points against the Club in default.</p> <p>The Board may vary its decision in respect of the points gained <u>(or disqualification)</u> in circumstances where;</p> <p>(a) the ineligibility is due to the failure to obtain an International Transfer Certificate; or</p> <p>(b) where the ineligibility is related to a change in the Player’s status with the Club for whom he is registered; or</p> <p>(c) where the Board determined that exceptional circumstances exist.</p>	<p>To clarify that, where a Club fields an ineligible player in a ‘knock-out’ fixture (e.g. a Play-Off match or a league cup match), the default consequence is disqualification from the relevant knock-out competition.</p>
16.	Rule 8.31 Match Videos	<p>8.31 Match Videos</p> <p>NEXT SECTION IS TO BE USED INSTEAD OF THE FOREGOING FOR NATIONAL LEAGUE, NATIONAL LEAGUE NORTH AND NATIONAL LEAGUE SOUTH ONLY</p> <p>The Home Club in all matches played under the jurisdiction of the Competition shall film the game in its entirety with an uninterrupted view and provide a full match video to a content management solution as specified by the Competition and in a timeframe as determined by the Competition. The Away Club may film the match if this is agreed by the Home Club, such agreement is not to be unreasonably withheld. Clubs are permitted to use or duplicate match footage with the permission of the Competition only. Filming shall be in a format as directed by the National League from time to time.}</p>	<p>To clarify the position re Match Videos at Steps 1/2 and Steps 3/4 – and distinguish the provisions re match videos from those introduced last season re match streaming (i.e. Rule 8.3.2).</p> <p>To insert a requirement to retain match footage for at least 6 months, to ensure match footage is available for a reasonable time should it be required for disciplinary or other regulatory purposes.</p>

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		<p><u>NEXT SECTION IS FOR STEP 3 & 4 LEAGUES ONLY</u></p> <p><u>Where matches played under the jurisdiction of the Competition are filmed, Clubs may only use or duplicate that match footage with the permission of the Competition. The Away Club may film the match if this is agreed by the Home Club, such agreement is not to be unreasonably withheld. A copy of the match footage must be retained for at least 6 months and provided to The FA or the Competition upon request.</u></p> <p>ALL OTHER LEAGUES RESUME HERE</p> <p>MATCH STREAMING BY A CLUB</p> <p>8.32 Unless determined otherwise by The FA, a Club participating in a Competition Match may offer a live stream of that match online subject to compliance with the following conditions:</p> <p>8.32.1 consent of the Board to the live stream taking place must be obtained;</p> <p>8.32.2 the two competing Clubs must consent to the live stream taking place and agree any associated live streaming arrangements (including the costs associated with those arrangements, if applicable);</p> <p>8.32.3 subject to Rule 8.32.4, the live stream cannot take place during the Transmission-Free Period;</p> <p>8.32.4 where the live stream is to take place during the Transmission-Free Period, it must be geoblocked so that it is not accessible in the UK (or any Crown Dependency of the UK); and</p> <p>8.32.5 a copy of the live stream footage must be provided to The FA, the Board or the opposing Club upon request following the Competition Match.</p>	

