



Football 2015/16

League & Cup Rules and Regulations

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CODE OF CONDUCT

AoC Sport, its member colleges and other participants will encourage the development of high standards of performance and behaviour. Both staff and competitors should always seek to set a good example by the way in which they carry out their duties and responsibilities both on and off the field. AoC Sport may refuse the entry of any team that does not follow this charter.

AoC SPORT

1. Will ensure that the rules are fair. They need to be thoroughly understood by competitors and officials, and properly enforced.
2. Will make every effort to ensure that the rules are applied consistently and with absolute impartiality.
3. Will make every effort to impress upon participants and officials the absolute need to maintain the highest standards of sporting behaviour in the organisation and the practice of their sport.

STAFF/COACHES

1. Must ensure that all competitors satisfy the eligibility requirements of AoC Sport competitions and that they are registered before playing.

2. Insist that competitors understand and abide by the principles of good sporting behaviour.
3. Must not countenance the use of illegal or performance-enhancing drugs by competitors.
4. Must never employ methods or practices that might involve risks to long-term health or physical development of their students.
5. Must not attempt to manipulate the rules to the advantage of their competitors.
6. Must show respect to all officials and their decisions.
7. Will demonstrate proper professional behaviour at all times, providing a positive role model for the competitors. In particular foul, abusive or offensive language/actions must not be used in the presence of competitors.
8. Must not use social networking sites to make derogatory comments about any official, opponent or AoC Sport.
9. Must prioritise AoC Sport matches to ensure that they are played on the dates specified.

10. When playing as the home team, must communicate relevant information to the opponents at least seven days before the match.
 11. Must ensure the criteria of the competition are met in full.
 12. Must take the competition rules, a playing under protest form, evidence of eligibility and completed team sheet to every match.
 13. Must follow all administration requirements related to the collation of team sheets and the updating of results.
5. Must accept success and failure, victory and defeat with good grace and without excessive display of emotion.
 6. Must treat their opponents and team members with due respect and fairness at all times, which includes the use of social networking sites.
 7. Must respect everyone participating in AoC Sport competitions in terms of age, gender (including transgender), ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation or disability.

COMPETITORS

1. Must abide by both the laws and the spirit of their sport.
2. Must accept the decisions of the umpires and referees without question or protestation.
3. Must not cheat and in particular must not possess, consume or supply illegal or performance-enhancing drugs.
4. Must exercise self-control at all times.

SPECTATORS

1. Must support their team in a friendly, positive way, without abusing officials or other competitors, and without trying to influence the decisions of referees or organisers.

It is recommended that a copy of the Rule Book of all sports be to hand, and that the member college/organisation be affiliated to the Governing Bodies of all the sports in which it is taking part.

PREMIER LEAGUE, CATEGORIES 2 AND 3 LEAGUES

1. ELIGIBILITY

- 1.1 All participants in AoC Sport competitions must be recorded on the Individualised Learning Record (ILR) by the institution. They must be on the ILR as a continuing student at the time of the match. Students on the ILR who are registered as completed, withdrawn or transferred are not eligible to play.
- 1.2 All participants in a football team must be on the ILR of the same institution unless written permission is received from AoC Sport.
- 1.3 It may be possible for a student to be on a funded study programme at more than one college. In such circumstances, the student will play for the college at which they study more guided learning hours at. If this college does not enter a team in the student's chosen sport, the college at which the student studies fewer hours must make a written request to the other college for the release of the student.
- 1.4 All participants in the men's leagues must be under 19 and over 16 years of age at midnight on 31 August in the academic year of participation.

- 1.5 All participants in the women's leagues must be under 21 and over 16 years of age at midnight on 31 August in the academic year of participation.
- 1.6 Any college submitting false information or playing an ineligible player(s) may forfeit the match, subject to the submission of a written explanation.

2. STAFFING

- 2.1 College/Team coaches:
- a) Premier League: must be qualified at FA Level 3 (UEFA 'B' Licence). Where a new head coach is named during the season they must provide evidence that they have also achieved or are committed to achieving the FA Level 3 (UEFA 'B' Licence) within twelve months.
 - b) Category 2: must be qualified to FA Level 2.
 - c) Category 3: must be active FA Licensed coaches, working towards Level 2.
- 2.2 First Aid:
- a) Premier League: The first aider with each team must be qualified to minimum Level 2 – Basic Treatment & Management of Injuries (FA) qualification or equivalent.

- b) Categories 2 and 3: There must be a qualified first aider in attendance at each game.

