

GIBRALTAR FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION
REFEREE REGULATIONS 2023-24
SCOPE OF GFA REFEREE REGULATIONS



1. General Provisions

- 1.1 These GFA Referee Regulations are established in accordance with the GFA Statutes and any additional and ancillary regulations (including those contained in this GFA Handbook and those of UEFA and/or FIFA) to which the GFA is bound.
- 1.2 These GFA Referee Regulations may be amended by the GFA from time to time.
- 1.3 These GFA Referee Regulations shall be binding on all Referees operating under the jurisdiction of the GFA.
- 1.4 These GFA Referee Regulations seek to:
 - (a) improve the quality of Match Officials and refereeing officials at all levels of the game by establishing specific rules to standardise and enhance their status and education, as well as the way that refereeing is organised within the GFA;
 - (b) recognise the essential role of Match Officials and refereeing specialists in upholding the values of fair play and protecting the Players and the game;
 - (c) maintain and improve the standard of refereeing from grassroots level upwards;
 - (d) recognise the GFA's responsibilities for appointing reliable and suitably qualified Match Officials and refereeing specialists for the GFA's Competitions and education or development programmes; and
 - (e) ensure that Match Officials enjoy fair and equal treatment with regard to Disciplinary Sanctions, opportunities for promotion and appointments.
- 1.5 These GFA Referee Regulations establish the organisational structure of refereeing under the jurisdiction of the GFA and govern the following matters:
 - (a) terms of reference for the GFA Referee's Committee;
 - (b) referees' administration;
 - (c) referee education, performance and assessment;
 - (d) referees' appointment;
 - (e) disciplinary, disputes and complaints procedures; and
 - (f) ethics and codes of practice.



SECTION ONE
ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

2. Referees Committee

- 2.1 The Referees Committee is established by the GFA in accordance with these GFA Referee Regulations as the principal body for the control and management of Referees and shall have authority over all matters pertaining to Referees, Referee Specialists, Referee Administrators and any person directly involved in refereeing matters save where specifically excluded or delegated to another body under these GFA Referee Regulations.
- 2.2 The Referees Committee shall serve a term of four years, and be comprised of:
- (a) a Chairperson;
 - (b) a Deputy Chairperson; and
 - (c) include such persons that may be deemed necessary for the Referees Committee to discharge its duties (which may include a Referee Manager, and noting that at least a minimum of 80% of the individuals serving on the Referees Committee must be composed of Referee Specialists, with the remaining 20% of members capable of being non-specialists with other knowledge and experience that could benefit the work of the Referees Committee).
- 2.3 The individuals comprising the Referees Committee shall be appointed as follows, namely:
- (a) the Chairperson will be appointed by the GFA;
 - (b) the Deputy Chairperson will be appointed by the GFA in consultation with, and on the recommendation of the Chairperson of the Referees Committee.
- 2.4 The Chairperson will, in their discretion, assign the following roles and positions to those individuals appointed to the Referees Committee, namely:
- (a) a senior referees' officer responsible for Referees officiating in senior football competitions, including but not limited to the GFA Football League, GFA Rock Cup; GFA Pepe Reyes Cup; GFA Intermediate League; and GFA Intermediate Cup;
 - (b) a youth referees' officer responsible for Referees officiating in youth football competitions;
 - (c) a women's referees' officer responsible for Referees officiating in senior women's football competitions, including but not limited to the GFA Women's League and the GFA Women's Rock Cup; and
 - (d) a futsal referees' officer responsible for Referees officiating futsal competitions.