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17.	Rule 15.3 Withdrawal of Clubs	<p>If, after the commencement of a Playing Season, any Club either:</p> <p>(i) ceases to operate for any reason; or</p> <p>(ii) gives notice to the Company that it does not intend to continue competing in the Competition for any reason:</p> <p>then the Company may extinguish <u>will expunge</u> the playing record of that Club and any monies due to that Club from the Company shall be forfeited. The Company shall have the discretion to issue charges against that Club and to issue fines against that Club in accordance with the Fines Tariff.</p>	To align this Rule with NLS Regulation 5.5.3.
18.	Rule 23.5 Playing Surfaces	<p>Only Clubs with FIFA Quality Pro certified Football Turf Pitches will be eligible to take part in matches under the auspices of The National League at Step 1 & 2 of the National League System <u>SAVE THAT:</u></p> <p><u>(a) a Club which has a ground with the recommended FIFA Quality Certificate installed by 31 July 2016 can be promoted to Step Two 2 of the National league System providing that it undertakes that upon renewal of the Pitch the Club will install a Pitch that is awarded a FIFA Quality Pro Certificate or be relegated to the appropriate Step; <u>or</u></u></p> <p><u>(b) a Club can be promoted to Step 2 provided that:</u></p> <p><u>(i) By 31 May in the season prior to promotion, the Club undertakes that its Pitch will be awarded a FIFA Quality Pro Certificate by no later than the following 31 May (i.e. 31 May in the Club's first season participating at Step 2),</u></p> <p><u>The Club's undertaking must include at least the following information:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>• Details about how any necessary works will be completed (including any relevant planning permissions required and a plan for those to be obtained).</u> <u>• Details of the costs involved in completing the works and evidence to demonstrate how those costs will be funded.</u> <p><u>; and</u></p>	<p>To create a managed grace period for Clubs seeking promotion from Step 3 to Step 2 to achieve the necessary certification for its Football Turf Pitch (as applicable).</p> <p>This proposal seeks to recognise the potentially significant costs associated with meeting the requisite FIFA standard, and that Clubs may only be in a position to sensibly incur such costs once promotion to Step 2 is secured.</p>

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		<p><u>(iii) By 31 March in the Club's first season participating at Step 2, the Club provides an update to the Board detailing the progress made with reference to the undertaking, an updated funding position and such other information as the Board considers necessary.</u></p> <p><u>Failure by the Club to obtain a FIFA Quality Pro Certificate for its Pitch by 31 May in the Club's first season participating at Step 2 will lead to the Club being relegated to the appropriate Step.</u></p>	
19.	<p>Rule 23.6(b)(ii) Playing Surfaces</p>	<p>Without prejudice to the obligations set out in Paragraph 23.3 above, Clubs that have a Football Turf Pitch shall:-</p> <p>(a) take such steps and/or refrain from such actions as are necessary to ensure that the Football Turf Pitch continues to meet the requirements for a FIFA Quality Certificate or Quality Pro Certificate (as applicable) at all times during each Playing Season including, without limitation, complying with all requirements of the FIFA Quality Standard;</p> <p>(b) where required to undertake Pitch Tests:</p> <p>(i) procure that the FIFA accredited field test institute undertaking any Pitch Test provides to The Competition a copy of their official reports to FIFA immediately following completion of the Pitch Test;</p> <p>(ii) provide a copy of the FIFA Quality Certificate or Quality Pro Certificate <u>to the Competition and Football Foundation by 31st May 31 July</u> prior to the commencement of each Playing Season (as applicable); and</p> <p>(c) co-operate with all reasonable requests made by the Competition, the Association or FIFA for the performance of the Football Turf Pitch to be measured.</p> <p><u>Where either (i) a Club fails to undertake a Pitch Test where required to do so, or (ii) the Pitch Test is failed, that Club shall not be permitted to use its ground for Competition Matches and the Club must enter a groundshare with another Club or club which is acceptable to the Competition, including but not limited to that Club or club's ground meeting the relevant Stadium Accreditation</u></p>	<p>To clarify the correct recipient of the certificate.</p> <p>To clarify the consequences of failed to undertake (or failing) a Pitch Test) – i.e. that the relevant club cannot use its ground and must enter a groundshare.</p>