3. COMPETITION SYSTEM

- 3.1 The competition will be organised and administered by the Competition Administration Officer (Football).
- 3.2 The competition will be organised around a 'Regional League' principle where possible, although there may be a requirement for some travelling outside of regions.
- 3.3 The Regional Operations Officers will designate colleges to each league according to the entries received and geographical location, the leagues to be approved at the Regional Operations Group meeting.
- 3.4 The Premier competition is based around an 'elite' standard and as such travelling will be greater than in Categories 2 and 3 leagues. Entry to the Premier League is by application only, the ECFA Board may therefore incorporate several regions to ensure 'elite' competition can be achieved according to the number and quality of entries received.
- 3.5 Dates of fixtures will be advertised to participating teams within two weeks of the leagues being determined by ECFA or Regional

Operations groups' via the FixturesLive or Full Time websites.

- 3.6 Matches will be played on the Wednesday afternoon designated by the Competition Administration Officer (Football) in the fixture list. Games will be scheduled between September and April.
- 3.7 Matches can be played on other days if both teams are in agreement.
- 3.8 Where a team is unable to complete a fixture on the designated date due to extenuating circumstances they must contact AoC Sport at least seven days in advance of the fixture to obtain permission to agree an alternative date with the opposition. The fixture must be rescheduled within seven days and the new date for the match posted on FixturesLive or Full Time. Colleges entering this competition must accept that completion of fixtures within this timescale must take priority over other external competitions.
- 3.9 Where teams cannot mutually agree on a new date, the Competition Administration Officer (Football) may set a date that both colleges must abide by. Failure to re-play the game on the date specified will result in one or both teams facing a points penalty and/or fine.

3.10 A match may be cancelled for legitimate reasons only, such as:

- International call ups (one goalkeeper or two outfield players);
- Severe weather conditions;
- Work experience (providing AoC Sport is informed by 30 September).

Non legitimate reasons are:

- Lack of players due to injury, illness and holidays etc;
- Participation in competitions outside of ECFA;
- Other arrangements clashing with the structured season.

3.11 Please note the AoC Sport/ECFA structured season with all dates for the year, was available in May and by submitting the online entry form each college accepted the dates as a commitment.

3.12 Where a match is cancelled for non legitimate reasons after midday on the day before the match teams may apply for a walkover by using the form available in the resources section of the AoC Sport website.

3.13 Protests must be lodged and walkovers sought within seven days of the fixture. Walkovers will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and must be sent to appeals@aoc.co.uk using the Stage 1 (S1) Walkovers, Protests

and Appeals form. It is not acceptable for teams to merely enter a 3-0 score when an opponent has not fulfilled a fixture.

3.14 A score of 3-0 will be recorded in the event of a walkover.

3.15 Where a team offers three walkovers in a season all of their results will be removed, with any remaining fixtures being converted to friendlies.

3.16 If a fixture is agreed to be postponed by both parties then a walkover cannot be requested in the future if the fixture is not rescheduled and played by the end of the structured season.

3.17 No double headers are allowed in the ECFA Premier Leagues.

3.18 In non-premier football competitions, teams wishing to play a double header must obtain permission through the AoC Sport national office and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. If permission is granted then the result shall be awarded as follows: the first half will be classed as one match and the second half will be classed as a separate match.

3.19 If appropriate then fixtures can be brought forward or reversed. The home team will need to update FixturesLive/Full Time accordingly.

- 3.20 If you experience any issues with contacting the opposing team it is important that you raise this with AoC Sport immediately, so appropriate action can be taken.
- 3.21 In league matches, points will be awarded as follows:
- Win = 3 points;
 - Draw = 1 point;
 - Loss = 0 points.
- 3.22 Where teams within the same league share the same number of points, the following criteria will be applied in order to determine the order:
- a) Goal difference in League games.
 - b) Goals scored in League games.
 - c) Total wins in League games
 - d) Head-to-head record of the teams involved in the tie based on total points in League games.
 - e) Ranking based on points earned against top four group finishers.
 - f) Lottery conducted by ECFA at league office.
- 3.23 If for any reason the league schedule has not been completed by the end of the season all outstanding results will be recorded as 0-0 with no league points being given to either team. Failure to complete the matches may result in a £100 fine.
- 3.24 Premier League only: On completion of regional league fixtures a series of 'play-off' matches will be organised to determine the national league champion. These fixtures will be scheduled by the Competition Administration Officer (Football)
- 3.25 Premier League - If the league schedule has not been completed by the deadline set by AoC Sport, colleges will be selected for the play off stage on the basis of the number of points achieved by that date.
- 3.26 In 2015-16 the top 3 teams in each of the five men's Premier League groups will qualify for the play offs together with the best 4th placed team based upon the average goals difference per game using the total number of games possible in the league.
- 3.27 In 2015-16 the top 2 teams in each of the three women's Premier League groups will qualify for the play offs together with the two best 3rd placed team based upon the average goals difference per game using the total number of games possible in the league.
- 3.28 Where teams within the same league share the same number of points, the criteria listed at 3.22 will be applied in order to determine who progresses to the 'play offs'.

