



WE CARE ABOUT FOOTBALL

UEFA Referee Convention

Convention on Referee Education and
Organisation

Edition 2012

CONTENTS

Preamble	1
Article 1 – Definition of terms	1
Article 2 – Scope of application	2
Article 3 – Aims	2
Article 4 – Admission procedure	2
Article 5 – Rights and duties of the UEFA member associations that are parties to the present convention	3
Article 6 – Rights and duties of UEFA	3
Article 7 – Withdrawal	4
Article 8 – Annexes	4
Article 9 – Applicable law and disputes	4
Article 10 – Languages	4
Article 11 – Approval	4
ANNEX A – REFEREEING STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION	5
A. <i>Referees committee</i>	5
B. <i>Refereeing panels</i>	7
C. <i>Refereeing department</i>	10
ANNEX B – EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT	15
A. <i>Instructors education programme</i>	15
B. <i>Referee recruitment programme</i>	16
C. <i>Referee retention programme</i>	16
D. <i>Grassroots referee education programme</i>	16
E. <i>Talents and mentors programme</i>	17
F. <i>Elite referee education programme</i>	20
G. <i>Referee observer education programme</i>	20
ANNEX C – FINANCIAL SUPPORT	22
A. <i>HatTrick incentive payments (in accordance with the relevant provisions of the UEFA HatTrick Regulations)</i>	22
B. <i>Budget and expenditure records</i>	22

Preamble

Considering the need to:

- i) promote the role of match officials and refereeing specialists in football at both international and national level;
- ii) improve the quality of match officials and refereeing specialists at all levels of the game by incorporating specific rules aimed at standardising and enhancing their status and education as well as the way refereeing is organised within the different UEFA member associations;
- iii) define the legal and professional status of match officials and ensure that the refereeing organisations within the UEFA member associations remain uninfluenced by other bodies such as governments, leagues or clubs;
- iv) recognise the essential role that match officials and refereeing specialists have to play in football in order to uphold the values of fair play and protect both the players and the game;
- v) maintain and improve refereeing from grassroots level upwards, wherever possible;
- vi) recognise the responsibility of the UEFA member associations to appoint reliable and suitably qualified match officials and refereeing specialists for their competitions and education and development programmes,

UEFA and the UEFA member associations that are parties to the present convention have agreed the following.

Article 1 – Definition of terms

For the purpose of the present convention, the following definitions apply:

- a) *category*: grade of referee, assistant referee, referee observer or referee instructor that determines the level at which they operate;
- b) *elite*: classification of referee, assistant referee or referee observer officiating or observing in the highest leagues on the territory of a UEFA member association;
- c) *grassroots*: classification of referee, assistant referee or referee observer officiating or observing at school, youth and grassroots levels on the territory of a UEFA member association;
- d) *match official*: referee, assistant referee or fourth official;
- e) *mentor*: former match official supporting the learning process of a talent by building with them a one-to-one relationship of trust and mutual understanding that helps them capitalise on learning opportunities, thereby improving their performance on and off the field of play;
- f) *panel*: list or group of people authorised to perform a specific role (referee, assistant referee, referee observer, referee instructor or mentor);
- g) *RAP*: FIFA/UEFA Referee Assistance Programme;

- h) *refereeing specialist*: person who has had at least five years' active refereeing experience in any or all of the various roles of referee instructor, referee observer, referee mentor or match official;
- i) *talent*: match official having shown the ability and potential to officiate at a higher level.

Article 2 – Scope of application

The present convention describes the rights and duties of UEFA and the UEFA member associations that are parties to the convention with regard to the education and organisation of match officials and refereeing specialists within the UEFA member associations in question.

Article 3 – Aims

The present convention aims to:

- a) guarantee a unified level of education for match officials and refereeing specialists by setting minimum standards to ensure a comprehensive set of education and development programmes running from grassroots to professional football;
- b) continuously improve the quality and status of match officials and refereeing specialists by using appropriate tools and measures for that purpose;
- c) establish a refereeing organisation within the UEFA member associations that is not controlled or influenced by other bodies such as governments, leagues or clubs;
- d) provide a framework for defining the legal and professional status of match officials in the UEFA member associations.