- 2.5 The Chairperson will, in their discretion, from time to time allocate the following responsibilities to and amongst the members of the Referee's Committee, including:
- (a) appointments;
 - (b) grading and licensing;
 - (c) observers;
 - (d) registration;
 - (e) regulations;
 - (f) recruitment and retention;
 - (g) UEFA Referee Convention;
 - (h) welfare aspects; and
 - (i) female referees.
- 2.6 Each member of the Referee's Committee who is assigned a task and/or responsibility shall be available, as required, to provide the necessary guidance and support to the Refereeing Department, in order to ensure that the policies and directions of the Referees Committee are properly implemented. The Refereeing Department will provide the Referee's Committee with an update on matters on a monthly basis.
- 2.7 The Referee's Committee shall meet quarterly and shall have a quorum of three members. Meetings of the Referee's Committee may be transacted by means of a conference call, or other medium of communication which is available to all members.
- 2.8 In addition, the Referee's Committee shall be responsible for all matters pertaining to refereeing as well as:
- (a) overseeing the implementation of, and adherence to, the UEFA Convention on Referee Education and Organisation;
 - (b) facilitating and approving a process of strategy for refereeing all levels of the game in Gibraltar in accordance with the strategies and directions of the GFA;
 - (c) be responsible for the recruitment and retention of Referees, together with enhancing and promoting the role of Referees;
 - (d) be responsible for the appointment, control, management and development of Referee Observers, Referee Instructors and Referee Liaison Officers, as well as the formulation of guidelines and directions for these roles;
 - (e) approving educational structures for Referees and refereeing specialities to guarantee a unified level of education by delivering a comprehensive training and development programme from grassroots to elite level football, specifically in the areas of recruitment and retention of referees, referee observer systems, talent and mentor programme, and the education of referees at grassroots and elite level;
 - (f) appointing, evaluating and grading Referees;

- (g) being the final decision-making body regarding education, fitness and training, performance and assessment, appointments and ensuring a high and professional level and standard regarding the selection of Referees;
 - (h) ensuring that the selection, promotion and appointment of Referees (including specialists) is conducted in a transparent, uniform, equitable and ethical manner that is amenable to quality assurance and audit;
 - (i) being the custodian and controller of all Referee Licences and shall be the final decision-making body regarding the suspension or removal of a licence save as otherwise provided for in these GFA Referee Regulations;
 - (j) being responsible for proposing changes to these GFA Referee Regulations or other matters pertaining to Referees and the GFA; and
 - (k) reporting directly to the GFA on its activities.
- 2.9 The Referees Committee shall be supported in its functions by the GFA, Refereeing Specialists and such other relevant persons as may be required from time to time.
- 2.10 The Referees Committee shall refer all matters which are considered to fall within the scope of the Disciplinary Regulations to the Disciplinary Bodies. Decisions made by the appropriate Disciplinary Bodies shall be binding on Referees and the Referees Committee.
- 2.11 Notwithstanding the provisions of regulation 2.12, and for the avoidance of doubt, matters pertaining to education, performance, assessments, appointments, remuneration, licences or such other matters not being related to, or falling under the remit of, the Disciplinary Regulations, shall be matters which shall be deemed to be entirely within the control of the Referees Committee whose decision shall be final and binding.
- 2.12 Matters concerning child protection shall be referred to the appropriate person appointed by the GFA for such matters, and in the first instance, for the initial evaluation and consideration and referral (as necessary).
- 2.13 The Referees Committee reserves the right to review, deliberate (including consulting any engaged legal advisers of the GFA or otherwise) prior to communicating any decision made. Further, the Referees Committee shall make final and binding decisions in relation to all matters which are considered to fall within the scope of their jurisdiction.

SECTION TWO REFEREEING DEPARTMENT

3. Composition of the Refereeing Department

- 3.1 The Refereeing Department will be established by the GFA in accordance with these GFA Referee Regulations.
- 3.2 The Refereeing Department will be comprised of at least one member with broad experience in the field of Refereeing which has had a minimum of five years' prior experience as an Elite Referee, together with such additional staff as may be required to administer the functions of the Refereeing Department.

4. Duties of the Refereeing Department

- 4.1 The duties and responsibilities of the Refereeing Department will include, but not be limited to:
- (a) assisting the Referees Committee;
 - (b) implementing the decision adopted by the Referees Committee;
 - (c) carrying out all logistical aspects relating to the administration of refereeing;
 - (d) carrying out all administrative duties of the Refereeing Department;
 - (e) implementing programmes to develop Referees in accordance with any continued professional development guidelines provided by the Referees Committee from time to time;
 - (f) organising courses for Referees and Referee Instructors; and
 - (g) prepare and produce teaching materials in accordance with the Laws of the Game as issued by the IFAB.