3.29 Play-off matches that finish in a draw at full-time will be concluded by any one or all the following procedures depending upon the prevailing conditions:

- Extra time of two halves of 15 minutes.
- A penalty kick competition carried out in accordance with the Laws of the Game.
- This should be agreed by both managers in the presence of the Referee prior to the commencement of the match.

4. PLAYER REGISTRATION

4.1 All players must be registered before they are eligible to play. Details of all players to be used (i.e. full names, gender and DOB) should be completed online using FixturesLive or Full Time.

- Premier League: A maximum of 35 players at any one time may be named using the Full Time player registration system. No new players may be registered to play after February Half Term.
- Categories 2 and 3: Player details must be entered on the FixturesLive system.

4.2 In the interests of increasing participation and preventing late cancellations, additional players can be brought into teams in the

Category 3 leagues at late notice providing:-

- They comply with rule 1.1 and either 1.3 or 1.4
- They are included and identified on the team sheet.
- The opposition coach is notified prior to the match.
- They are registered on FixturesLive within 48 hours of the match.

4.3 Coaches must be able to provide photo ID of their players if challenged about the eligibility of a player. This can be done by **either** using the management information system to produce the names, photographs and dates of birth of all players. **or** insisting that players carry with them their valid student ID card.

4.4 Any team found to have submitted false information or played an ineligible player(s) will forfeit the match.

4.5 All players must be listed on the team sheet according to their numbered shirt (including **no more than five** nominated substitutes **all five of which** may be used during a game).

4.6 In category 2 and 3 institutions have the option of completing either a team sheet or squad sheet, both of which are available on the resources section of AoC Sport.

4.7 The team sheet must be exchanged in the presence of the referee 30 minutes prior to kick off. (it is good practice to provide a copy for the referee).

- Premier League: Both teams must send the fully completed team sheet of their opponents to the Competition Administration Officer (Football) within two days of the completion of each fixture. Where a game is played on a Wednesday the team sheet should be received by 5pm on the Friday. The away team manager must complete the quality standards questions before submitting the team sheet.
- Categories 2 and 3: Each team must retain their opponent's team/squad sheet until the end of the season in the event of AoC Sport requiring the information for any investigation.

4.8 Any appeal against player eligibility must be completed on form S1, sent to appeals@aac.co.uk and be accompanied by the team sheet.

4.9 Teams may nominate five substitutes who may be used at anytime. Any number of substitutions may be used at any time with the permission of the Referee. Entry onto the field of play will only be allowed during a

stoppage in play. A player who has been replaced may return to the play as a substitute for another player.

4.10 No player may play for two institutions during the same season, unless written permission has been granted by the Competition Administration Officer (Football) in exceptional circumstances.

4.11 In the interests of player development movement between teams (ie, men's 2 to men's 3) is permitted as long as they are registered in accordance with rule 4.1. No more than three players listed on the team sheet of a team at one level may play in the next match at a lower level.

4.12 Players who have previously played at a higher level must be identified on the team/squad sheet.

NB We are dependent on coaches displaying sound educational ethos and values to ensure that this rule is upheld. In particular the practice of playing a senior team in a lower competition is one that AoC Sport discourages.

4.13 AoC Sport staff has the right to attend any fixture and request to see a player's student ID with or without prior notice. Failure to provide the relevant information

upon request will result in further action being taken.

5. CONDITIONS OF PLAY AND FIXTURE OBLIGATIONS

5.1 The home team must contact their opponents with match details such as venue, facilities available, start time and colours of kit at least seven days before the fixture (i.e., Thursday for games that take place on the following Wednesday). Game start times are negotiable to accommodate the travelling of visiting teams.

5.2 All matches should be played on high quality grass pitches (minimum dimensions 70 yards x 100 yards or 65 m x 92 m) and all lines should be clearly marked. The pitch should be well maintained and the grass regularly mown to an acceptable length.

5.3 In the event of poor weather, matches may be played on FIFA approved 3G pitches (minimum dimensions 70 yards x 100 yards or 65 m x 92 m). Under no circumstances can any match be played on a sand-based or sand-filled artificial surface.

5.4 In the Premier League the use of caged 3G pitches will be an exception. Teams should not arrange to play all matches on 3G.