Article 4 – Admission procedure

- 1 Every UEFA member association may apply to become party to the present convention by demonstrating its commitment to and quality of referee education and organisation.
- 2 A UEFA member association may submit a written application to this effect to the UEFA administration at any time.
- 3 The UEFA administration verifies that the application is complete and submits it to the UEFA Referee Convention Panel.
- 4 The UEFA Referee Convention Panel assesses the application and appoints one of its members to support the applicant in meeting the minimum standards of the present convention by setting objectives, providing information and advice and conducting regular visits.
- 5 The UEFA Referee Convention Panel and UEFA Referees Committee are given regular reports on the progress of the applicant.

- 6 Once the UEFA Referee Convention Panel feels the applicant has met the minimum standards, it submits a report to the UEFA Referees Committee recommending the applicant for admission.
- 7 The UEFA Referees Committee considers the report prepared by the UEFA Referee Convention Panel and either submits it to the UEFA Executive Committee for approval or returns it to the UEFA administration indicating required improvements.
- 8 On approval by the UEFA Executive Committee, the present convention is open to signature by the representatives of both the applicant and UEFA.

Article 5 – *Rights and duties of the UEFA member associations that are parties to the present convention*

- 1 When a UEFA member association signs the present convention it becomes a party to the convention and agrees to respect the provisions laid down in the convention and its annexes.
- 2 UEFA member associations that are parties to the present convention:
- a) are responsible for handling their own refereeing matters in accordance with the minimum standards defined in the annexes to the present convention;
 - b) agree to be regularly assessed by UEFA to ensure that these standards are duly fulfilled;
 - c) undertake to inform UEFA promptly in writing of any change in their own refereeing education and/or organisation.

Article 6 – *Rights and duties of UEFA*

- 1 UEFA undertakes to help the UEFA member associations that are parties to the present convention and those in the admission procedure to meet and maintain the minimum standards defined in the annexes to the convention, through advice, training and other appropriate support and by means of regular assessments.
- 2 UEFA undertakes to financially support the UEFA member associations that are parties to the present convention through the UEFA HatTrick programme in accordance with the relevant provisions of the *UEFA HatTrick Regulations* and Annex C to the present convention.
- 3 UEFA reserves the right to withhold incentive payments if the minimum standards of the present convention are not met in accordance with the relevant provisions of the *UEFA HatTrick Regulations*.

Article 7 – *Withdrawal*

Each UEFA member association that is a party to the present convention has the right to resign from the convention at any time by informing the UEFA administration in writing.

Article 8 – *Annexes*

Annexes to the present convention form an integral part thereof.

Article 9 – *Applicable law and disputes*

- 1 The present convention is subject to Swiss law.
- 2 The parties to the present convention agree that any dispute that arise from the implementation of the convention and cannot be settled amicably shall be submitted to the Court of Arbitration of Sport (CAS) in Lausanne, Switzerland, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the *UEFA Statutes*, including for provisional or super-provisional measures, to the explicit exclusion of any State court.

Article 10 – *Languages*

- 1 The present convention exists in English, French and German.
- 2 In the event of discrepancy between the English, French or German versions of the present convention, the English version prevails.

Article 11 – *Approval*

The present convention was adopted by the Executive Committee at its meeting on 1 October 2012 and is open to signature by all UEFA member associations as of this date.

ANNEX A – REFEREEING STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION

A. Referees committee

1. Introduction

UEFA member associations that are parties to the present convention must establish a referees committee which reports to the executive committee.

The referees committee must be an integral part of the national association structure and be given exclusive responsibility for all matters related to refereeing in the territory of the national association, totally independent of the leagues, clubs and government.

2. Composition

At least 80% of referees committee members must have at least five years' experience as refereeing specialists.

Up to 20% of members may be non-refereeing specialists with other knowledge and experience which could benefit the work of the committee.

The chairman of the referees committee should be a member of the executive committee.

The terms of office of the referees committee members must coincide with those of the executive committee members.

Expertise from regional referees committees should be fully utilised by the national referees committee, the composition (and where applicable duties) of which should be replicated to the greatest extent possible at regional level, taking into account the size of the country and other constraints.

Female representation on the national and regional referees committees is highly encouraged.

3. Duties and responsibilities

The duties and responsibilities of the referees committee are defined by the executive committee, which gives the referees committee full responsibility for all matters relating to refereeing, including the national association's refereeing structure, organisation, strategies and programmes for all levels of the game (including futsal and women's football), in line with the overall strategy of the present convention, FIFA's *Regulations on the Organisation of Refereeing in FIFA Member Associations* and the rules and regulations of the national association.

