



Football Association of Wales

Men's Tier 3 Club Licensing Regulations Edition 2024

Approved by the FAW National League's Board on 8th August 2024

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Definitions of Terms

Note – Definitions are also contained in the FAW's "Articles of Association", "Standing Orders" and "Regulations" (including, without limitation, the Regulations for the Pyramid League System) and cross-references are noted where appropriate.

For the purpose of these regulations, the following definitions apply:

DEFINITIONS

AGM	The League Annual General Meeting, which takes place at the end of every football season.
Appeals Body	The Appeals board appointed by the Licensor to deal with an appeal by an Licence Applicant or the Licensor against a decision of the First Instance Body.
Ardal North/South	The Ardal North/South are the bodies comprising of clubs in Tier 3 of the FAW Men's Pyramid, all members subject to the licensing process.
Ardal North/South Club Licensing Regulations	The working document ('Regulations') which describes the Ardal North/South Club Licensing system in Wales with specific national particularities and objectives.
Association	The Football Association of Wales Limited (company number 00213349) whose registered office is at The Pavillion, Hensol, Vale of Glamorgan, CF72 8JY
Chief Executive Officer	The senior employee of the Association
Club	Any club defined pursuant to FAW Rule 11.1.1., playing at Tier 3 of the FAW Men's Pyramid.
Club Licensing Criteria	Requirements to be fulfilled by the Licence Applicant divided into five categories: Sporting, Infrastructure, Personnel and Administrative, Legal and Financial.
COMET	The Football Management System used by the Association as set out in these Regulations. Any reference to the FAW COMET, COMET, or System shall mean the same.
Core Process	Minimum requirements that the Licensor has to put in place for verification of compliance with the Criteria described in the Regulations as basis for the issuance of a Tier 3 Licence to a Licence Applicant.
Council	The shareholders of the Association being the supreme body of the Association
Cymru North/South	The Cymru North/South are the bodies comprising of clubs in Tier 2 of the FAW Men's Pyramid, all members subject to the licensing process.
Deadline for submissions	The date by which the Licence Applicants must submit to the Licensor, all documents and evidence in support of their application for a Tier 3 Licence.
Deadline for submission of the application to the Licensor	The date by which the Licensor requires Licence Applicants to have submitted all information for its application for a Tier 3 Licence.
Decision Making Bodies	The First Instance Body and the Appeals Body.

FAW	The Football Association of Wales
FAW Club Licensing System	Consists of the Criteria and a Core Process
FAW National Leagues Board	The FAW Standing Committee responsible for Club Licensing Regulations on behalf of the Board.
First Instance Body (FIB)	The board appointed by the Licensor to assess Licence Applicants and decide whether or not to grant the Licence Applicant a Tier 3 Licence.
League General Manager	The League Secretaries for the Ardal North and Ardal South responsible for the day-to-day organisation and management of the relevant Tier 3 League.
Licence	Certificate granted by the Licensor confirming fulfilment of all minimum mandatory criteria by the Licence Applicant as part of the admission procedures for entering the FAW Men's Tier 3 Club Competition.
Licence Applicant	Legal entity responsible for the football team participating in the National Competition, which applies for a Licence for assessment against the Tier 2 Club Licensing Regulations.
Licence Season	FAW season for which a Licence Applicant has applied for / been granted the FAW Tier 3 Licence.
Licensee	Licence Applicant that has been granted the Licence by Licensor.
Licensing Administration	Body or staff within the Licensor that deals with the club licensing matters
Licensor	Body that operates the Club Licensing System and grants Licences. In Wales, FAW is the Licensor.
List of Licensing Decisions	List submitted to the FAW containing, among other things, information about the Licence Applicants that have undergone the club licensing process and been granted the FAW Men's Tier 3 Licence by the Decision-Making Bodies.
May	Indicates a party's discretion to do something (i.e. optional, rather than mandatory).
Minimum Criteria	Criteria to be fulfilled by a Licence Applicant to be granted the Licence. Known as 'A Criteria'.
Must or Shall	Indicates an obligation to comply with the Regulations (i.e. mandatory). Failure to do so will result in refusal to grant the Tier 3 Men's Licence.
Recommended	This is a best-practice recommendation and therefore, not a Tier 3 Licence failure.
Significant Change	Any event that is considered material to the documentation previously submitted to the Licensor and that would require a different presentation if it had occurred prior to the submission of the documentation. .

Stadium	The venue for a domestic competition match including, but not limited to, all properties and facilities near to such stadium (for example offices, hospitality areas, press centre)
Subsequent Events	Events or conditions occurring after the licensing decision.
Tier 3	The third tier of the FAW Men's Pyramid.
Tier 3 Licence	The Licence granted by the relevant body for the Licence Applicant to play in Men's Tier 3 of the FAW Pyramid.

1. Introduction

1.1 Men's Tier 3 Club Licensing Regulations

The Men's Tier 3 Club Licensing Regulations ("Regulations") set out quality standards and procedures by which clubs will be assessed as a basis for entry to FAW Men's Tier 3 competitions, with continuous Ground improvement of many aspects of football.

The Football Association of Wales (FAW) approved the Tier 1 system on the 6th December 2005 and the FAW Council has agreed the same criteria subjects as UEFA Licensing, which made its decision following a consultation with a variety of bodies.

The objective of a uniformed Tier 3 criteria was first published in the FAW's Strategic Plan of 2012. The formation of the new National Game Board in September 2014 became the catalyst for the introduction of these Regulations. Following a series of taskforce meetings and ground audits, the first Tier 3 Regulations were written.

The National Game Board approved the criteria in its meeting on 13th April 2015, which was then ratified by FAW Council on 29th April 2015 and updated on 17th December 2015.

Licensing requires that those clubs in membership of the Ardal Northern and Southern leagues meet specific standards. These standards are present in the form of Criteria under four headings;

Sporting

Infrastructure

Personnel and Administration

Legal

The Criteria are transparent and consistent with UEFA standards where necessary, and a great deal of care and attention has been given to drafting these regulations. The focus has been on establishing a set of quality standards for Ardal Northern and Ardal Southern Leagues that are attainable for all current clubs and for those aspiring to join the leagues. It also provides those wishing to be promoted to the Cymru North or Cymru South, a platform for meeting the Tier 2 Criteria.

Licensing will have all the characteristics of a quality management system. The FAW's management of the system will be coherent with UEFA Licensing, which is annually subject to third party scrutiny by UEFA and assessed by two independent bodies (First Instance Body and Appeals Body), in order to guarantee the transparency and integrity of the system.