5.5 Duration – all matches will be played in accordance with the FA rules of the game and shall be for a maximum of 90 minutes (i.e. 45 mins each way) and a minimum of 70 minutes (i.e. 35 mins each way) by agreement with both Team Managers and the Match Referee. There should be a half time interval not exceeding 15 minutes.

5.6 Where a match is abandoned after 70 minutes have been played, the score at the time of abandonment will constitute a match result, this to be confirmed by the Referee.

5.7 Match balls – at least two suitable match balls to ensure continuous play will be provided for the referee's inspection prior to each match. At Premier League these must be of sufficient quality for a high level match and kept in reserve for matches only. Regular training balls should not be used.

5.8 Team Colours – in the event of a colour clash the away team will change to colours which provide a satisfactory contrast. Shirts may bear a sponsor's name and should be clearly numbered. No black kit is allowed by any team or player.

5.9 Refreshments – At Premier League and Category 2 the home college shall provide suitable hospitality and refreshments which will replenish energy levels for their visitors following each

game before they embark upon their journey home. This can be negotiated where colleges have a travelling distance to the fixture of under one hour. Under these circumstances it is the responsibility of the home team to contact the away team to negotiate whether there are requirements for refreshments, and where they are requested home colleges must provide these. At Category 3 the home college shall provide access to refreshment facilities.

5.10 It is the home team's responsibility to input the results by logging on to Full Time (Premier League) or FixturesLive (Categories 2 and 3). This must be done within two clear days of the fixture. For example: for a Wednesday fixture the result must be inputted by the Friday of that week. Away teams also have the option of inputting the result.

5.11 A no-show occurs when a team wilfully does not show up to a confirmed fixture. Penalties for no-shows are as follows:

- A forfeit to the opposing team and 1 point is deducted from the league total.
- A forfeit will result in a 3-0 win to the team not at fault.
- The team that is guilty of a 'no show' is precluded from participating in any 'play off' opportunity should they qualify. If this is the case the

next nearest team in terms of league standing will automatically qualify for this privilege.

- For a second no-show in the season a team will be docked 3 points and will be automatically suspended pending a review.

5.12 If no result is entered for a due fixture then the following communication will be sent from AoC Sport to the home team and cc'd to the away team.

- At the beginning of every month an email reminder will be sent to all teams that have results outstanding requesting that the result be entered immediately or a new date to be agreed if the match has not been played.
- Thirty days later where the result of the match or new date has not been added to Full Time/FixturesLive the away team will be awarded the match with a score of 3-0.

5.13 A team unable to attend a scheduled game because of an accident, weather or unforeseen circumstances should immediately notify the opponent and the league office. Each situation will be reviewed by the Competition Administration Officer (Football) who shall render a decision that may be appealed

through the system laid out in the section on appeals.

- 5.14 Designated touchline areas: Spectators should stand or be seated on the sides of the pitch at least three metres from the touchline or as practical, running the full length of the pitch and no one should stand by or behind the goals. Working in conjunction with the terms of the FA Codes of Conduct colleges should encourage individual and collective responsibility for ensuring that the rules relating to touchline areas are adhered to.

6. MATCH OFFICIALS

- 6.1 Match Officials – the home college should arrange for appropriately qualified officials at each match. All match officials must be appropriately dressed. Failure of the home team to provide the appropriate number and level officials may result in the match being forfeited and/or a £50 fine. Official's match fees will be paid for by the home college. The requirements for match officials are:-

- Premier League: neutral Referee at **Level 5** or above and **two qualified assistant referees at Level 7**.
- Category 2: neutral Referee at **Level 6** or above and **two**

qualified assistant referees at Level 8.

- Category 3: neutral Referee at **Level 7** or above or a **Level 9 if accompanied by a mentor.**

7. TROPHIES

- 7.1 The winner of each League will be presented with a cup for permanent retention.
- 7.2 Premier League winners will play a series of 'play-off' matches before a Final is staged on a neutral venue where the winners will be presented with the Premier 'Champions Cup' to be retained for one season.
- 7.3 Colleges winning the Premier 'Champions Cup' are responsible for the cost of engraving and return to the ECFA office by 31 March.

8. MISCONDUCT

- 8.1 Any person having a connection with the college (e.g. staff, student, parent etc) guilty of misconduct could cause the team/college to be withdrawn from further involvement in the competition and/or the imposition of a fine or other sanctions.
- 8.2 Any matters of misconduct recorded by the referee should be sent to and will be dealt with by

the **County Football Association to which the offender(s) is affiliated**. ECFA should be made aware of any such instances. Serious misconduct will be dealt with by ECFA and the County Football Association together.

- 8.3 AoC Sport cannot intervene in any matters of misconduct that are being investigated by the County FA or the Police.