The referees committee is particularly responsible for the recruitment and retention of grassroots and elite match officials and refereeing specialists, and for their education, training, development and welfare.

The main duties of the referees committee, as defined by the executive committee, should be to:

- a) draft regulations governing refereeing within its national association for approval by the executive committee, and send a copy of the approved regulations to the UEFA Referee Convention Panel;
- b) inform the UEFA Referee Convention Panel of any amendments to the regulations or the composition of the referees committee and refereeing department;
- c) pre-approve the annual refereeing budget prepared by the refereeing department and submit it to the executive committee for final approval;
- d) annually approve panels of referees, assistant referees, referee observers and referee instructors and classify them in appropriate categories on the basis of their experience, performance and successful completion of the necessary programmes and tests;
- e) approve proposed talents and mentors;
- f) adopt an overarching strategic education and development plan with SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, time-bound) objectives, key performance indicators, an appropriate budget and support services;
- g) ensure that the required education and training is completed by all referees, assistant referees, referee instructors, referee observers and mentors, and that the required fitness levels are achieved by referees and assistant referees at all levels;
- h) appoint referees, assistant referees and referee observers to matches in competitions organised by the national association, and in other competitions when requested to do so;
- i) promote and relegate referees, assistant referees, referee observers and referee instructors;
- j) nominate candidates for the FIFA International List;
- k) implement an ongoing referee observer quality control process;
- l) ensure that match-fixing and corruption-related education and awareness-raising activities are organised for match officials and that all relevant information is shared among everyone involved in refereeing around the country.

Each member of the referees committee should take responsibility for at least one of the above tasks. At grassroots level, responsibility for panels, match appointments, promotions and relegations may be delegated to a regional referees committee where appropriate.

The national referees committee should meet at least quarterly. Meetings may be conducted by conference call or other means as long as all participants can communicate clearly with one another.

B. Panels

1. Referee panels, categories and appointments

1.1 Formation of panels and categories

UEFA member associations that are parties to the present convention must maintain separate panels for elite and grassroots referees, elite assistant referees, and where possible grassroots assistant referees. Within these panels, different categories apply. The number of categories required depends on the size and needs of the association and its competitions. Match officials work their way through the categories by means of a system of promotion and relegation. Identification of referee talents should be an ongoing part of this process.

1.2 Criteria for promotion and relegation and match appointments

The reasons for promotions/relegations and appointments/non-appointments should be kept confidential within the referees committee and refereeing department.

The criteria in all cases should be based on performance, personality, availability, development, administrative factors and successful completion of the relevant written and fitness tests. Average observer marks are not appropriate as the only criterion. Possibilities for fast-track promotions should be made available, in particular for match officials that have successfully completed a talents and mentors programme.

1.3 Elite panels and appointments

The numbers in the elite referee and elite assistant referee panels should be determined by the referees committee depending on the requirements of the elite competitions (professional and semi-professional).

The number of elite referees should allow them to be appointed for a minimum of 50% of matchdays in the top league and it is highly recommended that they also be appointed to games in the second league to ensure they are active regularly throughout the season.

If necessary, the referees committee may set up a sub-committee for appointments.

1.4 Grassroots panels and appointments

Grassroots referee panels and, if possible, grassroots assistant referee panels, should be established on a regional basis. The number of referees and assistant referees in these local panels should be decided by the regional referees committees in accordance with the needs of the local competitions and in consultation with the grassroots referees manager. The maximum number of referees per panel should be determined by the number of games in the relevant competitions and their geographic spread.

Appointments officers for the local grassroots panels should be appointed by the regional referees committees. If necessary, a sub-committee could be set up to assist in this task.

1.5 Costs

Referees and assistant referees must be reimbursed for the costs they incur for the matches at which they officiate in accordance with the category in which they officiate.

At elite level, all costs must be reimbursed by the national association.

2. Referee observer panels, categories and appointments

2.1 Formation of panels and categories

UEFA member associations that are parties to the present convention must maintain separate panels of elite and grassroots referee observers. Within these panels, different categories apply. The number of categories required depends on the size and needs of the association and its competitions. Observers work their way through the categories by means of a system of promotion and relegation.

2.2 Criteria for promotion and relegation and match appointments

The reasons for promotions/relegations and appointments/non-appointments must be kept confidential within the referees committee and refereeing department.