1.2 Benefits of Men's Tier 3 Club Licensing Regulations

The FAW sets the standards for the Men's Tier 3 Club Licensing Regulations. By meeting these standards, football as a whole is acknowledging its responsibility to the community at large. The auditing of these Regulations are a transparent process that enables Licence Applicants to demonstrate to all their stakeholders that they meet quality standards.

Licensing will help to establish benchmarking information. Licence Applicants will be able to use this information to establish their position and to plan future quality improvement.

FAW resources will be focused on assisting Licence Applicants demonstrating a desire to improve and work in partnership with each other for the benefit of the football community in Wales. Football will benefit from the adoption of quality management practices by the FAW.

These Regulations were adopted by the Football Association of Wales on the 8th August 2024 and come into for the 2025/2026 season.

2. Procedure

2.1 The Management of the System

The Men's Tier 3 Club Licensing Regulations will be managed by the FAW for Licence Applicants to Tier 3. The system will comprise of audits conducted by the FAW and assessment by the Decision-Making Bodies.

In order to demonstrate that it meets the Criteria, a Licence Applicant Must upload all necessary supporting documents to the FAW COMET system.

Applications will be considered by the Decision-Making Bodies, in accordance with these Regulations and the Core Process.

In considering a non-Tier 3 club's licence application, a non-Tier 3 Licence Applicant will be permitted to make developments to their infrastructure criteria if they can evidence by 30th April 2025, that quotes, planning permission approval (if required) and necessary finance are in place in order to complete the required updates by a date to be agreed at the sole discretion of the Decision-Making Bodies and signed off by FAW Club Licensing Staff that the developments meet the minimum Criteria.

If current Tier 3 clubs require upgrading their current infrastructure after 30th April 2025, then this can be permitted provided that the Licence Applicant provides quotes, planning permission approval (if required) and necessary finance are in place in order to complete the required upgrades to be agreed at the sole discretion of the Decision-Making Bodies and signed off by FAW Club Licensing Staff that the developments meet the minimum Criteria.

Those Licence Applicants that meet the standards will be issued a Licence. Those Licence Applicants that have not fulfilled the minimum 'A' Criteria will not be granted a Licence unless an extension has been granted by the First Instance Body (FIB) or Appeals Body (AB) to carry out any upgrades. Should any upgrades not be completed by the date set by the respective Decision-Making Bodies, then the same Decision-Making Body will have the right to revoke the applicable Licence.

The deadline for submission of the list of licenced clubs is set by the FAW Board and must be strictly adhered to annually before the relevant League's Annual General Meeting.

2.2 Tier 3 Club Licence Refusal

A Tier 3 Licence is mandatory for participation at Tier 3.

If a Licence Applicant is refused a Tier 3 Licence by the First Instance Body, the following procedure will apply:

A Licence Applicant refused a Tier 3 Licence, must submit any appeal to the relevant Club Licensing Manager within 10 days of being informed of the First Instance Body's decision. Appeals must be forwarded in writing for the attention of the Club Licensing Manager together with the appropriate Appeal Fee as set out in FAW Rule 43.2.3. The Appeals Body is notified, and a meeting date agreed.

The Club Licensing Manager prepares a report and dispatches this to the Appeals Body.

The Appeals Body consider the Licence Applicant's appeal by 31st May each year. The decision is made whether to grant a Tier 3 Licence or not. If a Tier 3 Licence is granted, any area for future attention may be detailed. If a Tier 3 Licence is refused, areas to be addressed must be detailed and any relevant sanction applied.

The Club Licensing Manager submits the list of licensed applicants to the FAW Board, the relevant Leagues at Cymru North, Cymru South, Ardal Northern, Ardal Southern Leagues and Area Associations of the FAW Pyramid before its Annual General Meetings.

2.3 Criteria Graduation

The Criteria described in these Men's Tier 3 Club Licensing Regulations are graded into three separate categories.

The different grades have been defined as follows:

'A' Criteria – Mandatory

If the Licence Applicant does not fulfil any 'A' criteria, then it cannot be granted with a Men's Tier 3 Licence unless the Decision-Making Bodies grant an exemption under 2.1 of these Regulations.

'B' Criteria – Expected

If the Licence Applicant does not fulfil any 'B' Criteria, then it may still receive a Men's Tier 3 Licence subject to the Applicant fulfilling the 'A' Criteria. However, repeated failure to meet these Criteria May result in sanctions as specified under 3.1 of these Regulations.

'C' Criteria – Recommended

If the Licence Applicant does fulfil any 'C' Criteria, then it may still receive a Men's Tier 3 Licence. These Criteria may become 'A' or 'B' Criteria in future licences or may be requirements for a Men's Tier 2 Licence; however, it is recommended that Licence Applicants have these Criteria in place to support the overall development of the club.

2.4 Development

Licensing a progressive system designed to deliver continuous improvement. Improvements will be introduced as the system develops. The relevant FAW committee has the authority to review Criteria and these recommendations will be referred to the FAW Board for approval following a consultation process with various bodies including the FAW National Leagues Board, the League Management Committees and the Ardal Northern/Southern clubs. The development process will incorporate reasonable timescales and the Regulations will be reviewed on an annual basis.

3. Licensor

3.1 Responsibilities of the Licensor

The Licensor is the Football Association of Wales (FAW). It governs the Men's Tier 3 club licensing system.

The Licensor must:

- a. establish an appropriate licensing administration as defined in 3.2;
- b. establish at least two Decision-Making Bodies as defined in 3.3;
- c. set up a catalogue of sanctions as defined in 3.4;
- d. defines the core process in accordance with 3.5;
- e. assess the documentation submitted by the Licence Applicants, consider whether this is appropriate and defines the assessment procedures as defined in 3.6
- f. ensure equal treatment of all Licence Applicants and guarantees them full confidentiality with regard to all information provided during the licensing process as defined in 3.7;
- g. determine to its comfortable satisfaction whether each criterion has been met and what further information, if any, is needed for a Licence to be granted.

3.2 Licensing Administration

The Licensor must appoint a Club Licensing Manager who is responsible for the Licensing Administration. The Club Licensing Manager should be educated as a minimum to degree level.

The tasks of the licensing administration include:

- a. preparing, implementing, and further developing the Club Licensing System,
- b. providing administrative support to the Decision-Making Bodies,
- c. assisting, advising and monitoring the Licensees during the Licence Season;
- d. informing the FAW and National League Board of any event occurring after the licensing decision that constitutes a Significant Change to the information previously submitted to the Licensor, including a change of legal form, legal group structure (including change of ownership) or identity;
- e. serving as the contact point for and sharing expertise with the licensing departments of other UEFA member associations and with UEFA itself.