5. Financial Matters and Resources

- 5.1 On the instructions of the Referees Committee, the Refereeing Department shall prepare and propose the annual budget which, once approved by the Referees Committee, shall be submitted to the GFA for their review, consideration and final approval.

6. Register of Referees

- 6.1 The Refereeing Department shall administer all matters relating to Referees and shall keep an accurate and up-to-date Register of Referees. The Register shall contain the names, dates of birth and addresses of each Referee, including their education, training, and current level within the game of football or any other details necessary to keep the database up to date. Such data shall be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act and the GFA Privacy Policy in this GFA Handbook.

- 6.2 The criteria for admission to the Register of Referees shall be decided and communicated by the Referees Committee from time to time
- 6.3 Any person, over the age of 15, can apply for admission to the Register of Referees. The application must be made on an official referee registration form as attached in Schedule 15 of this GFA Handbook, and submitted with a fee as prescribed from time to time by the Referees Committee (noting that said sum shall be fully refunded in the event that the individual's application for admission onto the Register of Referees is not accepted). The Referees Committee reserve the right to refuse, defer and/or otherwise deal with an application to be included in the Register of Referees. The successful applicant will receive an official confirmation of registration by the GFA.
- 6.4 A Referee from another country wishing to referee in Gibraltar must provide proof of their current Referee status from their national football association. He or she are required to produce a Police Certificate of Good Conduct from their country of residence. The Referees Committee will determine their classification level in accordance with regulation 7 of these GFA Referee Regulations.
- 6.5 The Referees Committee shall have the authority to remove a name from the Register of Referees.
- 6.6 Referees convicted of any criminal offence which is likely to negatively impact on their position as a Referee with the GFA may be immediately removed from the Register of Referees by the Referee Committee.
- 6.7 Referees must notify the Refereeing Department of any change in their contact details.
- 6.8 Referees which are removed from the Register of Referees shall be entitled to appeal this decision to the Appeals Committee in accordance with the procedures set forth in this GFA Handbook.

7. **Licence to Officiate**

- 7.1 A Referee must apply for a Referee Licence on an annual basis to officiate GFA Matches and Competitions. A Referee may officiate at or below the level specified on their Referee Licence. A Referee Administrator may approve a temporary appointment to a higher grade in order to assess a Referee's suitability for promotion to a higher level, or to deal with an emergency situation.
- 7.2 Referees shall be classified under the each of the following Referee Licences:
- (a) Category Four Licence being, a Referee who has successfully completed the foundation course in refereeing and whose age is between 15 and 18 years. A Category Four Licence will enable him to referee at GFA youth league and/or competition level. A Category Four Licence Referee may be a member of a Club or a GFA committee. On attaining the age of 18 years, the Referee is automatically promoted to a Referee holding a Category Three Licence;

- (b) Category Three Licence being, a Referee who is over the age of 18 years and who has successfully completed the foundation course in refereeing. A Category Three Licence will enable him to referee at GFA youth league and/or competition level, women's competitions and the GFA Intermediate League and GFA Intermediate Cup. A Category Three Licence Referee may be a member of a Club or a GFA Committee;
- (c) Category Two Licence being, a Referee who has been promoted from a Category Three Licence on merit. A Category Two Licence will enable him to referee in the GFA Intermediate League and GFA Intermediate Cup;
- (d) Elite Assistant Referee being, a Referee who has had a Category Two Licence for at least one year. An Elite Assistance Referee Licence will enable him to act as an assistant Referee in the GFA Football League, GFA Rock Cup and GFA Pepe Reyes Cup;
- (e) FIFA Listed Assistant Referee being, an assistant Referee who has been included in the FIFA International Assistant Referees List in any given year;
- (f) Category One (Elite) being, a Referee who holds an Elite Referee Licence which will enable him to referee in the GFA Football League, GFA Rock Cup and GFA Pepe Reyes Cup; and
- (g) FIFA Listed Referee being, a Referee who has been included in the FIFA International Referees List in any given year.