The criteria in all cases must be based on performance, personality, availability, development, administrative factors and successful completion of the relevant written tests. Possibilities for fast-track promotions should be made available. All referee observers must be given the opportunity to progress to elite level by means of additional training and quality assessments.

A minimum of two people should be responsible for each referee observer appointment.

2.3 Elite and grassroots panels

A referee observer is someone charged with evaluating and grading a referee's performance on the field of play. For this they must be someone with active refereeing experience, a thorough knowledge of the current *Laws of the Game*, good oral and written communication skills and good psychological and management skills. They must be able to view a game through the eyes of the referee, analyse the referee's performance, identify strengths and weaknesses and areas for improvement and offer praise, encouragement, and practical advice and solutions.

The numbers in the elite referee observers panel should be decided by the national referees committee based on the needs of the elite competitions (professional and semi-professional).

The numbers in the local grassroots referee observer panels should be decided by the regional referees committees in accordance with the needs of the local competitions.

At all levels, the maximum number of referee observers in each panel should be determined by the number of games in the relevant competitions and their geographic spread.

2.4 Costs

All referee observers should be reimbursed for the costs they incur for the matches at which they observe in accordance with the category in which they observe.

At elite level, any reimbursement of costs must be made by the national association.

2.5 Reports and marking system

Referee observers are encouraged to use the UEFA observer marking system to assess the referees they observe. They must conduct an oral debriefing with the referee after the match and then produce a written report.

Referee observers' reports must be kept confidential within the referees committee and refereeing department.

Quality control is an important process with regard to referee observers. In the context of this quality control, if the referees committee has reason to question a referee observer's written comments or marking, it may ask them to review their assessment.

3. Instructor and mentor panels

3.1 Formation of panels and categories

UEFA member associations that are parties to the present convention must maintain national panels of referee instructors and mentors to ensure a sufficient number of trained instructors for seminars and mentors for talents and mentors programmes.

Referee instructors should be former match officials with thorough, up-to-date knowledge of the *Laws of the Game*, good oral and written communication skills and good psychological and management skills.

They must be good teachers, be able to plan and set specific tasks and objectives for match officials, explain these tasks and objectives and help the match officials achieve them. They should be able to clearly impart knowledge and know-how using a variety of teaching methods including audiovisual aids, while being open to new ideas and challenging current refereeing practice.

During seminars, they should stick to their allocated time and stay on topic but encourage questions and dialogue, as well as actively listening to their audience and giving them time to reflect.

It is important that instructors offer feedback and support, and encourage the practical application of the knowledge and know-how imparted. They should organise group work, create a maximum of learning opportunities and help the match officials capitalise on these opportunities.

The mentor profile is outlined in the context of the talents and mentors programme in Annex B.

The national association should pay all instructors and mentors a fee for their work.

C. Refereeing department

1. Introduction

UEFA member associations that are parties to the present convention must establish a dedicated refereeing department as an integral part of the administration.

2. Composition

The refereeing department must be composed of at least one refereeing manager, who must be a refereeing specialist.

The refereeing manager must work full time to coordinate all refereeing matters within the association.

In addition, dedicated administrative and specialist support must be part of or available to the refereeing department to assist in the duties and responsibilities outlined below.

The size of the refereeing department and the amount of support available to it should be proportional to the size and refereeing needs of the national association. In all cases, however, it must be sufficient to meet the minimum standards of this convention and fulfil the duties set out below.

3. Duties

The main duties of the refereeing department are to:

- a) implement decisions of the referees committee;
- b) assist the referees committee (and regional referees committees) in the administration and development of refereeing within the national association;
- c) liaise with and advise the referees committee on all refereeing matters, including those specifically related to the present convention;
- d) propose, design, coordinate and deliver all referee education and development programmes in cooperation with the relevant members of the specialist support team;
- e) prepare and maintain a detailed refereeing budget and expenditure record in accordance with Annex C of the present convention, for approval by the referees committee;
- f) send UEFA the approved, detailed refereeing budget and expenditure record at the start and end of each financial year, clearly indicating the sources and uses of all funds;
- g) attend all relevant FIFA/UEFA courses on education and administration.

4. Specialist support team

Dedicated support must be available to the referee department. The extent to which it is an integral part of the department may depend on the size and refereeing needs of the national association, but as a minimum it must encompass the following roles.

Anyone performing one of the following roles should provide a professional service and be recompensed financially.