At least one member of the Licensing Administration or an external financial expert must have a financial background and a diploma in accountancy/auditing recognised by the ACCA (or a recognised equivalent) or must have several years' experience in the above matters (a "recognition of competence").

3.3 Decision-Making Bodies

1. The Decision-Making Bodies are the First Instance Body (FIB) and the Appeals Body (AB), and they must be independent of each other.
2. The First Instance Body decides on whether the Licence should be granted to a Licence Applicant on the basis of the documents provided by the submission deadline set by the licensor and on whether the Licence should be withdrawn.
3. The Appeals Body decides on appeals submitted in writing and makes a final decision on whether the Licence should be granted or withdrawn. Should the Licence be granted, the Licence Applicants appeal fee must be returned.
4. Appeals may only be lodged by:
 - a. a Licence Applicant who received a refusal from the First Instance Body;
 - b. a Licensee whose Licence has been withdrawn by the First Instance Body; or;
 - c. the Club Licensing Manager on behalf of the Licensor.
5. The Appeals Body makes its decision based on the decision of the First Instance Body and all the evidence provided by the appellant with its written request for appeal and by the set deadline.
6. As per FAW Rule 149(B), the licensing of Qualifying Clubs and all other clubs under the jurisdiction of the Association to play in Ardal Northern leagues and Ardal Southern leagues shall be governed, sanctioned, and controlled as set out in these Regulations.

7. Members of the Decision-Making Bodies are selected by the Chief Executive Officer of the Football Association of Wales for a term of three years and must:
 - a. act impartially in the discharge of their duties;
 - b. abstain if there is any doubt as to their independence from the Licence Applicant or if there is a conflict of interest. In this connection, the independence of a member may not be guaranteed if he or any member of his family (spouse, child, parent or sibling) is a member, shareholder, business partner, sponsor or consultant of the Licence Applicant;
 - c. not act simultaneously as Club Licensing Manager or a member of the Licensing Administration
 - d. not belong simultaneously to a judicial statutory body of the Licensor;
 - e. not belong simultaneously to the FAW Council of the FAW or its affiliated leagues, clubs or area associations;
 - f. not belong simultaneously to the personnel of an affiliated club;
 - g. not belong simultaneously to the administrative staff or to any statutory Decision-Making Body or committee of the Football Association of Wales or Ardal Norther/Ardal Southern Leagues.
8. The quorum of the Decision-Making Bodies is three members. In case of a tie, the Chair has the casting vote.
9. The Decision-Making Bodies must operate according to procedural rules – to be defined by the Licensor - which are as follows;
 - a. The submission deadline for all documents in the first instance is 30th April 2025 as specified in the annual Core Process and Must be respected.
 - b. The Licensor, licensing experts and the Decision-Making Body members must all guarantee the principle of equal treatment by annually signing forms of independence and confidentiality.
 - c. Licence Applicants may have legal representation at the First Instance Body or the Appeals Body meeting, if seven days' notice is provided in writing to the Licensor.
 - d. The Licence Applicant has the right to be heard at a Decision-Making Body meeting, by either legal representation as described in Paragraph 3.3(9c) or by the Club Chairperson or their nominated deputy, if seven days' notice must be provided in writing. The Decision-Making Bodies also have the right to request that their meeting is attended by a club representative.
 - e. The official language for all correspondence and meetings is English.
 - f. The Licensor is permitted to set time limits within the Core Process which guarantees feedback from the licensing experts before the final submission deadline. (e.g., calculation, compliance, interruption, extension).
 - g. A Licence Applicant has the right to submit an appeal in writing to the Club Licensing Manager within ten days as of the date of the corresponded decision of the First Instance Body.
 - h. All deadlines are clearly defined within the Core Process in order to ensure that there are no delaying effects to Competitions or to process.
 - i. The Licence Applicant may submit supplementary evidence to the Appeals Body.
 - j. The Licence Applicant has the burden of proof to the comfortable satisfaction of the Decision-Making Bodies.
 - k. All decisions made by the First Instance Body and the Appeals Body must be confirmed in writing to the relevant Licence Applicant on the same day as the decision was made. The only exception to this is where a First Instance Body or Appeals Body are meeting over two days, in which case, all decisions will be communicated to the relevant Licence Applicants on the second day of the meeting.
 - l. Any complaint must be submitted in writing to the Chief Executive Officer.
 - m. Content and form of pleading
 - n. Deliberation / hearings – The Decision-Making Bodies must consider all written and verbal evidence provided by the Licence Applicants and the licensing experts. The Decision-Making Bodies must deliberate this evidence before providing the findings of the hearing.
 - o. Cost of procedure – The cost of the Appeal shall be in accordance with FAW Rules 43.2.3.

3.4 Catalogue of Sanctions

1. To guarantee an appropriate assessment process, the FAW has set up a catalogue of sanctions for the Club Licensing System for the non-respect of 'B' Criteria referred to in these Regulations. It falls to the competent national bodies to impose these sanctions on the Licence Applicants/Licensees.
2. The catalogue of sanctions are as follows;
 - a. A caution
 - b. A warning can be issued
 - c. For a second offence of the same criteria, the financial incentive for achieving the Licence can be withheld
 - d. A suspended fine can be imposed
 - e. A fine of up to £10,000 can be imposed
 - f. The Licence can be withdrawn
 - g. A suspension from achieving a Licence can be imposed for the following Licence season.
3. To guarantee an appropriate assessment process, the FAW must refer to the national disciplinary regulations in respect of violations of other licensing regulations (e.g., submission of falsified documents, non-respect of deadlines, sanctions against individuals, etc.).

3.5 The Core Process

1. The Licensor has defined the Core Process for the verification of the Club Licensing Criteria and thus manage the issuing of Licences.
2. The Core Process starts on 2nd September and ends on the submission of the list of licensing decisions to the FAW administration by the deadline communicated by the latter.
3. The Core Process consists of the following minimum key steps:
 - a. Submission of the licensing documentation to the Licence Applicants;
 - b. Return of the licensing documentation to the Licensor;
 - c. Assessment of the documentation by the Licensing Administration;
 - d. Submission of the written representation letter to the Licensor;
 - e. Assessment and decision by the Decision-Making Bodies;
 - f. Submission of the List of Licensing Decisions to the FAW within seven days of each decision being final.
4. The deadlines for the above key process steps must be clearly defined and communicated to the clubs concerned before the start of the Core Process by the Licensor.