9. SANCTIONS AND PENALTY FINES

- 9.1 Teams failing to comply with the rules of the competition or found to be guilty of misconduct may be subject to one or more of the following - the imposition of a significant fine and costs, points deduction, and/or in certain circumstances, exclusion from the league.
- 9.2 Teams playing in AoC Sport competitions will be monitored through match reports and unannounced visits to ensure the Quality Standards are met.
- 9.3 Any team accumulating fines to the value of £200 during the course of the season will have 2 league points deducted and the college concerned may be subject to the imposition of further sanctions.

- 9.4 In the event of a team withdrawing from the league without finishing its scheduled games, all results will be expunged and other sanctions or fines may be imposed.

- 9.5 At periods during the season, ECFA shall provide the compliance record to all premier league colleges. If the league finds that compliance with standards is insufficient, it may recommend that the college's status be revoked for the following season.

- 9.6 At the discretion of the Competition Administration Officer (Football), colleges who have maintained a previously exemplary record of compliance may be given a suspended fine throughout the course of the season for a first offence (this only relates to penalty fines and not points deductions). This suspended fine will be payable in full where another offence is committed.

- 9.7 For colleges who are involved in 'one off' minor transgressions concerning the Rules of the Competition sanctions and/or Penalty Fines will be imposed using the following scale.

Offence	Fine	Sanction
Failure to provide adequately qualified match officials	£50 at second offence	3-0 walkover
Failure to meet a fixture obligation on the appointed (or agreed) date	Up to £100	3-0 walkover
Changing facilities, pitches and/or match equipment that do not meet the requirements of the Category Operating Standards	£50 at second offence	Warning notice issued
Failure to provide wholesome post match refreshments	£50 at second offence	Warning notice issued
Failure to record match results and return Team Sheets to the Competition Administrator within 48 hours	£50 at second offence	Warning notice issued
Failure to register players before they play		3-0 walkover for all matches in which non registered players are used
Committing an act that is deemed to be not in the spirit of the game	£50	
Failure to control players and/or coaching staff	Up to £500	up to 6 points (plus additional sanctions)
Withdrawing from a league during the season	No fine up to end of November then up to £100	Teams may be prevented from entering the competition in the following season

10. WALKOVERS, PROTESTS AND APPEALS

10.1 See page 25.

PREMIER CUP, KNOCKOUT CUP AND MEN'S KNOCKOUT TROPHY

1. ELIGIBILITY

- 1.1 All participants in AoC Sport competitions must be recorded on the Individualised Learning Record (ILR) by the institution. They must be on the ILR as a continuing student at the time of the match. Students on the ILR who are registered as completed, withdrawn or transferred are not eligible to play.
- 1.2 All participants in a football team must be on the ILR of the same institution unless written permission is received from AoC Sport.
- 1.3 It may be possible for a student to be on a funded study programme at more than one college. In such circumstances, the student will play for the college at which they study more guided learning hours at. If this college does not enter a team in the student's chosen sport, the college at which the student studies fewer hours must make a written request to the other college for the release of the student.
- 1.4 All participants in the men's cup competitions must be under 19 and over 16 years of age at

midnight on 31 August in the academic year of participation.

- 1.5 All participants in the women's cup competitions must be under 21 and over 16 years of age at midnight on 31 August in the academic year of participation.
- 1.6 Any college submitting false information or playing an ineligible player(s) may forfeit the match, subject to the submission of a written explanation.

2. STAFFING

- 2.1 College/Team coaches:
- Premier Cup: must be qualified to FA Level 2
 - Knockout Cups and Men's Knockout Trophy: must be active FA Licensed Coaches.
- 2.2 First Aid:
All Cup competitions: There must be a qualified first aider in attendance at each game.

3. COMPETITION SYSTEM

- 3.1 The competition will be administered by ECFA.
- 3.2 Entry to the competition must be received by AoC Sport before the

deadline stated on the online entry form.

3.3 The competition will be in run in standard cup format:

- Area qualifying competition.
- National play-offs between areas.

3.4 All games must be played on a one-off knockout basis with no replays.

3.5 The competition is run as an 11 a-side cup competition.

3.6 Each match may have 16 named players with only 11 on the pitch at any one time.

3.7 A draw will be made by the Competition Administration Officer (Football). The completion dates for fixtures will be circulated with the draw at the start of the competition and available on the AoC Sport structured season which can be accessed on the AoC Sport website. These will be the final play by dates for each round. Failure to comply with these dates will result in the toss of a coin to decide which team progresses to the next round.

3.8 Where matches are cancelled due to weather they must be played on the following term time Wednesday. In order to keep the competition on schedule it may be

necessary for a team to forego home advantage if, after a game has been postponed once due to weather, the pitch of the away team is playable.