4.1 Referee recruitment and retention officer

A referee recruitment and retention officer is required to manage the national association's referee recruitment and retention programmes.

The main duties of the referee recruitment and retention officer are to:

- a) design and implement top-down recruitment campaigns (national and regional);
- b) ensure a sufficient number of well-designed, well-delivered recruitment and retention programmes are implemented both nationally and regionally;
- c) work closely with the national instructor to ensure a suitable number of qualified referee instructors are available to run introductory courses for grassroots referees and assistant referees;
- d) liaise with the appointments officers to ensure appropriate matches are allocated to beginner referees and assistant referees;
- e) identify talented new referees and assistant referees and propose candidates for talents and mentors programmes to the referees committee, via the talents and mentors coordinator;
- f) maintain a central database of all referee records and ensure this is kept up to date.

4.2 Talents and mentors coordinator

A talents and mentors coordinator is required to work closely with the referee recruitment and retention officer and national instructor on talents and mentors programmes.

The main duties of the talents and mentors coordinator are to:

- a) coordinate the design and delivery of talents and mentors programmes using a top-down approach;
- b) receive and centralise information on the identification of talents from various sources;
- c) liaise with the referee recruitment and retention officer to propose talent and mentor candidates to the referees committee;
- d) liaise with referee instructors to organise seminars for talents and mentors in collaboration with the national instructor;

- e) monitor the progress of talents and their progression through the different talents and mentors programmes (grassroots and elite), in cooperation with the referees committee.

4.3 Grassroots referees manager

A grassroots referees manager is required to manage all grassroots referee and assistant referee activities and operations, including their education and development.

The main duties of the grassroots referees manager are to:

- a) manage the education and development programmes for grassroots referees and assistant referees in cooperation with the national instructor;
- b) work closely with the recruitment and retention officer and talents and mentors coordinator;
- c) serve as a point of contact for all regional grassroots managers and provide any support required;
- d) liaise with the regional referees committees regarding grassroots referee panels and ensure the national referees committee is informed accordingly.

4.4 Elite referees manager

An elite referees manager is required to manage all elite referee and assistant referee activities and operations, including their education and development.

The main duties of the elite referees manager are to:

- a) manage the education and development programmes for elite referees and assistant referees in cooperation with the national instructor;
- b) serve as a point of contact for all elite match officials and provide any support required on a case by case basis;
- c) manage the provision of sports science expertise, psychological, physical and tactical training and analysis, nutritional and medical advice, media training and, if necessary, English language tuition for elite referees and assistant referees;
- d) work closely with the referees committee in relation to match appointments.

4.5 Referee observer manager

A referee observer manager is required to manage all referee observer activities and operations, including their education and development.

The main duties of the referee observer manager are to:

- a) manage the education and development programmes for referee observers in cooperation with the national instructor;
- b) serve as a point of contact for all referee observers and provide any support required on a case by case basis;
- c) work closely with the referees committee in relation to observer match appointments.

4.6 National instructor

A national instructor is required to lead all activities and operations in connection with education and development programmes.

The main duties of the national instructor are to:

- a) work closely with the refereeing department on the design, coordination and delivery of all education and development programmes;
- b) propose referee instructors to the referees committee and advise on categories;
- c) manage networks of regional instructors and mentors, provide them with training and share information at least once a year;
- d) catalogue all clips from domestic matches used in education and development programmes;
- e) attend RAP courses and similar.

4.7 National fitness instructor

A national fitness instructor is required to lead all referee and assistant referee fitness programmes at national level, and should be supported by a network of regional referee fitness coaches.

The national fitness instructor must be a qualified fitness instructor with the theoretical knowledge to apply modern fitness training methods to referee performance training (e.g. educational background in training and coaching). He is not allowed to be an active elite-level referee himself.

The main duties of the national fitness instructor are to:

- a) work closely with the refereeing department on the design, coordination and delivery of all referee fitness programmes;
- b) establish a standard and realistic fitness grading system at national level, to be approved by the referees committee and implemented regionally at all levels not covered by the FIFA fitness tests;
- c) manage a network of regional referee fitness coaches and meet them at least once a year to share information on fitness training;
- d) cooperate with the UEFA referee fitness coaches' coordinator regarding weekly training plans, training advice, injury prevention exercises, test instructions, presentations and other sources of information;
- e) distribute specific fitness training plans to all regional referee fitness coaches or match officials where appropriate;
- f) monitor the fitness of all elite referees and assistant referees, ensure they are being tested in accordance with FIFA requirements, and identify and help those who require personalised training programmes;

- g) liaise with the RAP fitness instructors with regard to the results of fitness tests and inform the UEFA referee fitness coaches' coordinator of any concerns about the fitness of European FIFA referees;
- h) attend relevant RAP fitness courses, actively participate in the UEFA network of national fitness instructors and maintain the necessary level of English (written and spoken) to do so effectively.