3.6 Assessment Procedures

1. The Licensor defines the assessment procedures as set out in these Regulations which Must be followed.

3.7 Equal Treatment and Confidentiality

1. The Licensor ensures equal treatment of all Licence Applicants during the Core Process.
2. The Licensor guarantees the Licence Applicants' full confidentiality regarding all information submitted during the licensing process. Anyone involved in the licensing process or selected/appointed by the Licensor must sign a confidentiality agreement before assuming their tasks.

4. Licence Applicant

4.1 Definition of the Applicant

1. A Licence Applicant May only be a football club, i.e., a legal entity responsible for a men's football first team participating in FAW competitions and that either:
 - a. Is a registered member of the Football Association of Wales and/or its affiliated league(s) (hereinafter: registered member); or
 - b. Has a contractual relationship with a registered member (hereinafter: football company).

4.2 General Responsibilities of the Licence Applicant

1. The Licence Applicant Must provide the Licensor with:
 - a. All necessary information and/or relevant documents to fully demonstrate that the obligations are fulfilled; and
 - b. Any other document relevant for decision making by the Licensor.
2. This includes information on the reporting entity/entities in respect of which sporting, infrastructure, personnel and administrative and legal information is required to be provided to satisfy the Men's Tier 3 Club Licensing Criteria.
3. Any event occurring after the submission of the documentation to the Licensor and represents a Significant Change to the information previously submitted Must be promptly notified to the Licensor (including a change of the Licence Applicant's legal form, legal group structure including ownership, or identity).

4.3 FAW Men's Tier 3 Club Licence Certification

1. Licence Applicants which qualify for Tier 3 on sporting merit must obtain the Men's Tier 3 Licence, issued by the Licensor according to the present Regulations.
2. An FAW Men's Tier 3 Club Licence expires without prior notice at the end of the Licence Season for which it was issued.
3. An FAW Men's Tier 3 Club Licence cannot be transferred.
4. An FAW Men's Tier 3 Licence May be withdrawn by the Licensor's Decision-Making Bodies if:
 - a. any of the conditions for the issuing of the FAW Men's Tier 3 Club Licence are no longer satisfied: or
 - b. the Licensee violates any of its obligations under the present Regulations.
5. As soon as a withdrawal of an FAW Men's Tier 3 Club Licence is envisaged, the FAW administration must notify the Chief Executive Officer accordingly. The Chief Executive Officer will have the discretion to refer the withdrawal of an FAW Men's Tier 3 Club Licence to the First Instance Body or Appeals Body, whichever Decision-Making Body granted the Licence to the Licence Applicant. The Decision-Making Body will determine whether the Licence be withdrawn or not.
6. It shall cost £100.00 per club to apply for an FAW Men's Tier 3 Club Licence. This must be paid by the application deadline stated in the Core Process. Licence Applicants that are successfully granted a Licence by the First Instance Body shall have their application fee refunded.

4.4 Clubs outside of Tier 3

1. Licence Applicants relegated from the Cymru North or Cymru South (Tier 2) on sporting merit or for failure to achieve the FAW Men's Tier 2 Club Licence Must meet the 'A' Criteria as stated in the FAW Men's Tier 3 Club Licensing Regulations. This will be assessed on or before 30th April each year.
2. Should a Licence Applicant obtain an FAW Men's Tier 3 Club Licence but not be eligible to play in the Cymru North or Cymru South (i.e. because of relegation from Tier 2 or not gaining promotion via sporting merit from Tier 3), the Men's Tier 2 application shall be conferred to a Tier 3 application, subject to the Licence Applicant achieving the 'A' Criteria for Tier 3.
3. Licence Applicants seeking promotion into Tier 3 must meet all of the 'A' Criteria as stated in these regulations on or before the 30th April each year unless an exception is granted in accordance with Paragraph 1.04(3) and/or Paragraph 2.1 of these Regulations.
4. The above may be subject to the appeals process, as detailed in Paragraph 3.3(4).

5. Only Licence Applicants participating in Cymru North, Cymru South, Ardal Northern leagues, Ardal Southern leagues or highest divisions (Tier 4) of the six area associations are permitted to apply for an FAW Men's Tier 3 Club Licence.

Club Licensing Criteria

General

Licence Applicants must note that failure to fulfil any 'B' Criteria, as detailed throughout these Regulations, does not necessarily lead to a Licence refusal but to a sanction defined by the Licensor according to its catalogue of sanctions, as per Paragraph 3.4.

5. Sporting Criteria

S.02 – Youth teams (C Criteria)

1. The Licence Applicant must have the two following youth teams within its legal entity, another legal entity included in the reporting perimeter or a club affiliated to its legal entity:
 - a. a youth team within the age range of 10 to 21;

Each youth team, within this age range, must take part in official competitions or programmes played at national, regional or local level and recognised by the FAW.

S.04 – Registration of players

1. All the Licence Applicant's players, including youth above the age of 10, Must be registered with the FAW or its Area Association in accordance with the relevant provisions of the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players.

S.07 – Women's football activities (C Criteria)

1. The Licence Applicant must support women's football by implementing measures aimed to further develop, professionalise and popularise women's football such as:
 - a. Entering a first and/or youth team in official competitions
 - b. Providing support to an affiliated women's football club
 - c. Organising other women's football initiatives as defined by the Licensor (i.e. Huddle)
2. For any Licence Applicants that support women's football under Paragraph S.07(1), must ensure the measures and/or activities are provided with the same guarantees to access playing and training facilities as the men's football section.

6. Infrastructure Criteria

I.01 - Stadium Safety Assessment

1. The Licence Applicant Must provide a Stadium Safety Assessment, which Must include, but is not limited to the requirements of the document provided in Appendix II.
2. All safety assessments submitted for Paragraph I.01(1) Must be no older than one year old at the date of the deadline for submission of documents and Must be signed by an authorised signatory of the Licence Applicant.

I.03 – Stadium Contingency and Evacuation Plan

1. The Licence Applicant Must provide a plan to evacuate the ground in the response to any contingencies which arise which Must include but is not limited to the requirements of the document provided in Appendix II.

I.04 – Approved Capacity Level

1. The Licence Applicant Must have in place an approved capacity level, which is relevant and safe for all competitions. The minimum capacity for Tier 3 Competition and League Cup matches is 500.
2. Licence Applicants Must have in place at least 100 covered seats, which are in compliance with Paragraph I.19.
3. Licence Applicants applying from Tier 4 Must have in place at least 50 covered seats by the 30th April 2025, which are in compliance with Paragraph I.19. The Licence Applicant Must meet the full criteria of 100 covered seats by 30th April 2026, in order to meeting the seating requirements for Tier 3 Criteria to remain in the league for the 2026/2027 season.

