



ENGLISH CLUBS CHAMPIONSHIP

LONDON & SE DIVISIONAL ORGANISING

COMMITTEE (DOC)

ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTIONS 2019-2020

These Administrative Instructions apply to all clubs playing within the London & South East Division EXCEPT where such Administrative Instruction is deemed to be in conflict with the RFU Regulations or any subsequent ruling, amendment or clarification which may be made from time to time by the RFU.

1. Reporting of Match Results using Electronic Match Cards

Teams must be entered on EMC before kick-off time

Results must be reported to the Result Service by 5.30pm. If you are having problems sending your EMC, you should Telephone in, using the number provided.

EMC's must be completed and sent by Midday on the Monday following the Saturday match

Failure to adhere to the above will result in fines issued by your League Secretary

2. Non-playing of Matches on the Appointed Date

RFU Regulation 13.9.1(c) requires a club to play all and each of its fixtures on the dates appointed in accordance with the RFU/DOC Structured Season, or the rearrangement thereof. It is the responsibility of the home club to ensure the availability of a pitch at their normal home ground or elsewhere.

Where the League Secretary rules that the failure to play a match on the appointed date is unjustifiable and therefore in breach of RFU Regulation 13.6.11(b), the offending club shall be deducted Championship points appropriate to the Sanction Guidelines (RFU Regulation 13, Appendix 1) and the game shall not be replayed.

In general, the only justifiable postponement is that due to weather conditions. Except that the DOC reserves the right to allow a postponement caused by wholly exceptional circumstances totally beyond the control of the Club or its members or by virtue of local or National emergency.

3. Postponed Matches

(a) Prior to the day of a match

No match shall be postponed, for whatever reason, before and without consultation with, and the consent of, the League Secretary or, if he is unavailable, a member of the DOC. Such consultation shall be conducted only by and through the club's Nominated League Contact.

The Home Club shall inform both the League Secretary AND the visiting Club IMMEDIATELY the first doubts about pitch fitness and/or pending inclement weather are raised and shall, at the same time, establish the intended travel arrangements and timings of the visitors.

Where the issue is the condition of the pitch, the League Secretary may require that the home Club arranges for a pitch inspection by the appointed match referee or, where he is not available, a member of the Club's local Referees' Society.

(b) On the day of the match

Where a Club wishes to postpone a match prior to the arrival of the opponents, they must consult and seek the permission of the League Secretary, or a DOC member, prior to cancellation of the match. If time permits the League Secretary may require a pitch inspection by the appointed match referee or other referee able to act on his behalf. The consultation must be made by and through the club's Nominated League Contact, who must notify the opposition immediately. Clubs should be aware of the time that the opposition will be leaving its home base when making ground inspections and **make every endeavour to avoid unnecessary travel.**

(c) All postponed matches

- (i) Where a ground is pronounced unfit or is unavailable for play for any other reason, no other suitable local venue is available and the scheduled match is the first of the two games in the season between the clubs, the venue SHALL, where time allows, be reversed if the opposition's pitch is fit and available to play. In these circumstances the scheduled home team shall remain the home team for the purposes of the Regulations and these Instructions.

Note: Where the game is in doubt in the days prior to the day of the match this arrangement to reverse venue should already be in place.

- (ii) Following a first postponement, the Home Club must take all possible steps to ensure the match is played on the second date. This must include the provision of a suitable alternative pitch and, for the avoidance of doubt, this will include the opponent's pitch if it is available. This will also apply to the return fixture even if that would mean both matches between the two clubs being played at the same venue.
- (iii) A match postponed because of weather or a match not played on the scheduled date for reasons acceptable to the DOC shall be played on the "Next Available Weekend" (NAW) in accordance with RFU Regulation 13.6.10 (a).

For the 2019/2020 season, the weekends of December 28th (all clubs) and December 21st and April 11th (clubs at Level 7 and below ONLY) shall not be deemed a 'NAW' unless both participating clubs agree. ALL other dates SHALL be a 'NAW'.