No.	RULE	PROPOSED AMENDMENTS	RATIONALE
		<u>Programme requirements.</u>	
20.	Rule 25 Qualified Medical Practitioners	<p>Subject to Rule 25.2, the following table sets out the designated Qualified Medical Practitioner or First Aider which each home Club, operating at its respective Step of the National League System, shall have in attendance throughout all Competition Matches:-</p> <p>[...]</p> <p>At Steps 1 to 3 only</p> <p>25.1.1 The At Steps 1 to 3 only, the Qualified Medical Practitioner shall visit both the home and away teams' dressing rooms before leaving the ground. The name of the practitioner present at the Competition Match must be entered on the team sheet.</p> <p>ALL LEAGUES RESUME HERE</p> <p>[...]</p>	<p>To correct an error in the drafting, as both home and away Clubs are required to have the relevant individual(s) in attendance at a Competition Match.</p> <p>To move the text of the heading to within the Rule itself, in order to make clearer.</p>
21.	Appendix (Licensing) Definitions	<u>"Board Safeguarding Champion" means a member of a Club's board who provides oversight and champions the safeguarding of children and young people (under the age of 18) and adults at risk in all Club activities.</u>	To introduce a definition used in the proposed addition to the Licence Criteria re safeguarding.
22.	Appendix (Licensing) The Licensing System Paragraph 1.4	If at any time during a Membership Year the Competition becomes aware that a Club no longer fulfils any of the Licensing Criteria then the Competition shall review that Club's Licence in relation to the non-fulfilment such that a Licence may be withdrawn, suspended or have conditions imposed or varied or have <u>sporting</u> /financial penalties imposed upon it.	To clarify that sporting penalties may be imposed for non-fulfilment of any of the Licensing Criteria.

No.	RULE	PROPOSED AMENDMENTS	RATIONALE
23.	Appendix (Licensing) Licence Criteria Annex 1 [NEW] Paragraph 6 Safeguarding	<p><u>6.1 By 14 March in a Membership Year a Club must provide to the Competition evidence of publication of the Club's Safeguarding Policy, the name of the Club's Welfare Officer and evidence of publication (via the Club's website) of the method through which the Club's Welfare Officer may be contacted.</u></p> <p><u>6.2 By 14 March in a Membership Year a Club must confirm in writing to the Competition the name of the Officer who will act as the Board Safeguarding Champion.</u></p> <p><u>6.3 By 14 March in a Membership Year, a Club must carry out and submit to the Competition a Safeguarding Risk Assessment that has been agreed and signed by the Club Welfare Officer and Board Safeguarding Champion.</u></p>	To enhance safeguarding practices and culture within Clubs.
24.	Appendix (Financial Reporting Initiative Steps 3 and 4)	<p>2 Procedure</p> <p><u>Initial Reporting</u></p> <p>2.1 By 31 August and 28 February of each year (collectively 'the Reporting Dates'), each Club shall submit the following information to the Competition:</p> <p>[...]</p> <p><u>(vi) Any debt owed by the Club to any other creditor which exceeds £1,000 and the Club's proposals for payment of the same.</u></p> <p>[...]</p> <p>3 Sanctions</p> <p>3.1 Any Club that fails to provide some or all of the documentation detailed in clause 2.1 shall be subject to an immediate Embargo.</p> <p>3.2 Any Club that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - by each Reporting Date, has failed to Satisfy in Full its Arrears; and/or - defaults on a Time to Pay agreement; <u>and/or</u> - <u>defaults on payment of a debt reported pursuant to clause 2.1(iv);</u> 	To procure additional information from clubs regarding debts over £1000 owed to creditors other than HMRC.

No.	RULE	PROPOSED AMENDMENTS	RATIONALE
		shall be subject to an immediate Embargo until such time as the Arrears are Satisfied in Full <u>and shall be subject to such other penalty as the Board or Sub-Committee detailed at Section 4 shall deem appropriate (including but not limited to a points deduction and/or suspension from the Competition).</u>	

TABLE 2

The following proposed amendments all relate to the ‘change of control’ provisions, which only apply to the National League only (Steps 1 and 2). The proposed amendments reflect a request from the National League to better align its ‘change of control’ provisions with those contained in the EFL Regulations.