3.9 The draws shall be circulated, and all games are to be played at the ground of the first named team (unless agreed otherwise by both teams).

3.10 Where a match is cancelled for non legitimate reasons after midday on the day before the match teams may apply for a walkover by using the form available in the resources section of the AoC Sport website.

3.11 The winner of the Knockout Cup will be entered into the following season's Premier Cup competition.

4. PLAYER REGISTRATION

4.1 Only players who have previously been registered on either Full Time or FixturesLive are eligible to play in the Premier Cup, Knockout Cup or Knockout Trophy.

4.2 Players who have played in the Premier Cup, the Premier League or in the Category 2 leagues cannot play in the National Knockout Cup. Failure to follow this ruling will result in the match being awarded to the other team.

- 4.3 Where colleges have more than one team in a competition a player is 'cup tied' once they have played for one team and cannot then play for the other team. A team that is found to have played a cup tied player will forfeit the match.
- 4.4 In the interests of increasing participation and preventing late cancellations, additional players can be brought into teams in the Knockout Cup and Knockout Trophy at late notice providing:-
- They comply with rule 1.1 and either rule 1.3 or 1.4
 - They are included and identified on the team sheet.
 - The opposition coach is notified prior to the match.
 - They are registered on FixturesLive within 48 hours of the match.
- 4.5 Coaches must be able to provide photo ID of their players if challenged about the eligibility of a player. This can be done by **either** using the management information system to produce the names, photographs and dates of birth of all players. **or** insisting that players carry with them their valid student ID card.
- 4.6 Any team found to have submitted false information or played an ineligible player(s) will forfeit the match.
- 4.7 All players must be listed on the team/squad sheet according to their numbered shirt (including **no more than five** nominated substitutes **all five of which** may be used during a game).
- 4.8 Teams may nominate five substitutes who may be used at any time. Any number of substitutions may be used at any time with the permission of the Referee. Entry onto the field of play will only be allowed during a stoppage in play. A player who has been replaced may return to the play as a substitute for another player.
- 4.9 The team sheet must be exchanged in the presence of the referee 30 minutes prior to kick off.
- Premier Cup: Both teams must send the fully completed team sheet of their opponents to the Competition Administration Officer (Football) within two days of the completion of each fixture. Where a game is played on a Wednesday the team sheet should be received by 5pm on the Friday. The away team manager must complete the quality standards questions before submitting the team sheet.
 - Knockout Cup and Trophy: Each team must retain their opponent's team/squad sheet until the end of the season in

the event of AoC Sport requiring the information for any investigation.

- 4.10 Any appeal against player eligibility must be completed on form S1 within 24 hours, sent to appeals@aoc.co.uk and be accompanied by the team sheet.

5. CONDITIONS OF PLAY AND FIXTURE OBLIGATIONS

- 5.1 The home college must contact their opponents with match details such as venue, facilities available, start time and colours of kit at least seven days before the fixture (i.e., Thursday for games that take place on the following Wednesday). Game start times are negotiable to accommodate the travelling of visiting teams.
- 5.2 All matches should be played on grass pitches (minimum dimensions 70 yards x 100 yards or 65m x 92m) and all lines should be clearly marked. The pitch should be well maintained and the grass regularly mown to an acceptable length. Where weather dictates, a FIFA approved 3G surface can be used but written permission is needed from the opposition prior to travel.
- 5.3 Duration of matches; all matches shall be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game and shall be

for a maximum of 90 minutes (i.e. 45 minutes each way) and a minimum of 70 minutes (i.e. 35 minutes each way). The duration of half time shall not exceed 15 minutes.

- 5.4 Where a match is abandoned after 70 minutes have been played, the score at the time of abandonment will constitute a match result, this to be confirmed by the Referee. If less than 70 minutes AoC Sport will determine whether the result will stand or the match rescheduled for the following Wednesday.
- 5.5 Conclusion of fixtures; procedure if a draw at full time to be any one or all of the following, depending upon the prevailing conditions (i.e., light, state of the pitch, etc)
- Extra time of two halves of 15 minutes.
 - A penalty kick competition, carried out in accordance with the Laws of the Game.
 - REPLAY OF THE FIXTURE IS NOT PERMITTED.
 - Teams must appreciate the need to start early enough to allow sufficient time for these procedures to be implemented if necessary.
- 5.6 Match balls – two suitable match balls to ensure continuous play must be provided by the home team.

5.7 Team Colours – in the event of a colour clash the away team will change to colours which provide a satisfactory contrast. Shirts may bear a sponsor's name and must be clearly numbered. No black kit is allowed by any team or player.