4. 'Next Available Weekend' (NAW) Protocol

Matches rearranged in accordance with RFU Regulation 13.6.10 will be scheduled as

follows:

- (a) As soon as it is known that both clubs are available, i.e., not involved in a previously rescheduled league match, an RFU Cup match or have nominated the date as a non-available weekend (see Instruction 6), the rescheduled date will be CONFIRMED. This date will not be changed save in accordance with sub-paragraph (d) below.
- (b) If the availability of one or both clubs cannot be confirmed but remains possible, then the match will be scheduled as PROVISIONAL for that 'NAW'.
- (c) If two or more matches become available at the same time for confirmation on the same 'NAW' then the longest outstanding original scheduled fixture will take precedence.
- (d) The committee shall have absolute discretion, subject to the right of appeal, to alter the above protocol if:
 - (i) it is apparent that an alternative sequence would conclude outstanding matches earlier than might otherwise occur or;
 - (ii) in their opinion, it is beneficial to the competition, e.g., to prioritise end-of-season fixtures with a view to concluding promotion and relegation issues including play-offs.

5. Reporting of Postponed and/or Abandoned Matches

Both Clubs shall report the postponement or abandonment of a match to the League Secretary as soon as practicable, stating the full reasons and in the case of abandonment, the score and the time elapsed in the game before it was abandoned.

Separately and additionally, any postponement or abandonment ON THE DAY OF THE MATCH must be notified to the Results Service by the club(s) in accordance with Instruction 1 above.

A match postponed or cancelled and notified to the League Secretary PRIOR TO THE DAY OF THE MATCH will not be subject to Instruction 1 above. The League Secretary will ensure the Results Service has been made aware.

6. Nominated Non-Available weekend

For the 2019/20 season each Club in the Competition, at Level 7 and below ONLY, may nominate ONE non-league weekend to be designated "non-available for the rearrangement of a postponed/abandoned match". This nomination must be made in writing, signed by a recognised Club Official, to the Divisional Administrator not later than 30th September 2019. The Divisional Administrator will acknowledge the nomination by Email, which shall be retained by the Club as evidence of such agreement.

A Club cannot nominate a scheduled League Weekend, or a Weekend scheduled for a play-off match.

7. Rulings, Decisions and Appeal Procedures

The League Secretary is delegated by the DOC to make all primary decisions with regard to any Regulation and any of these Instructions in respect of all clubs within that league.

The League Secretary shall apply any sanction in writing in accordance with RFU Regulation 13.10.3 and 13.10.4 and having regard to the Sanction Guidelines (RFU Regulation 13, Appendix 1).

The Club will then have 7 (seven) days from the date of receipt of the written notification to request a review by the DOC in accordance with RFU Regulation 13.10.5 to 13.10.9. Such request must be in writing to the Divisional Administrator stating the full grounds and accompanied by a payment of £50.00 (to “London & SE RFU Competitions Account”) which will be returned if the request is successful.

Requests for a review not lodged within the 7 days will be adjudged to be ‘out of time’ and will not be heard.

A club has a further right of appeal to the RFU as specified in RFU Regulations 13.10.10 and 19.13.

8. Appointment of Referees

It is the responsibility of the home club to ensure the appointment of a referee for all matches including rearranged matches and play-offs.

RFU Regulation 12.1.3 provides that it is the home Club’s responsibility to liaise with the appointed match official(s) directly to confirm they are aware of the arrangements and have the appropriate directions to the venue for the match. ‘Directly’ shall NOT be deemed to include messages left with a third party or automated answering services without a confirmed response from the match official(s). Failure to adhere to this will be taken into account should a game be postponed because of the lack of a match official.

Where the appointed referee is delayed or fails to arrive or where, during the course of a match, the referee is injured or is otherwise unable to continue, the two captains shall use their best efforts to agree to a substitute referee so allowing the match to be completed.