No.	RULE	PROPOSED AMENDMENTS	RATIONALE
25.	Rule 1 Definitions	<p><u>“Acquisition Debt” means the aggregate amount of all obligations incurred by the Proposed Acquiror (to the extent they are or will be secured over the assets of the target Club) and incurred by the target Club in connection with or following the acquisition of Control of the target Club for or in respect of borrowings of any nature.</u></p> <p>[...]</p> <p><u>“Control” shall be as defined in the Rules of The FA.</u></p> <p>[...]</p> <p><u>“Group” shall be as defined in the Rules of The FA.</u></p> <p>[...]</p> <p><u>“Parent Undertaking” shall be as defined in the Rules of The FA.</u></p> <p>[...]</p> <p><u>“Person” shall be as defined in the Rules of The FA.</u></p> <p>[...]</p>	Defined terms added to reflect those used in the proposed new change of control provisions applicable to Steps 1 and 2 of the NLS.

No.	RULE	PROPOSED AMENDMENTS	RATIONALE
		<p><u>“Proposed Acquiror” shall have the meaning given to it in Rule 2.16.</u></p> <p>[...]</p> <p><u>“Subsidiary Undertaking” shall be as defined in the Rules of The FA.</u></p>	
26.	<p>Rule 2.9</p> <p>Membership Requirements</p>	<p>Any Club which is incorporated must be incorporated in England and Wales. Any Club wishing to incorporate shall notify The FA, its Affiliated Association and the Company Secretary before it makes any resolutions in this regard <u>and Rule 2.16 shall also apply where the Club participates at Step 1 or 2 of the National League System.</u> Any person wishing to be appointed as an Officer to a Club must comply with the requirements of The FA Owners’ and Directors’ Test Regulations and send to the [League] [Company] Secretary a copy of the Owners’ and Directors’ Declaration within 5 days of sending the same to The FA <u>(save where Rule 2.16 applies).</u></p>	<p>To clarify that: (a) incorporation of a Club at Steps 1/2 shall trigger the requirements of the proposed new change of control provisions, and (b) Declarations must be submitted in advance of a change of control in which Rule 2.16 applies.</p>
27.	<p>Rule 2.10</p> <p>Membership Requirements</p>	<p><u>AT STEPS 3 TO 6 ONLY</u></p> <p>In the event that any Club which is an unincorporated association incorporates itself it shall notify the [Company] [Competition] Secretary in writing within 14 days of the passing of the resolution to take this action and shall with such notice provide the [Company] [Competition] Secretary with a copy of the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the company. Any amendments to the Memorandum and Articles of Association of a Club must be notified to the Competition Secretary in writing within 14 days of the passing of the resolution with a copy of the change(s).</p>	<p>To clarify that this provision now only applies to Steps 3-6 given the proposed new change of control provisions for Steps 1 and 2.</p>

No.	RULE	PROPOSED AMENDMENTS	RATIONALE
28.	<p>Rule 2.11</p> <p>Membership Requirements</p> <p>Transfer of Membership</p>	<p><i>Transfer as a Going Concern</i></p> <p>2.11.1 In the event that any Club which resolves to transfer its membership of the Competition from one legal entity to a different legal entity, other than in the circumstances shown at 2.11.2 below, the Board will use the following minimum criteria in deciding whether to approve that transfer:</p> <p>a. The shareholders or members of the Club have voted to agree to the transfer of the Club’s membership to the new entity.</p> <p>b. All Football Creditors in the Club must be paid in full or transferred in full (with each creditor’s consent) to the new entity, and evidenced as such.</p> <p>c. All other creditors in the Club must be paid in full or Secured or transferred in full (with each creditor’s consent) to the new entity and evidenced as such.</p> <p>d. The proposed new entity has provided financial forecasts to The FA and the Competition showing its ability to fund the Club for the next twelve (12) months or to the end of the Playing Season following transfer (whichever is the longer) and that evidence of funding sources has been provided.</p> <p>e. The FA must have given approval for the transfer to take place.</p> <p><i>Transfer from Insolvency</i></p> <p>2.11.2 In the event that any Club that is subject to an Insolvency Event resolves to transfer its membership of the Competition to a new entity, the Board will use the following minimum criteria in deciding whether or not to approve that transfer:</p> <p>a. The shareholders or members of the Club have voted to agree to the transfer of the Club’s membership to the new entity and/or a licensed insolvency practitioner(s) appointed to the Club has agreed to sell or transfer some or all of the Club’s assets to the new entity;</p>	<p>To clarify that, at Steps 1 and 2, where a transfer of a Club’s membership results in an acquisition of control then the proposed new change of control provisions shall apply.</p>