5.8 Refreshments – Premier Cup: the home college shall provide suitable hospitality and refreshments which will replenish energy levels for their visitors following each game before they embark upon their journey home. If less than one and a half hours travelling is involved refreshments are at the discretion of the home college. Under these circumstances it is the responsibility of the home team to contact the away team to negotiate whether there are requirements for refreshments. Knockout Cups and Knockout Trophy: From the quarter final suitable hospitality and refreshments which will replenish energy levels must be provided. Prior to the quarter final suitable hospitality and refreshments should be provided if more than one and a half hours travelling is involved.

5.9 It is the home team's responsibility to input the results by logging on to FixturesLive. This must be done by 5pm on the day after the fixture. It is also acceptable to email the result to the Competition Administration Officer (Football). Away teams

also have the option of inputting the result.

5.10 Failure to submit the result will result in a toss of a coin to determine who progresses to the next round.

5.11 Substitutes: a college may, at its discretion, name five substitutes and use up all five substitute players in any match. The referee shall be informed of the name(s) of the substitute(s) before the start of the match. A player who has been replaced may return to the play as a substitute for another player. Any substitutes not named may not take part.

5.12 In cup competitions any walkover requests or protests must be completed on form S1 within 24 hours, sent to appeals@aoc.co.uk and be accompanied by the team sheet.

6. MATCH OFFICIALS

6.1 The match officials shall be organised by the home college and shall be neutral. Any problems should be notified to the away college before they travel.

■ Premier Cup: Referee at **Level 5** or above and **two qualified Assistant Referees at Level 7**.

■ Knockout Cups and Men's Knockout Trophy: Referee at

Level 7 or above but from the quarter final a Referee at **Level 5** and two qualified **Assistant Referees at Level 7** must be provided.

7. TROPHIES

7.1 The winning team will receive a trophy to retain for 12 months. It is the winner's responsibility to return this trophy to AoC Sport for presentation by the 31 March. Failure to do so will result in the winning teams being invoiced for the replacement trophy.

7.2 There will be medals for the players of both teams playing in the final.

7.3 Colleges winning the Premier Cup, Knockout Cup and Knockout Trophy are responsible for the cost of engraving and return to AoC Sport.

8. MISCONDUCT

8.1 It is a condition of entry that teams shall adhere to the ECFA Code of Conduct.

8.2 Players, Coaches, Managers and spectators of all competing teams shall behave in a manner that is not likely to bring the game of Football into disrepute.

8.3 ECFA shall have the power to take appropriate action against any team, Player, Coach or Manager within its jurisdiction.

8.4 Any matters of misconduct recorded by the referee should be sent to and will be dealt with by the **County Football Association to which the offender(s) is affiliated**. ECFA should be made aware of any such instances. Serious misconduct will be dealt with by ECFA and the County Football Association together.

8.5 AoC Sport cannot intervene in any matters of misconduct that are being investigated by the County FA or the Police.

8.6 Each college that enters the competition is also responsible for the behaviour of its spectators.

9. SANCTIONS AND PENALTY FINES

9.1 Teams failing to comply with the rules will be removed from the competition.

10. WALKOVERS, PROTESTS AND APPEALS

10.1 See page 25.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF AoC SPORT COMPETITIONS

1. League and Cup entries should be submitted using the online system by Friday 29 May 2015 to enable leagues to be prepared in June. Entries will be accepted until 18 September though we cannot guarantee a place in the preferred league.
2. By entering AoC Sport leagues and cups you are agreeing and committing to play on the dates specified. Failure to do so may result in the match being forfeited.
3. AoC Sport, in consultation with the Regional Operations Group, reserves the right to decline entry to competitions if they are already full or if there has been a breach of the code of conduct in the preceding season.
4. Communication will be made via the Competition Lead or sport specific contact of each college as appropriate. Our website will be regularly updated with information, contact details and fixtures. (www.aocsport.co.uk).
5. Each college must have a Competition Lead that is responsible for keeping the AoC Sport, Full Time and FixturesLive league management information up to date. They are also responsible for handling the following responsibilities: scheduling, referee payments, game planning, travel coordination, handling information and liaising with AoC Sport.
6. All Competition Leads must have an email address and a telephone number which is connected to a switchboard operator or answering system. Both should be checked on a regular basis.
7. AoC Sport must be notified immediately if the name of the Competition Lead changes.
8. An email confirming all entries will be sent in June after which time the online system will reopen for withdrawals from league and cup competitions, additional entries and amendments until Friday 18 September 2015.
9. A purchase order number must be entered on the online entry form before the end of August.
10. Invoices will be issued in mid-September based on the competition entries as at Friday 18 September 2015.
11. No refund will be given if any team withdraws from the league or cup competitions after Friday 18 September 2015.