I.05 – Public Access and Egress (C Criteria)

The Licence Applicant must ensure the following is provided in the stadium and the relevant documents provided for the audit:

1. At least one entry point which must be designed in such a way as to avoid congestion and ensure the smooth flow of the crowd.
2. All public passageways and stairways in the spectator areas must be painted in a bright colour, as must all gates leading from the spectator areas into the playing area and all exit doors and gates leading out of the stadium.
3. All exit doors and gates in the stadium, and all gates leading from the spectator areas into the playing area, must:
 - a. Be fitted with a locking device which may be operated simply and quickly by anyone from the inside in the case of exit doors and gates or from either side in the case of gates leading into the playing area;
 - b. Be designed to remain unlocked while spectators are in the stadium and;
 - c. Open outwards.
4. Approaches to the stadium must be adequately signposted to guide spectators to their sectors, and all turnstiles, entry and exit gates and doors must be operational and similarly clearly indicated by signs which are universally understood. Commercial signage and signage within dressing rooms must also be on display.
5. The boundary wall/fence must be of sound solid construction, secure on all sides and designed to obscure viewing from outside the stadium (recommended height of boundary structure is 2 metres).
6. The Applicant must submit a layout plan detailing all facilities within the ground (1:1000) and a site plan showing the access routes into the stadium (1:1500)

I.06 – Public Address System

1. The stadium Must be equipped with a public address system.
2. The public address system Must cover both the inside and outside of the stadium and be secured against failures of the main power supply.

I.08 – Field of Play

1. The field of play Must be smooth and level.

2. The stadium Must be equipped with either a natural playing surface or football turf.
3. Football turf Must be in accordance with the “FAW Regulations for the use of Football Turf Pitches” and must meet all of the following conditions:
 - a. It Must have been granted the required FIFA licence with the relevant certificate, which can only be delivered after the turf in question has been tested by a FIFA-accredited laboratory, as meeting the FIFA quality standards for football turf;
 - b. It Must meet all the requirements of the national legislation in force;
 - c. Its surface Must be green and marked with white in accordance with the Laws of the Game. All other colours although not recommended are permitted in domestic FAW competitions as set out in the “FAW Regulations for the use of Football Turf Pitches”.
4. The field of play must be equipped with a drainage system so that it cannot become unplayable due to flooding. **(B Criteria)**
5. The field of play Must be a minimum 98 metres long and 62 metres wide.
 - a. It is recommended the field of play is 105 metres long and 68 metres wide. **(C Criteria)**
6. There Must be a grass verge or alternatively artificial turf of the minimum width of 1.5 metres between the touch line and the perimeter barrier.
 - a. It is recommended that this distance is 3 metres. **(C Criteria)**
7. There Must be a permanent, fixed barrier, surrounding the perimeter of the pitch, to a minimum of 1.1 metres as measured from the spectator side
 - a. An exception to Paragraph I.08(7) is where permission has been granted by the FAW and/or associated league for one, two or three of the sides or part thereof, to be closed to spectators in accordance with Paragraph I.19(5).
8. If the Licensor believes that the quality of the field of play falls below an acceptable standard, an industry expert must assess the quality of the field of play. The expert will make recommendations to enhance the quality of the field of play which clubs Must carry out within reasonable timescales. The groundsman responsible for the maintenance of the field of play Must subsequently attend any relevant courses as instructed by the FAW.

I.09 – Warm-Up Area for Substitutes

1. A warm-up area for substitutes Must be available along the touchlines, behind the advertising boards behind the goal or on a separate area.

I.10 – Goals and Spare Goals

1. Goalposts and crossbars Must be in compliance with the Laws of the Game as promulgated by the International Football Association Board (IFAB), which means, in particular, that:
 - a. the distance between the posts must be 7.32m;
 - b. the distance from the lower edge of the crossbar to the ground must be 2.44m;
 - c. the goalposts and crossbars must be white;
 - d. they must not pose any danger to players.
2. A spare goal, which can be easily installed if the circumstances so require, must be available within the stadium for Tier 3 league matches. **(C Criteria)**

I.11 – Substitutes’ Benches

1. The stadium Must be equipped with two covered benches at pitch level, each with seating room for at least eight people and positioned either side of the halfway line. The two benches Must be on the same side as each other.
 - a. It is recommended that any developments to substitutes benches, must increase seating room to thirteen people **(C Criteria)**
2. A technical area Must be marked for each substitutes bench to define the area designated for team officials, as per IFAB Laws of the Game

I.12 – Dressing Rooms

1. The stadium Must be equipped with:
 - a. A player dressing-room for each team with seating room for at least eighteen people, a minimum of four showers, and exclusive use to one individual seated toilet with wash basin.

- b. A match officials' dressing-room with seating room for three people, a minimum of one shower, and exclusive use to one individual seated toilet with wash basin.
 - i. It is recommended that any new developments to the match officials' dressing rooms must provide a provision for female match officials. **(C Criteria)**
- c. All rooms must be clearly signposted, well lit, ventilated and/or heated.
- 2. The stadium Must guarantee safe access and egress for both teams and the match officials from their dressing-rooms to the playing area and ensure their safe arrival /departure from the stadium.
 - a. If deemed necessary by the Licensor, the Licence Applicant will be required to submit a written policy in order to meet this criterion.
- 3. If it's brought to the attention of the FAW that the dressing rooms fall below the minimum hygiene and/or quality standards as expected by the FAW at any stage during the season, the following will take place:
 - a. An inspection and/or evidence gathering must be carried out at the earliest opportunity.
 - b. The Licence Applicant Must complete any facility improvements as advised by the FAW and/or the Decision-Making Bodies.

I.13 – Match Day Office (C Criteria)

- 1. The stadium must be equipped with a match-day office with easy access to the team and match officials' dressing rooms.
- 2. The room must be well lit, ventilated and/or heated with access to communication facilities such as minimum 3G phone signal and/or WI-FI.