No.	RULE	PROPOSED AMENDMENTS	RATIONALE
		<p>b. All Football Creditors in the Club must be Paid in Full and evidenced as such;</p> <p>c. The proposed new entity has provided financial forecasts to The FA and the Competition showing its ability to fund the Club for the next twelve (12) months or to the end of the Playing Season following transfer (whichever is the longer) and that evidence of funding sources has been provided;</p> <p>d. The FA must have given approval for the transfer to take place; and</p> <p>e. All other creditors in the Club must be satisfied and evidenced as such (This provision to be read in conjunction with 2.11.3 below.)</p> <p>In the event that requirement (a) and/or (e) is not fully complied with, and only where the Board, at its absolute discretion, deems there to have been exceptional circumstances surrounding the application for the transfer, it may approve the transfer (subject to compliance with all other provisions above) and may apply such conditions as it deems appropriate including, without limitation, the deduction of points.</p> <p>2.11.3 Nothing in Rule 2.11.2 above shall limit in any way the application of Rule 13B of these Rules.</p> <p><u>NATIONAL LEAGUE ONLY</u></p> <p><u>2.11.4 Where the transfer of a Club's membership of the Competition pursuant to either Rule 2.11.1 or Rule 2.11.2 results in an acquisition of Control, then Rule 2.16 shall also apply.</u></p>	

No.	RULE	PROPOSED AMENDMENTS	RATIONALE
29.	<p>Rule 2.11</p> <p>Membership Requirements</p> <p>Ownership and Change of Control</p>	<p>NEXT SECTION IS FOR NATIONAL LEAGUE ONLY</p> <p>2.16 If any change of Control of a Club is proposed (whether by a natural person, legal entity or any other body) then:</p> <p>(i) The Club shall submit to the Board up to date information including financial information (such as budgets) prepared to take into account the consequences of the change in Control on the Club's future financial position as soon as reasonably practicable prior to the change of Control, or if submission is not reasonably practical prior to the change of Control then no later than 10 working days thereafter;</p> <p>(ii) The Board shall have the power to require those that are to acquire or have acquired control of the Club to appear before it and to provide evidence of the source and sufficiency of any funds which the purchaser proposes to invest in or otherwise make available to the Club; and</p> <p>(iii) On considering all information available, including that provided under Rule 2.16(ii), then the Board at its absolute discretion shall apply any conditions in respect of the Club's ongoing membership of the Competition including the provision of any further information, adherence to a budget, the application of an Embargo, request for financial guarantees, and or payment of a Bond.</p> <p>(iv) The Club shall submit a copy of any agreement concerning the completed sale of a controlling ownership interest to the Competition and The FA. If the Competition becomes aware that a</p> <p>change of Control has occurred at a Club in the Membership Year that has not been assessed in accordance with this Rule then, in addition to the powers set out in this Rule, the provisions, criteria and powers set out in Appendix Q: The Licensing System shall apply.</p> <p>This Rule shall not apply where Rule 2.11 applies.</p> <p>[NOTE: REPLACEMENT DRAFTING SET OUT SEPARATELY IN CLEAN TEXT BELOW]</p>	<p>To replace the existing change of control provisions with those more closely aligned with the change of control provisions contained in the EFL Regulations (given the proximity of Steps 1/2 to the EFL).</p> <p>The proposed amendments alter the position from a Club having to notify the National League of a change of control (such notification being previously permitted after-the-event), to a position whereby the proposed change of control requires the prior approval of the National League.</p>

2 MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

[...]