12. Relevant sports staff should be made aware of the entry submitted to ensure they know that they have teams expected to compete, and should inform AoC Sport as a matter of urgency if they will not be able to commit.
13. Any college that does not fulfil their fixtures or withdraws once the season commences can be fined up to £100 per team. AoC Sport reserves the right to suspend the entry into the competition for the following season of any team that does not fulfil their fixtures or withdraws once the season has commenced.
14. All Premier competitions must complete their fixtures and update the league tables by Friday 26 February 2016 to enable the teams qualifying for the play offs to be determined. The play offs will take place on the 9 March, 16 March and 20 April 2016 and the finals on 4 May. Failure to complete league fixtures by 26 February may result in the team's application to join the Premier League for the following season being declined.
15. All other leagues will officially finish at noon on 25 March 2016, with all league tables being frozen at this time.
16. Any teams entered into the football leagues and cups must affiliate to their County FA and forward their affiliation number to competitions@aoc.co.uk by 31 August 2015 in order for the FA to sanction the start of our leagues and cups. **Teams will not be permitted to play in AoC Sport competitions until an affiliation number is provided.**
17. All participants in AoC Sport competitions must be recorded on the Individualised Learning Record (ILR) by the institution. They must be on the ILR as a continuing student at the time of the match. Students on the ILR who are registered as completed, withdrawn or transferred are not eligible to play.
18. All participants in AoC Sport competitions must be over 16 years of age at midnight on 31 August in the academic year of participation. All players in basketball rugby and men's football must be under 19 years of age at midnight on 31 August in the academic year of participation while in other sports players must be under 21 years of age. In Ability Counts and LLDD players must be under 25.
19. Player registration is required for every AoC Sport competition prior to the first match in that competition.

- 20.** AoC Sport competitions take priority over any other competitions unless stated otherwise in the sport specific rules.
- 21.** AoC Sport cup matches take priority over league matches.
- 22.** AoC Sport reserves the right to put colleges into the appropriate level of competition within the league and cup structure.
- 23.** AoC Sport reserves the right to cancel any cup competition in which low entries mean there is not a round of 32 and reimburse entry fees accordingly.
- 24.** It is the responsibility of every entrant organisation to ensure that it has adequate insurance for its students to participate in sporting activities on and off site, including travel to and from the venue. We reserve the right to see evidence of insurance before allowing an organisation to participate.

APPEALS

SUMMARY OF AoC SPORT/ECFA - WALKOVERS, PROTESTS & APPEALS PROCESS FLOW DIAGRAM

Playing under Protest

• MAKING A PROTEST TO YOUR OPPONENT

- For issues that are known before, arise on the day or during the fixture.
- Initially log your protest with the team or individual concerned. Attempt to resolve amicably.
- If the issue cannot be resolved complete a Playing under Protest Form and use as evidence to support a Stage 1 (S1) Appeal.

Stage 1

• MAKING A WALKOVER OR PROTEST ABOUT YOUR OPPONENT to AoC SPORT or ECFA

- Formally submit a Stage 1 (S1) Walkovers, Protests and Appeals Form to appeals@aoc.co.uk.
- Evidence to be submitted detailing measures you have taken previously which could include a Playing Under Protest Form, team sheet, emails etc.
- Competition Administration Officer will investigate and a decision will be made on appropriate course of action.

Stage 2

• APPEALING A STAGE 1 DECISION made by AoC SPORT or ECFA

- Formally submit a Stage 2 (S2) Protests and Appeals Form to appeals@aoc.co.uk.
- Evidence to be submitted detailing measures taken up to Stage 1.
- Senior Competition Administration Officer/Competitions Manager will review information, investigate and uphold original decision or make a decision on alternative course of action.

Stage 3

• APPEALING A STAGE 2 DECISION made by AoC Sport or ECFA through an APPEALS COMMITTEE

- Formally submit a Stage 3 (S3) Final Stage Protests and Appeals Form to appeals@aoc.co.uk together with £100 fee.
- Evidence to be submitted detailing measures taken up to Stage 2.
- Appeals Committee will be convened to review case in accordance with competition rules.

For further guidelines on the Competition Walkovers, Protests and Appeals procedures please visit <http://www.aocsport.co.uk/resources.aspx> by accessing the Competitions tab.



Sport

For college, for life.

ECFA
Unit 14 North Street Workshop
North Street
Stoke Sub Hamdon
Somerset
TA14 6QR

Tel: 01935 823444

Web: www.ecfa.org.uk

 @ECFA12

Partners