I.14 – Emergency Medical Room for Players and Officials (C Criteria)

- 1. A defibrillator must be available at the ground.
- 2. Emergency vehicles must be able to drive into the stadium.
 - a. The access and egress point(s) must not be blocked.
 - b. A parking space must be identified for an emergency vehicle to park, which must not be occupied by any other vehicle or used for any other purpose.
 - c. Unobstructed access leading from a spectator area in the stadium to the playing area, must be provided to allow access and egress for a stretcher. It is recommended that this access is located as close as possible to the area designated for access/egress of emergency vehicle(s).
- 3. The stadium must be equipped with an emergency medical room for first aid and medical treatment of players and officials. A list of the minimum medical equipment required can be found in Appendix III.

I.16 – Floodlighting (C Criteria)

- 1. The stadium must be equipped with floodlight installations.
- 2. The stadium floodlight lux levels must be in compliance with the following:
 - a. Achieve a value 250 lux (or 250 lux adjusted which allows for a 10% deviation) for Tier 2 league and league cup matches when tested by an independent organisation.
 - b. Licence Applicants must provide a report stating the lux value, which must be no more than three years old.
 - c. The report must be a 96-point lighting test.

N.B. The FAW may at any time, request a 96-point lighting test to determine the current lux levels of the floodlights, If their lux level is considered to be too low by the FAW and/or the host broadcaster.

- 3. For any Licence Applicants that have floodlights, and intend on using them during the season to fulfil fixtures, they Must supply a valid lux certificate **(A Criteria)**

I.17 – Parking Areas

- 1. The Licence Applicant Must provide parking space for twenty cars in a safe and secure area. These Must be provided for the following:
 - a. ten parking spaces available for the teams and match officials.
 - b. ten parking spaces available for VIP's and/or FAW staff.
- 2. This parking area Must:
 - a. Be located in a safe and secure area in the immediate vicinity of the players' and match officials' area.

- b. Be of a secure footing. i.e., comprising of concrete, tarmac, gravel or stone. **(B Criteria)**

I.18 – Refreshment Facilities

1. Licence Applicants Must provide players and match officials with food and drink after the game. This facility can be located off-site.
2. The stadium Must be equipped with refreshment and catering facilities for all spectators during the game.

I.19 – Stands and Spectator Facilities

1. Seats for spectators Must be individual, fixed (e.g. to the floor), separated from one another, shaped, made of an unbreakable and non-flammable material and have a backrest of a minimum height of 30 cm when measured from the seat.
 - a. The use of temporary stands is prohibited
 - b. Bench seating of any description is prohibited
2. If It's brought to the attention of the FAW that the spectator stands fall below the minimum safety standards as expected by the FAW at any stage during the season, the following will take place:
 - a. An inspection and/or evidence gathering must be carried out at the earliest opportunity.
 - b. The Licence Applicant Must complete any facility improvements as advised by the FAW and/or the Decision-Making Bodies.
3. It must be possible for spectators to be accommodated, either standing or seated, along the full length of all four sides of the playing area, except where permission has been granted by the FAW for one of the sides or part thereof, to be closed to spectators. **(C Criteria)**
4. There Must be hardstanding surrounding one full length and one full width of the field, comprising of concrete, paving stones or tarmac;
 - a. Hardstanding of a temporary nature is not approved under any circumstances.
 - b. Where the stadium is part of a larger sports complex, the football area must be totally enclosed from all other activities. **(C Criteria)**
 - c. It is recommended that hardstanding surrounds the whole of the field of play. **(C Criteria)**
5. All mandatory spectator areas Must be accessed by hardstanding.
 - a. It should be possible, if whenever necessary, to prevent spectators from moving from one sector or sub-sector to another, except as part of the stadium's evacuation process. **(C Criteria)**

I.20 – Visiting Supporters (C Criteria)

1. At least 5% of the total stadium capacity must be available exclusively for visiting supporters, and where necessary, in a segregated area of the stadium.
2. Segregation requirements at specific matches shall be decided by the FAW in liaison with the local authorities concerned.

I.21– Emergency Lighting (C Criteria)

1. For the purpose of ensuring safety and guiding spectators & staff, any stadium with floodlights **(that permits evening matches to be played)** must be equipped with an emergency lighting system in any part of the stadium to which public or staff have access, including all egress and evacuation routes,, for use in the event of a general stadium lighting failure.
 - a. The emergency lighting system must be approved by a competent person / local authority.
 - b. An emergency lighting certificate must be produced and be no more than one year old from the date of the deadline for submission of documentation.
 - c. If emergency lighting is only available on one side of the stadium, only this side of the ground is permitted to be open at an evening match. This must be reflected in the document used to satisfy I.01 Criteria.
2. For any Licence Applicants that have floodlights, and intend on using them during the season to fulfil fixtures, they Must supply a valid Emergency Lighting Certificate **(A Criteria)**

I.22 – Sanitary Facilities

1. The stadium Must have sufficient clean and hygienic sanitary facilities distributed evenly throughout all sectors of the stadium for male and female spectators.

- a. Toilets and urinals Must be equipped with flushers
 - b. Toilets designated for females, or unisex facilities Must have a sanitary bin.
 - c. Sinks and amenities such as toilet paper and soap Must be available.
2. The recommended requirement for sanitary facilities are the following, based on an 80:20 ratio of male and female: **(C Criteria)**

Based on 500 Capacity as per Regulation I.04

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a) 1 seated toilet per 250 males | (2 seated toilets for males) |
| b) 1 urinal per 125 males; | (4 urinals for males) |
| c) 1 seated toilet per 125 females | (1 seated toilets for females) |

I.24 – Facilities for Spectators with Disabilities

1. Licence Applicants, Must have undertaken an appropriate self-assessment or a consultation with a local disability group (e.g. Level Playing Field), to review their own procedures with regard to the level of service it provides for spectators with disabilities.
2. The stadium must have dedicated access and seats for spectators with disabilities and their helpers. **(C Criteria)**
3. The stadium must have dedicated sanitary facilities for spectators with disabilities as well as refreshment and catering facilities nearby. **(C Criteria)**
4. One disabled toilet must be available for every 15 wheelchair users. **(C Criteria)**

I.25 – Ground Regulations

1. The Licence Applicant Must arrange to have its Ground Regulations fixed in suitable areas of the stadium in such a way that the spectators can read them.
 - a. Ground Regulations should at least provide information on; admission rights, abandonment and postponement of events, a description of prohibitions and penalties such as entering the field of play, throwing objects, use of foul and abusive language, racist behaviour, restrictions with regard to alcohol, fireworks, flares, banners, seating rules and causes for ejection from the stadium.

N.B. Where tickets are issued, the Ground Regulations should be clearly detailed on the ticket.