Ownership and Change of Control

[...]

NEXT SECTION IS FOR NATIONAL LEAGUE ONLY

Acquisition of Control

- 2.16 If any Person proposes to acquire Control of a Club (a “**Proposed Acquiror**”):
- 2.16.1 the Club and/or the Proposed Acquiror shall, as far in advance of the proposed acquisition of Control as reasonably possible and in any event no later than 10 Days prior to the date on which it is anticipated that such acquisition of Control will take place:
- (a) submit to The FA and to the Board a duly completed Owners’ and Directors’ Declaration in respect of each Person who will become an Officer upon the proposed acquisition of Control;
 - (b) submit such documentation and information as may be requested by the Board, to include but not limited to the Acquisition Materials set out at Appendix [X];
 - (c) submit to the Board up-to-date budget information prepared to take into account the consequences of the acquisition of Control on the Club’s future financial position; and
 - (d) where Rule 2.11.1 or Rule 2.11.2 applies, submit evidence that the requirements of the Rule have been met;
- 2.16.2 notwithstanding Rule 2.16.1, the Board shall have power to require the Club and/or the Proposed Acquiror to appear before it and to provide evidence of the ultimate source and sufficiency of any funds with which that Person proposes to acquire Control and/or invest in or otherwise make available to the Club; and
- 2.16.3 upon consideration of the information provided by the Club and/or the Proposed Acquiror, the Board may apply any conditions in respect of the Club’s ongoing membership of the Competition, including but not limited to: a requirement to provide further information, adherence to a budget, the imposition of an Embargo, request for financial guarantees, and/or payment of a Bond. In addition to the powers set out in this Rule, the provisions, criteria and powers set out in Appendix [X]: The Licensing System shall also apply.
- 2.17 No Person may acquire Control of a Club (and no Club may permit a Person to acquire Control of it) until such time as:
- 2.17.1 the Board receives confirmation from The FA that all Persons that are required to do so have complied with the process set out in Rule 2.16.1(a) and no such Persons are subject to a Disqualifying Event under the [Owners’ and Directors’ Test Regulations];

- 2.17.2 the Board provides confirmation of its satisfaction with the information provided pursuant to Rule 2.16.1(b), 2.16.1(c) and/or 2.16.1(d) (as applicable); and
 - 2.17.3 the Club and Proposed Acquiror have accepted any conditions imposed pursuant to Rule 2.16.3.
- 2.18 Any Officer of a Club who (whether intentionally, negligently or recklessly) causes, allows or permits any Person to acquire Control of the Club in breach of Rule 2.17 shall be in breach of these Rules.
- 2.19 Where any act of the Club, any Group Undertaking or any Officer thereof recognises:
- 2.19.1 any Person as an Officer; or
 - 2.19.2 any form of transfer (legal or beneficial) or any trust or joint ownership arrangements in relation to any share and the rights which may be exercised by a shareholder,
- without first having complied with Rule 2.17 in full, it will constitute a breach of these Rules by that Club.
- 2.20 A Club and its Officers must not:
- 2.20.1 enter into any agreement pursuant to which a Person agrees to acquire Control of the Club, subject to approval of the Board; and/or
 - 2.20.2 announce that any such agreement has been concluded subject to the approval of the Board.

APPENDIX : ACQUISITION MATERIALS

The materials listed below are non-exhaustive examples which the Board considers reasonable to request in the context of a proposed acquisition of Control.

The Board will use its discretion and judgment in relation to the materials it requests and in relation to the scope and application of the items referred to below in the context of the particular facts and circumstances of the proposed acquisition of Control.

No,	Detail
1.	An organisational chart showing proposed corporate structure post-acquisition and clearly listing all entities and persons within the overall structure and their percentage shareholdings of each entity within the Group, including (but not limited to) all Parent Undertakings and Subsidiary Undertakings where relevant.