9. Kick-off Time for Matches

In accordance with RFU Regulation 13.6.4 a match will start at the home Club’s usual kick-off time which shall be between 2.00pm and 3.00pm.

The DOC has decreed that clubs without floodlights shall kick-off NO LATER THAN:

3.00pm	September, October, March, April;
2.30pm	November, February;
2.00pm	December, January

Where the two clubs mutually agree on a kick-off time outside these times, they shall do so in conjunction with the League Secretary – as the representative of the “Committee” and in accordance with RFU Regulation 13.6.4(b)(ii).

Clubs with approved floodlights can nominate a standard kick off time between 2.00pm and 3.00pm and must inform the League Secretary and their opponents before 1st September of this.

Although the DOC has always ruled that clubs involved in offshore matches are expected to be sympathetic to the flight requirements of the visitors, that ruling does not alter the status and requirements of RFU Regulation 13.6.4 in any way.

10. Floodlights

A Club wishing to play under floodlights must send a copy of the lux certificate compliant with RFU Regulation 13.7.9 to the Divisional Administrator. This shall be valid for three years from the date of issue when it must be renewed otherwise permission to play under floodlights will be withdrawn.

11. New Club Entries

A club wishing to enter the Competition in the following season shall signify this fact in writing to the Divisional Administrator by 1st April of the current season and to the Chairman and/or Secretary of the relevant Constituent Body Competitions Sub-Committee. That Sub-Committee shall consider the application and make recommendation to the Organising Committee.

In addition; the Club must satisfy all entry requirements laid down from time to time by the Organising Committee not later than 30th April in the current season.

For entry in the 2020-21 season these requirements shall include;

- (a) having effective registration to the Club of a minimum of 25 players of whom at least six shall be capable of playing in the front row in accordance with RFU Regulations;
- (b) being able to display the ability to sustain a full League Programme of fixtures on the appointed dates;
- (c) having held full membership of the appropriate Constituent Body for a period of not less than one complete season; and
- (d) holding the rights to play on a suitable ground throughout the currency of a League season, without interruption.

12. Ground and Match Management

1. Barrier from Field of Play and Technical Areas

Clubs MUST familiarise themselves and comply with RFU Regulations 13.7.1 to 13.7.8 which include but are not limited to:

- Ensuring that (with the exception of coaching and medical staff, replacements and water carriers) all other persons are kept at a reasonable distance from the playing area by permanent or temporary barriers;
- Provision of Technical Areas. If a Club committee has deemed it impractical or unnecessary for pitch side barriers or Technical Areas to be in place then, unless the referee agrees otherwise, the area between the 10-metre and centre line at the end of the pitch in which its team plays the first half of the match shall form the Technical Area. Both teams shall be on the same side of the pitch as determined by the home team.
- Coaching and medical staff, replacements and water carriers are expected to remain in the Technical Areas when not undertaking their duties. **There shall be no more than four water carriers per team (including medical staff and replacements).**

Sanction Guidelines (RFU Regulation 13, Appendix 1) enable the DOC to impose such penalty as deemed appropriate including the deduction of 5 or more league points for failure to comply with these requirements (including report by the referee).

2. Touch Judges

In the absence of appointed touch judges in accordance with RFU Regulation 12.1.1(g) each Club shall provide a competent touch judge who should not be a replacement. **In an emergency** and with the consent of the Referee, a replacement may act as a touch judge.

13. Higher Level Team Not Fielded.

A club with more than one team competing in the English Clubs Championship must always honour its highest fixture. If a higher team unjustifiably defaults and the lower team plays and wins on the same day then the lower team shall be deemed to have lost and a '0 – 0' score shall be recorded.

Further to the above if a higher team fixture does not take place for reasons beyond their control or it does not have a fixture, there will be grounds of appeal to the League Secretary to review the result if it is suspected that a lower team has fielded a significant number of players from the higher level team.

It is expected that the principles herein follow through to support league structures and local merit tables.