I.26 – VIP Hospitality Areas (C Criteria)

1. The stadium must be equipped with at least ten VIP seats, which includes five for the visiting team officials.
2. The Stadium must be equipped with a hospitality area for VIP's and for the visiting club officials for refreshments pre and post-match, as well as at halftime.

I.27 – Media Working Area (C Criteria)

1. The stadium must have at least one room equipped with desks, power supply and phone/internet connections for media representatives.

I.28 – Camera Requirements and Positions (C Criteria)

1. The stadium must have a television gantry to meet the broadcaster's requirements as set out in the FAW Tier 1 Club Licensing Regulations.

I.29 – Press Box (C Criteria)

1. The stadium must accommodate a press box which is covered and centrally located in the main grandstand.
 - a. The press box must have an unobstructed view of the entire playing area and easy access to the other media areas.
2. The press box must have ten covered seats, five of which must be equipped with desks.
 - a. The desks must be fixed and big enough to accommodate a laptop computer and a notepad.
 - b. The desks must be equipped with a power supply and phone or internet connections.

I.30 – TV and Radio Commentary Positions (C Criteria)

1. One covered radio position must be identified.

2. Each commentary position must have at least three seats.

I.31 – Presentation and Post Match Interview Area (C Criteria)

1. The stadium must provide a dedicated post-match interview area for the host broadcaster, with relevant backboard.
 - a. The location must be as close as possible to the dressing room area and the facility must be approved by the host broadcaster.

I.32 – OB Van Parking Area (C Criteria)

1. The stadium must have hardstanding parking facilities to accommodate the host broadcaster OB unit in the immediate vicinity. The surface dimension of the area must be at least 100m².

Please note, If it's brought to the attention of the FAW that the stadium falls below the minimum standard expected by the FAW at any stage during the season, the following will take place:

- a. An inspection and/or evidence gathering must be carried out at the earliest opportunity.
- b. The Licence Applicant Must complete any facility improvements as advised by the FAW and/or the Decision-Making Bodies.

7. Personnel & Administrative Criteria

P.01 – Club Secretary or General Manager

1. The Licence Applicant Must have appointed a Club Secretary or General Manager who is responsible for running its operative matters.
2. The Club Secretary or General Manager Must be duly registered on COMET.

P.05 – First Aid Officer

1. The Licence Applicant Must have appointed a First Aid Officer who is responsible for the medical treatment, massages and rehabilitation of first team squad members during training and matches.
2. The First Aid Officer Must hold one of the following minimum qualifications:
 - a. Valid FAW First Aid Award
 - b. Any equivalent award, as approved by the FAW Head of Medical Services.
3. The First Aid Officer will be responsible for managing first aid relating to spectators.
4. The First Aid Officer Must attend all matches and training.
 - a. A replacement can be appointed, provided they meet all the required qualifications as stated in Paragraph P.05(2).
5. The First Aid Officer Must be duly registered on COMET
6. The First Aid Officer Must hold a valid FAW enhanced DBS certificate.

P.09 – First Team Manager

1. The Licence Applicant Must have appointed a First Team Manager who is responsible for the following matters of the first team squad:
 - a. Players' selection;
 - b. Tactics and training;
 - c. Management of the players and technical staff in the dressing room and the technical area before; during and after matches;
 - d. Duties regarding media matters (press conferences, interviews etc)
2. The First Team Manager Must hold one of the following minimum coaching qualifications, issued by a UEFA member association in accordance with the UEFA Coaching Convention:
 - a. Valid UEFA 'C' licence;
 - b. Valid non-UEFA coaching diploma equivalent to the licence required under P.09(2a);
 - c. Be "actively engaged" on the required UEFA coaching diploma course described under P.09(2a) or P.09(2b). Simple registration for the required diploma course is not sufficient to meet this criterion.
3. The First Team Manager Must attend at least 70% of all Tier 3 league matches per season since their appointment.
4. Should the Licence Applicant appoint joint First Team Managers, both individuals Must meet the P.09 Criteria in full.
5. The First Team Manager Must not also hold the role of P.05 – First Aid Officer.
6. The First Team Manager Must be duly registered on COMET.
7. If the Decision-Making Body is of the view that the First Team Manager has been appointed only to meet the Criteria stated in P.09, the Decision-Making Body has the right to refuse the Licence.

P.14 – Safeguarding Officer (C Criteria)

1. The Licence Applicant Must have appointed a Safeguarding Officer who is responsible for safeguarding matters of the club.
2. The Safeguarding Officer Must be duly registered on COMET.
3. The Safeguarding Officer Must hold a valid FAW Safeguarding Award.
4. The Safeguarding Officer Must have undertaken the necessary vetting checks and Must hold a valid FAW enhanced DBS certificate.

5. The Safeguarding Officer Must ensure that the Licence Applicant adopts, implements, and applies the FAW Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Practices.
6. The Safeguarding Officer Must develop and promote best practice; ensuring Licence Applicant personnel understand and fulfil their responsibilities.
7. The Safeguarding Officer is responsible for recording and reporting any concerns that may arise.

P.24 – Club Referee's (B Criteria)

1. The Licence Applicant must have appointed a Club Referee who should be available to referee matches in the FAW Reserve or Youth Competitions when no independent referee is available to officiate.
2. The Club Referee must be duly registered on COMET and hold a valid, level one refereeing award.
3. The Club Referee cannot be registered with more than one club as a Club Referee.

8. Legal Criteria

L.06 – Stadium for FAW Competitions

1. The Licence Applicant Must nominate a stadium that will be available for FAW club competitions which must be within the territory of the FAW and approved by the FAW. Pre-existing agreement between clubs and the FAW regarding territory are also acceptable.
2. If the Licence Applicant is not the owner of the stadium, it Must confirm the name of the owner and provide a written contract with the owner(s) of the stadium(s) it will use.
3. The Licence Applicant Must guarantee that the stadium(s) can be used for the Licence Applicant's home matches during the licence season. The Licence Applicant Must confirm there are no other agreements which may affect its ability to use any part of the stadium(s) for the Licence Applicant's home matches during the Licence Season. Any agreements which may affect its use Must be provided.
4. The stadium(s) Must fulfil the minimum 'A' infrastructure requirements as defined in the FAW Men's Tier 2 Club Licensing Regulations.

FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION OF WALES CONTACTS:

The Association's point of contact is -

Mr Ian Fisher
Club Licensing Manager
ian.fisher@faw.cymru

Mr Thomas Stiley
Club Licensing Executive
tstiley@faw.cymru

League Development Manager
leaguedevelopmentmanager@faw.cymru

The Football Association of Wales, Hensol Pontyclun, CF72 8JY.