7.3 Futsal Referees shall be classified under the following Referee Licences:

- (a) Category F4 being, a futsal Referee who has successfully completed the foundation course in futsal refereeing and who age is between 15 and 18 years. A Category F4 licence will enable him to referee futsal at GFA youth league and/or competition level. A Category Four Licence Referee may be a member of a Club or a GFA committee. On attaining the age of 18 years, the Referee is automatically promoted to a Referee holding a Category F3 Licence;
- (b) Category F3 being, a Referee who is over the age of 18 years and who has successfully completed the foundation course in futsal refereeing. A Category Three Licence will enable him to referee at GFA youth league and/or competition level, women's competitions and the GFA National Futsal Second Tier. A Category F3 Licence Referee may be a member of a Club or a GFA Committee
- (c) Category F2 being, a Category F3 Licence Referee who will be awarded a Category F2 Licence if the following criteria is satisfied:
 - (i) the individual will have a minimum of one full futsal season experience as a Category F3 Licence Referee;
 - (ii) positive written assessments by Referee Observers on a minimum of four games during any given futsal season; and
 - (iii) refereed a minimum of 10 futsal Matches during a futsal season.

A Category F2 Licence will enable him to referee in all GFA futsal Matches and Competitions;

- (d) Category F1 being, a Category F2 Licence Referee who will be awarded a Category F1 Licence if the following criteria is satisfied
- (i) the individual will have a minimum of two years' experience as a Category F2 Licence Referee;
 - (ii) positive written statements by Referee Observers on a minimum of five games during any given futsal season; and
 - (iii) refereed a minimum of 12 futsal Matches during a futsal season.

A Category F1 Licence will enable him to referee in all GFA futsal Matches and Competitions; and

- (e) FIFA Listed Futsal Referee being, a futsal Referee who has been included in the FIFA International Referees List in any given year.

7.4 The Referee's Committee shall decide the appropriate level to which the respective licence shall be issued based on the Referee's performance, education and annual assessments. The Referee's Committee shall determine the standards required for a Referee to obtain, retain or improve his level of licence.

7.5 The Referee's Committee shall make their decision in consultation with the Referee Observers, the decision of which shall be final.

7.6 The Refereeing Department shall forward a list of all licensed Referees to the Referees Committee on an annual basis.

7.7 Referee Licences shall be subject to the Referees meeting the minimum standards set down by the Referees Committee in areas such as education, performance, and assessment. Referees who fail to meet or continue to meet these minimum requirements may have their licence removed, suspended or the level of their respective licence may be amended by the Referees Committee as they see fit.

7.8 Referees Licences are held subject to compliance with the GFA Statutes, together with any other applicable codes of practice, guidelines and/or directives issued to Referees from time to time.

8. **Appointment to GFA Competition Panels**

8.1 Licensed Referees may be appointed to GFA Competition panels on an annual basis by the appropriate Referee Administrator. These appointments shall be reported by the Referee Administrator to the Referees Committee.

8.2 Appointment to a GFA Competition panel does not automatically entitles a Referee to an appointment the following year.

- 8.3 Referee Administrator may recommend the transfer and/or removal of a Referee from a GFA Competition panel to the Referee's Committee.
- 8.4 All issues relating to the appointments to GFA Competition panels or transfers shall be referred to the Referee's Committee. The Referee's Committee's decision shall be final and binding and not subject to any further review or appeal.
- 8.5 Referees may be requested by the Referees Committee to officiate outside their appointed Competition. All such requests shall take precedence.