No,	Detail
2.	Copies of all documents relating to changes in the corporate structure of each entity within the Group within the preceding three years of the date of the submission of the Acquisition Materials.
3.	Confirmation of the legal identity, jurisdiction of incorporation, jurisdiction of tax residence and status of each Person within the Group (for example: private individual, limited company, partnership, fund, listed or unlisted etc.) and background information about each such Person.
4.	<p>For each entity within the Group, verification of the following information (for example, from the appropriate company registry or copies of deeds where available):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporation. • Constitutional documents. • Articles of association / bye-laws. • Registered office. • Trading address(es) if different from registered office. • Names and address of directors. • Most recent financial statements (if an existing company). • Detailed biographies of the directors (or equivalent) of each entity within the Group, and certified copy passports for each. • Description of the activities of each entity within the Group.
5.	List of registered holders (together with details of the current and proposed ultimate beneficial owners (“ UBO ”), if different) of the shares of each entity within the Group (including name and address), with details of the shares held (or owned) and copies of any share certificates.
6.	Copies of all shareholder agreements and all other agreements regarding the shares of each entity within the Group (including pledges, security interests, options, pre-emption rights, nomineehips, trust agreements, etc.) or any other arrangements conferring rights (including voting rights) on third parties which might impair or influence the exercise by any registered holder or beneficial owner of any right attached to or deriving from the shares.
7.	Details of share/loan capital allotted, issued, or agreed to be allotted or issued by each entity within the Group since the date of the latest annual accounts of the Club.
8.	<p>In respect of each proposed Officer and/or any Person who is proposed to acquire Control and/or, where the proposed Officer is a corporate entity, that entity’s UBO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name, residential address(es) and date of birth (to be confirmed by provision of certified copy documents e.g. passport). • Certified copies of all passports held. • Nature and extent of the interest, including details of the shares held (or owned). • Confirmation that they will not be acting as trustee or nominee (or similar arrangement) for any undisclosed third party.
9.	In respect of each proposed Officer and/or any Person who is proposed to acquire Control and/or, where the proposed Officer is a corporate entity, that entity’s UBO, documentary evidence providing details of the financial circumstances and sources of wealth.
10.	Lists of directors and every person generally authorised by any entity within the Group to represent or bind the Club.
11.	Details of the overall management structure of the Group.

No,	Detail
12.	Detailed information as to the Acquisition Debt to be incurred and obligors for such debt and the source of funds to be invested in or otherwise made available to the Club.
13.	A copy of any financial model used in connection with the proposed acquisition, which will include profit and loss, balance sheet and cash flow projections relating to the Group and will contain an acquisition debt cash flow model showing the debt servicing of any Acquisition Debt (for these purposes assuming completion of the acquisition of Control of the Club).
14.	Details of the purchaser's principal bankers and a letter of reference from them, which is to include (i) confirmation of the total value of assets held with the bank, (ii) its understanding as to the source of funds, and (iii) confirmation as to the number of years the purchaser has been a client of the bank.
15.	Details of the purchaser's principal lawyers and accountants and confirmation of their appointments from the firms concerned;
16.	Details of the purchaser's lead financial advisors and a letter of confirmation which confirms (i) their appointment and (ii) whether they consider that sufficient funds are available for the acquisition of the Club.
17.	A copy of the proposed business plan for the Club.
18.	A copy of any Heads of Terms and Sale and Purchase Agreements.
19.	A list of any competition, regulatory or other clearances required for the acquisition.
20.	Confirmation that no entity or person referred to in the previous paragraphs is subject to UK Sanctions or is a UK Sanctions Restricted Person.
21.	General description of the Club's current banking and financing arrangements, as well as details of the banking and financing arrangements to be entered into in connection with the proposed acquisition of Control (including details of bank accounts and debt financing facilities).