



THE NORTH WEST COUNTIES FOOTBALL LEAGUE NATIONAL LEAGUE SYSTEM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

The following applies to all clubs considering promotion to or placement into the National League System at Step 6. Geographic location may dictate which Step 6 League a club is placed, with allocations to the North West Counties Football League, Midlands League, Northern League or Northern Counties East League being possible depending on the location of the applicant club, or vacancies within the overall step or individual leagues.

Minimum entry criteria by 31st March.

Feeder League Promotion:

Clubs must make an application to The FA by 31st December with the appropriate application fee.

To qualify for promotion, the club must finish the season in a top 5 position in their League.

Only one club can be promoted per feeder league so in the event of more than one applicant club finishing in the top 5, the highest placed club will be promoted – subject to meeting the criteria.

The ground must meet the minimum entry standard (Grade 7) by 31st March.

Ground Requirements:

- Must have an enclosed ground.
- Must have played on the ground for at least a full season.
- Must have security of tenure for at least the following season.
- Pitch size must be a minimum of 100 x 64 metres (110 x 70 yards).
- Football Turf (3G) Pitches must be to FIFA Quality Standard and have a valid bounce test certificate.
- Must have cover for a minimum of 50 spectators (there must be no obstructed views of the playing area from any seated stand). All stands, whether standing or seated must accommodate a minimum of 50 spectators.
- Must have hardstanding, a minimum of 1.4 metres from the pitch perimeter barrier for the full length of 2 adjacent sides.
- Must have a pitch perimeter barrier on all sides where spectators are allowed.
- The distance between the touch/goal lines and the pitch perimeter barrier (run off) must be a minimum of 1.83 metres, ideally 2 metres (3 metres for new grounds with Football Turf (3G) pitches).
- Must have a protected walkway for players and match officials from the dressing rooms to the pitch.
- Must have suitable access onto the pitch.
- Must have suitable access onto the pitch for emergency services.
- Must have 2 dug outs on the same side of the pitch at a minimum of 3 metres apart with a minimum of 8 seats in each and technical areas marked out in accordance with the Laws of the Game. The dug outs must also maintain the 1.83 metres from the touch line.

- There must be toilet facilities for spectators.
- There must be refreshment facilities for spectators.
- There must be a paybox/turnstile with suitable protection for the operator.
- Must have acceptable floodlight planning permission by 31st March and floodlights erected and in working order by 30th September.
- Must have adequate car parking at or near to the ground.
- There must be an area suitable to extend hospitality to the Directors/Committee of the opposing team and other Official Guests (FA, County FA, League etc).
- Pre match and half time hospitality for visiting teams officials and other allowable guests i.e. League, FA, County FA.

Dressing Rooms:

- Must meet the minimum sizes for Steps 5-6.
- Must have a treatment table in the home and away dressing rooms.
- Must have a stretcher available at all home games.
- Must have a bell/buzzer from the Referees dressing room to each team dressing room.
- Must have the required shower heads and wash basin.
- Must have the required toilet facilities.
- Must display all the required League Notices and Directives in all dressing rooms.
- Dressing rooms must always be secure on a match day.

After match hospitality:

- Must provide suitable after match hospitality for opposing players and team management in an area separate from spectators.

Other match day requirements:

- Must have a suitable internet connection to comply with the requirements of the League match day procedures.
- Must produce a match programme for all home fixtures (this can be a hard or digital copy) and a copy submitted to the League within 3 days of playing a match.
- Must have adequate personal and stewards to safely comply with the FA Ground Regulations and that of the National League System.
- Must have a Ground Safety Officer.
- Must have a qualified medical person in attendance at all home fixtures with the minimum qualification of Emergency First Aid in Football Level 2.
- Must have a defibrillator available for all home fixtures.
- Must have a Medical Emergency Action Plan.
- Must display the FA Ground Regulations at all entrances for paying spectators.

Other requirements:

- Must submit proof of Legal Entity status.
- Must submit the clubs Articles of Association / Club Rules.
- Must submit the previous seasons full accounts and copy of the meeting minutes at which they were approved.
- Must submit proof of funding for at least the full season and a business plan with financial projections for the following 3 seasons.

To remain in the League the following season a club must have by 31st March cover for 100 spectators of which 50 must be seated with an unobstructed view of the playing area.

If promoted to Step 5, there must be hard standing on a minimum of 3 sides of the ground and cover for 200 of which 100, must be seated with an unobstructed view of the playing area by following 31st March in the season in which the club plays at Step 5.

Must have a ground safety officer and a child welfare safeguarding officer present at all home fixtures.

New Clubs (Including Clubs not in a Feeder League Promotion Division)

The only difference is:

1. Applications are made to the League not the FA.
2. The League has to apply on the clubs behalf to the FA for placement into a League within the National League System by 1st February. It is therefore a requirement of this League that such applications are made to the League General Manager (generalmanager@nwcfl.com) by 31st December together with a non-refundable application fee of £120 inclusive of VAT.
3. Such applications will only be considered by the FA if there is a vacancy in the National League System after promotion and relegation issues have been settled.
4. Vacancies are National, not to individual Leagues. The maximum number of clubs currently allowed at Step 6 is 340. Ideally 17 Divisions of 20 clubs in each.

If your club requires any further information, please email: generalmanager@nwcfl.com