ANNEX B – EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

The following programmes must be incorporated into the overarching strategic education and development plan adopted by the referees committee, with an appropriate portion of the annual refereeing budget dedicated to each programme.

Everyone involved in the education, training and development of elite and grassroots referees, assistant referees, referee observers, referee instructors and mentors must undergo structured and formal training themselves at least once a year.

In all of the following programmes, appropriate information, materials and expertise must be made available on a top-down basis, with content relevant for the different levels at which the match officials/refereeing specialists operate.

UEFA encourages the exchange of experience and best practice in referee education and development. Any new ideas and materials can be shared through the UEFA Referee Convention Panel.

A. Instructors education programme

1. Introductory course

All new referee instructors must complete an introductory course at which they are provided with the necessary teaching materials. Introductory courses should also cover:

- a) learning and teaching principles;
- b) modern methodology and teaching aids;
- c) feedback and evaluation methods;
- d) practical exercises and required outcomes;
- e) communication and facilitation skills.

2. Seminars

The introductory course should be followed by ongoing seminars held at least annually.

The content for each seminar must be provided by the national instructor. It must include the latest information from RAP courses, updates on any changes to the *Laws of the Game* or their application, and any new guidance, equipment or materials from the national association.

These ongoing seminars should also provide a platform for networking and enable the referee instructors to discuss ideas, feedback and practices.

B. Referee recruitment programme

A dedicated referee recruitment programme is required to increase the number of qualified referees and assistant referees entering the game to meet the ever increasing demand.

In order to determine the number of new match officials required to achieve the desired ratio of one referee for every two teams, an analysis of the current situation must be conducted in conjunction with the regional referees committees and the local leagues. Attention should also be given to the desired referee profile.

Based on the results of this analysis, suitable campaigns should be designed and implemented on a top-down basis (national and regional).

Both the analysis and campaigns should be reviewed on a regular basis.

C. Referee retention programme

A dedicated referee retention programme is just as important as the recruitment programme, its aim being to retain and further develop the existing panels of qualified match officials at all levels of the game.

The referee retention programme must ascertain definitive reasons for match officials leaving the game and develop appropriate countermeasures.

A coaching system must be developed for new match officials and continuous training provided to all.

Attention must also be given to the need for individual development and testing on a case by case basis.

Support and contact points must be provided to all match officials, as well as regular meetings and other networking opportunities.

The retention programme should also incorporate innovative means of keeping match officials in the game, such as incentive schemes or similar.

D. Grassroots referee education programme

1. Introductory course

An introductory course lasting at least 15 hours must be organised for all new match officials.

This introductory course must include practical and theory exercises on the *Laws of the Game*, a presentation of the role and duties of referees and assistant referees, plus a written and a fitness test.

2. Seminars

In addition to completing an introductory course, all grassroots referees and assistant referees should meet at least three times a year in order to maintain their licence or equivalent.

Topics to be covered at seminars should include match incidents, foul recognition and FIFA/UEFA directives and interpretations of the *Laws of the Game*. RAP materials should be used where relevant, together with clips from domestic matches.

One of the seminars must include a written test on the *Laws of the Game* and the appropriate fitness test.

3. Fitness tests

The national grading system should be used to assess the fitness of grassroots referees and assistant referees, in line with the level of football at which they officiate.

E. Talents and mentors programmes

1. Introduction

Talents and mentors programmes are designed to provide specialist and specific education, training and development to selected referees and assistant referees identified as having the potential to officiate at the highest level possible in both the men's and women's games.

Whenever numbers allow, separate woman's talents and mentors programmes should be put in place. Where this is not possible, female referees and assistant referees must be included in the main programmes.

Elite and grassroots talents and mentors programmes should be organised. Depending on the geographic size of the national association, they can be run on a local, regional and/or national basis.