9. **Appointments**

- 9.1 The Referees Committee will appoint Referees to Matches in any given Competition.
- 9.2 The appointment or non-appointment to Matches shall be at the discretion of the Referees Committee.
- 9.3 A Referee Licence or GFA Competition panel appointment shall not grant an automatic right to a Referee to be selected to officiate at any Match. In making a decision or recommendation, a Referee Administrator may take into account assessments, Match administration, ranking, education, fitness, availability, location, the type of Match, and any other reason which may be relevant in his discretion.
- 9.4 Referees who are unable to accept any appointment must notify, by no later than 48 hours prior to the commencement of the Match, the secretary of the Referees Committee or the Refereeing Department of his/her inability to officiate and the exceptional circumstances which prevent him from doing so.
- 9.5 Any Referee who fails to notify his inability to officiate may face Disciplinary Sanctions in accordance with the Disciplinary Regulations.
- 9.6 The Referees Committee will ensure that Referees are only assigned to Matches and Competitions covered by the Referee Licence each Referee holds.

10. **Match Fees**

- 10.1 Match and Competition fees (as applicable) shall be authorised by the GFA after considering any representations from the Referees Association, who will in turn act on the advice of the Referees Committee.
- 10.2 Referees shall not accept or claim payment in excess of any amounts which are owed to them, and authorised by the GFA to be paid to them, for such Matches and/or Competitions.
- 10.3 Referees claiming Match or Competition fees and/or expenses shall ensure these are submitted on time in accordance with any relevant instructions received from the Referees Committee or the GFA.

10.4 All issues relating to Match and Competition fees and/or expenses shall be referred to the Referees Committee.

11. Match Administration

11.1 Referees shall review all team sheets on COMET, and any ancillary Match Official reports relating to Misconduct or otherwise, and complete their match report on COMET.

11.2 Referees may be requested by the GFA to clarify any matter pertaining to the team sheets.

11.3 Referees entering Misconduct reports online must ensure that all details are inputted accurately and forwarded to the GFA by all stipulated deadlines, together with any hard copy documentation that may be required.

11.4 Referees may be required to attend Disciplinary Proceedings regarding team sheets and/or reports.

11.5 Referees failing to comply with the provisions of this regulation 11 shall be reported to the Referees Committee.

SECTION THREE ASSESSMENTS OF REFEREES

12. Referee Observers

12.1 Referees shall be assessed and graded by Referee Observers who are appointed on an annual basis by the Referees Committee.

12.2 Elite Referees shall be assessed at every elite level Match officiated by them by an Referee Observer. All other Referees shall be assessed as required.

12.3 A Referee shall be entitled to adequate post-match analytical feedback from the Referee Observer.

12.4 A Referee shall be entitled to receive a copy of the Referee Observer's report, which report shall be sent within 72 hours of the Match assessed or in the case of an Elite Referee, within two Business Days of the Match assessed. All Referee Observers' reports must be submitted to the Refereeing Department for auditing purposes prior to releasing it to the Referee concerned.

12.5 The process or manner in which a Referee has been assessed may be reviewed by the Referee Specialist designated for that purpose. This review shall not be subject to any appeal, and any findings shall be binding and final.

13. **Marks**

- 13.1 A marking system shall be implemented by the Referees Committee for use at all levels.
- 13.2 The awarding of a mark rests solely with the Referee Observer who is assessing a Referee in a Match.
- 13.3 Marks shall be used by the Referee Committee to make decisions in relation to Referees' overall grading, licence level, training, education, Match appointments or other related matters.

14. **Fitness**

- 14.1 Referees shall maintain a level of fitness consistent with a Referee's training programme (as this is determined from time to time by the Refereeing Department) for the level of football or futsal they are licensed to officiate.
- 14.2 Referees may be assessed by a fitness instructor set by the Refereeing Department on their level of fitness in order to obtain or retain their Referee Licence.
- 14.3 Failure to achieve the necessary fitness required may result in non-selection of a Referee for Matches until a satisfactory improvement has been made. In such cases, a Referee may be allowed to continue officiating on the basis of a lower level Referee Licence. In certain circumstances, a Referee Licence may be removed or suspended by the Referees Committee.
- 14.4 Referees shall be required, as necessary, to attend fitness training sessions granted by the Refereeing Department. Non-attendance, without an acceptable explanation, may result in the removal or suspension of their Referee Licence, or the non-appointment of said Referee to any Matches.
- 14.5 The Referees Committee shall determine the appropriate fitness test and level of fitness required to operate at each grade.