2. Programme content

Talents and mentors programmes should be run in two-year cycles. During this time, the talents should follow specially designed practical and theory seminars, while at the same time receiving one-to-one support and assistance from their respective mentors.

Prior to and during the programme, talents should be set SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, time-bound) objectives for the short, medium and long term, which must then be regularly reviewed and assessed.

A referee or assistant referee should spend no longer than two years in any one talents and mentors programme (grassroots or elite).

In addition to seminars for talents, new mentors must be provided with training to ensure they are well equipped to perform their role in the programme.

3. Talent profile

In order for a new referee or assistant referee to be proposed and approved for the talents and mentors programme, they must:

- a) be nominated by the talents and mentors coordinator and approved by the relevant referees committee;
- b) achieve positive written assessments of their performance in matches;
- c) have a minimum of two years' active refereeing experience at regional level;
- d) demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the *Laws of the Game* in a written entrance test;
- e) successfully complete an interview process;
- f) have regular access to email;
- g) pass the fitness test for the next referee category.

4. Duties of talents

Talents admitted to the programme undertake to:

- a) attend all seminars and participate fully in the programme activities and exercises;
- b) follow the specific fitness training programme provided by the national fitness instructor;
- c) behave in a responsible and attentive manner at all times;
- d) respond promptly and fully to all correspondence related to their refereeing activities;
- e) successfully complete ongoing written and fitness tests and maintain appropriate match performance standards;
- f) achieve at least a basic level of oral and written English if in a programme at national level.

5. Seminars and mentoring for talents

Seminars organised as part of talents and mentors programmes should include an introduction to the programme itself, as well as modules on the following topics:

- a) *Laws of the Game*;
- b) referee professionalism and ethics;
- c) psychology of refereeing;
- d) tactical thinking for referees;
- e) body language;
- f) physical fitness;
- g) match management;

- h) awareness of gamesmanship;
- i) advantage situations;
- j) technical area management.

Alongside seminars, mentoring of talents should encompass coaching, assessments and individual development plans. This includes practical on-field exercises (match scenarios) and match performance reviews (video analysis), including in official competition matches. Dedicated seminars and mentoring for assistant referees should be organised.

6. Mentor profile

Mentors should be former match officials who can support the learning process of talented new referees and assistant referees by building one-to-one relationships of trust and mutual understanding. Such relationships help match officials capitalise on learning opportunities, thereby improving their performance on and off the field of play.

Specifically, a mentor must:

- a) be a positive communicator;
- b) be an active listener and facilitator;
- c) have a friendly and approachable manner;
- d) have sufficient refereeing experience to offer credible feedback;
- e) have good observation skills;
- f) have a thorough and up-to-date knowledge of the *Laws of the Game*.

7. Duties of mentors

Each mentor working on the programme undertakes to:

- a) build a one-to-one relationship of trust with the talent to which they are assigned;
- b) guide, coach, encourage and support the talent to help them develop the necessary skills and techniques;
- c) work on mutually identified and agreed development areas within the agreed time frame;
- d) help the talent capitalise on learning opportunities;
- e) help the talent maintain a positive attitude and good behaviour;
- f) improve the talent's performance and help them achieve their full potential;
- g) work closely with the relevant referees committee and talents and mentors coordinator.

8. Seminars for mentors

Former match officials who are new to mentoring should be provided with seminars that introduce them to the talents and mentors programme and impart adult learning principles.

In addition, regular seminars and refresher courses should be organised for mentors to discuss how to support the learning process by building a one-to-one relationship of trust, how to establish mutual understanding, how to help talents capitalise on learning opportunities, and how to improve attitudes, behaviour and performance.

F. Elite referee education programme

1. Seminars

Seminars for elite referees must be organised at least once every two months prior to and during the season on either a regional or national basis (i.e. minimum of six annually). If there is no equivalent programme for elite assistant referees, they should be included in these elite referee seminars.

Topics to be covered at seminars include match incidents, foul recognition and FIFA/UEFA directives and interpretations of the *Laws of the Game*. RAP materials should be used, together with clips from the top domestic league.

Support throughout the season should also be provided in terms of nutrition, media training, mental preparation, medical check-ups, English language tuition, psychological support, tactical awareness, and any other relevant aspects.

2. FIFA fitness tests

Elite referees and assistant referees must complete the minimum number of FIFA fitness tests per season defined by the UEFA Referees Committee.

The results of all FIFA fitness tests must be sent to the RAP fitness instructors.

3. Joint seminars with elite referee observers

Elite observers must attend at least two of the elite referee seminars held each year. In addition to these joint seminars, any new guidelines given to the referees at any time must also be given to the elite referee observers.

G. Referee observer education programme

1. Introductory course

All new referee observers must complete an introductory course including a test on the *Laws of the Game*.

2. Seminars

The introductory course should be followed by ongoing seminars held at least annually, on a national or regional basis.

The main topics to be covered in referee observer seminars are:

- a) learning and teaching principles;
- b) feedback and evaluation methods;
- c) practical exercises and required outcomes;
- d) communication and facilitation skills;
- e) management skills;
- f) report writing;
- g) written test on the *Laws of the Game*.

Elite referee observers should attend the same number of seminars as grassroots referee observers and be given additional ongoing training. Joint seminars for elite referee observers and elite referees must be organised at least twice a year.

ANNEX C – FINANCIAL SUPPORT

A. HatTrick incentive payments

(in accordance with the relevant provisions of the UEFA HatTrick Regulations)

An annual incentive payment of €100,000 is allocated to each UEFA member association that is a party to the present convention as long as it continues to implement and apply the convention and continues to meet the minimum standards of the convention.

UEFA member associations which have applied to become parties to the present convention may submit requests for financial support during the admission procedure, based on projects or equipment needed to allow them to meet the minimum standards of the convention. These financial requests can be submitted for a maximum of €100,000 per UEFA season and must be approved by UEFA.

Any financial support received by an applicant in the same UEFA financial year as it signs the present convention will be deducted from the annual incentive payment allocated to the UEFA member association that year as a party to the convention.

B. Budget and expenditure records

Each UEFA member association that is a party to the present convention must submit to the UEFA administration a detailed refereeing budget and expenditure record at the start and end of each financial year.

The budget must be sufficient to cover the cost of the administration and development of refereeing activities and operations, dedicated refereeing staff within the association, and the requirements of the present convention.

The budget must be submitted to UEFA two months prior to the start of the national association's financial year and the expenditure record two months after the financial year closes. All figures must be provided in the local currency and converted into euros. These documents must be signed by the chairman of the referees committee and the general secretary or CEO of the national association.

Each UEFA member association that is a party to the present convention must also maintain separate accounting records of all UEFA incentive payments and financial support received and how all such funds have been used. These records must be made available to UEFA on request.

UEFA incentive payments and financial support must be invested exclusively in referee education and development.

INDEX

Admission procedure.....	2	Languages.....	4
Aims	2	Marking system.....	9
Applicable law	4	Match appointments	7, 8
Appointments	7, 8	Match official.....	1
Approval	4	Mentor	1, 9
Budget.....	22	Mentor profile.....	19
Category.....	1, 7, 8, 9	Mentoring.....	18
Coaching system.....	16	National fitness instructor.....	13
Composition	5, 10	National instructor.....	13
Criteria for promotion and relegation.....	7, 8	Panel	1, 7
Definition of terms	1	Payments.....	8, 9
Disputes	4	Programme content	17
Duties	10, 11, 12, 13	RAP	1
Duties and responsibilities.....	5	Referee observer education programme.....	20
Duties of mentors	19	Referee observer manager.....	12
Duties of talents.....	18	Referee observer panels.....	8
Education and development.....	15	Referee panels	7
Elite	1	Referee recruitment and retention officer	11
Elite panels.....	7, 8	Referee recruitment programme.....	16
Elite referee education programme	20	Referee retention programme.....	16
Elite referees manager.....	12	Refereeing department	10
Expenditure records	22	Refereeing organisation.....	5
FIFA fitness tests.....	20	Refereeing specialist	2
Financial support	22	Refereeing structure	5
Fitness tests	17	Referees committee.....	5
Formation of panels.....	7, 8, 9	Reports	9
Grassroots.....	1	Rights and duties of the parties	3
Grassroots panels	7, 8	Scope of application	2
Grassroots referee education programme	16	Seminars.....	15, 16, 18, 20
Grassroots referees manager.....	12	Specialist support team	11
HatTrick incentive payments	22	Talent.....	2
Instructor	9	Talent profile	18
Instructor and mentor panels.....	9	Talents and mentors coordinator	11
Instructors education programme...	15	Talents and mentors programme....	17
Introductory course.....	15, 16, 20	Withdrawal.....	4



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