15. **Development**

- 15.1 Referees shall attend such workshops and seminars organised by the Refereeing Department. Non-attendance, without an acceptable explanation, may result in the removal or suspension of a Referee's Referee Licence, or the non-appointment of said Referee to any Matches.

SECTION FOUR GENERAL OBLIGATIONS

16. Code of Ethics

16.1 All Referees (irrespective of Referee Licence held) shall adhere to any ancillary codes of ethics and professional conduct as may be approved and introduced by the GFA for Referees from time to time.

17. Conflicts of Interests

17.1 A Referee may not officiate a Match in a Competition if he is a member or is affiliated in any way with a Club playing in that Match.

17.2 An Elite Referee, or an Elite Assistant Referee shall be ineligible to represent any body at a meeting, or act as a member of any Referees Committee, Refereeing Department or the GFA, unless nominated by the Referees Association.

18. Uniform

18.1 All Referees must officiate in official uniforms as designated and approved by the GFA from time to time.

19. Rules and Regulations

19.1 All Referees shall abide by the Laws of the Game and/or the Futsal Laws of the Game (as applicable), and shall be bound by the rules and regulations of this GFA Handbook (together with any ancillary codes of practice, guidance or additional rules which may be implemented by the GFA from time to time).

SECTION FIVE DISCIPLINARY, DISPUTES AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

20. Complaints

20.1 Complaints against Referees must be made in writing to the Referees Committee. Complaints involving, or alleging, breaches of the Disciplinary Regulations shall be a matter to be referred to the Disciplinary Bodies.

20.2 Complaints concerning children shall be referred to the appropriate person appointed by the GFA for such matters. The designated person shall have jurisdiction to handle the complaint in accordance with any GFA Child Welfare Policy, and to refer the complaint to the Disciplinary Bodies as necessary, or refer the complaint back to the Referees Committee if the matter is to be more appropriately heard under their remit. For the avoidance of doubt, the designated person appointed by the GFA shall have

full authority to assess individual cases and determine the appropriate process for such complaints.

21. **Disciplinary**

21.1 Referees shall be subject to Disciplinary Sanctions in accordance with the Disciplinary Regulations contained in this GFA Handbook, together with any additional disciplinary rules which the GFA may introduce from time to time.

21.2 Matters pertaining to education, assessments, appointments or other matters under the jurisdiction of the Referees Committee shall not be subject to or review by the Disciplinary Bodies.

21.3 The Referees Committee shall have the authority to liaise with the Disciplinary Bodies to determine whether a matter concern a breach of the Disciplinary Regulations and/or imposition of a Disciplinary Sanction.

22. **Disputes**

22.1 Any disputes or disagreements involving Referees not otherwise expressly dealt with by these GFA Referee Regulations must be made in writing to the Referees Committee.

22.2 In any such disputes, the Referees Committee shall attempt to resolve such disputes by facilitating a meeting and communications between the parties to the dispute with a view to resolving the problem within 14 days of the Referees Committee's receipt of written notification of said dispute. The Refereeing Department shall be available to guide and assist in this process throughout.

22.3 If the dispute has not been resolved within 14 days of the initial meeting, the dispute shall be referred to the GFA, who may, *inter alia*:

- (a) convene a hearing with all parties to consider the dispute;
- (b) make such enquiries or requests to all parties as it deems appropriate;
- (c) hear from such persons as they deemed appropriate;
- (d) make such recommendations or binding decision to any party to the dispute as they deem fit; or
- (e) refer any disciplinary matters to the relevant Disciplinary Body as applicable.

22.4 To the extent that the GFA does not refer any matter or disciplinary aspects in relation to the same to a Disciplinary Body, the GFA's decision shall be final and binding on the parties, and shall not be capable of appeal.

23. **Final Provisions**

- 23.1 The GFA may also take any action necessary to address any matters which may not be adequately addressed under these GFA Referee Regulations providing that such actions are reasonable and proportionate.