FAW representatives involved are subject to confidentiality and independence agreements.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: CORE PROCESS

Monday, 2 September 2024	2024 / 25 Core Process begins. Updated Regulations sent to all FAW Tier 3 clubs, Tier 4 clubs and FAW Area Associations. FAW Tier 3 & 4 clubs (via Area Associations) invited to apply for Tier 3 Licence, via COMET. Tier 3 Licence application costs £100.00.
Tuesday, 31 December 2024	Submission deadline for Tier 3 Licensing application payments, via COMET.
October – April 2025	Site visits for stadium audit (if required) and assessment of licensing application & documentation to be undertaken.
Saturday, 1 March 2025	Deadline for submission of groundsharing agreements, in accordance with the FAW Pyramid Regulations.
Monday, 21 April 2025 to Wednesday, 30 April 2025	Final assessment of stadiums to ensure that it meets the infrastructure Criteria (if required). Licence Applicants should ensure all mandatory infrastructure work is completed by the 21 st April 2025.
Wednesday, 30 April 2025	Deadline for submission of all documents.
Tuesday, 13 May 2025	Tier 3 First Instance Body meets to discuss Tier 3 South applications.
Wednesday, 14 May 2025	Tier 3 First Instance Body meets to discuss Tier 3 North applications. All Tier 3 Decision Letters are sent out following the conclusion of the First Instance Body Meetings
Saturday, 24 May 2025	Deadline to submit Tier 3 appeal (Tier 3 applicant clubs)
Tuesday, 27 May 2025	Appeals Body meeting.
Saturday, 31 May 2025	List of Tier 3 licensed clubs to the FAW Board.

APPENDIX II: STADIUM SAFETY ASSESSMENT AND EVACUATION PLAN

I.01. Stadium Safety Assessment

The Club has agreed the following Safety Assessment, which includes all of the Criteria as listed in FAW Tier 3 Club Licensing Regulation I.03.

Spectators Access into the Ground

The club has [] Turnstiles, which are designed in such a way as to avoid congestion and ensure the smooth flow of the crowd.

Or (And delete as appropriate)

Club has alternative entry to the stadium such as; secure door which allows a safe route and access.

It is / is not possible to segregate spectators when accessing the stadium.

Public Passageways

It is recommended that all public passageways and stairways in the spectator areas are painted in a bright colour, as must all gates leading from the spectator areas into the playing area and all exit doors and gates leading out of the Ground.

Exit Doors / Gates

It is Recommended that all exit doors and gates in the Ground, and all gates leading from the spectator areas into the playing area, should:

- a) Be fitted with a locking device which may be operated simply and quickly by anyone from the inside in the case of exit doors and gates or from either side in the case of gates leading into the playing area;
- b) Be designed to remain unlocked while spectators are in the Ground.

Signage

The sign-posting of ingress and egress routes, all exit gates/doors, toilets, refreshments and other facilities, shall be maintained at all times.

Policy for Players, Officials and Spectators

The procedure for Players, Officials and Spectators when entering the Ground is as follows:

Policy for Players

(should include parking, entrance to the Ground and any safety provision)

Policy for Officials

(should include parking, entrance to the Ground and any safety provision)

Policy for Spectators

(should include parking, entrance to the Ground and any safety provision)

A policy must be in place and adhered to, if there is need for segregation.

Boundary wall/fence

If applicable, the Ground boundary wall or fence should be made of a sound solid construction, secure on all sides and designed to obscure viewing from outside the Ground. It is Recommended that the height of boundary structure is 2 metres and any further developments should take note of this.

Layout Plan and Site Plan

The Club should maintain a Layout Plan of the Ground, detailing all facilities within the Ground (1:1000). The club should also maintain a Site Plan showing the Access Routes in to the Ground (1:1500). This can be by way of ordnance survey map or Google Map.

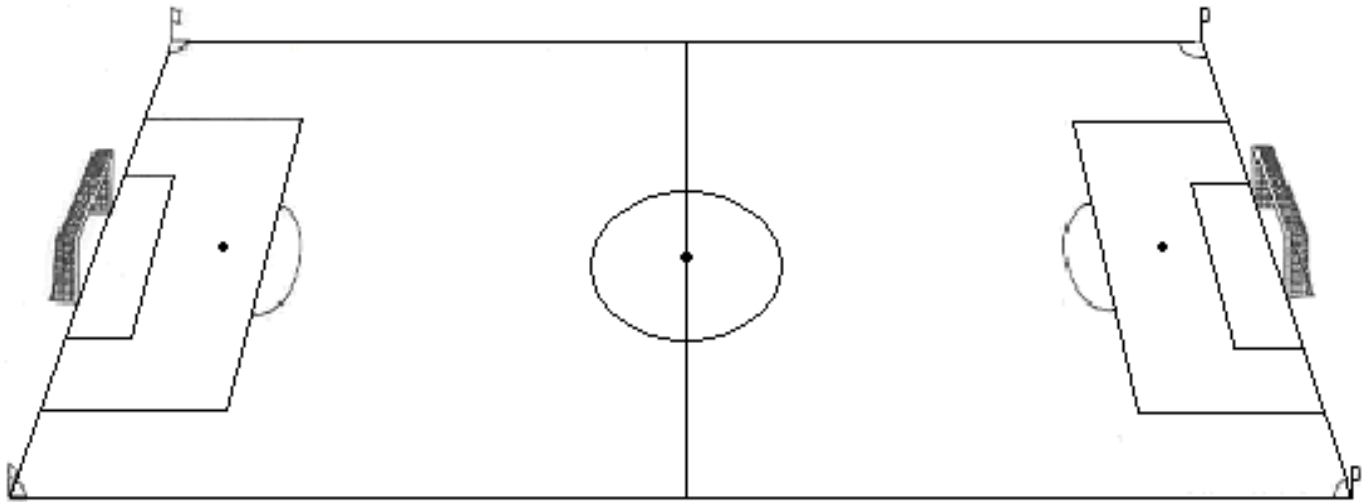
Contact details of medical personnel available on the day at the Ground:

Postcode of the Ground and any specific instructions to give the emergency services:

Addresses of the nearest hospitals, including travel time and phone number:

Location of first aid equipment available at the Stadium including defibrillator:

I.03. Evacuation Plan



The plan is designed to cope with any emergency irrespective of how, where or when it occurs, and for this reason the Plan must retain a degree of flexibility.

Key

EX = Emergency Exit

G = Exit Gates

→ = Routes

This document has been agreed by the Club Committee / Board of Directors at their meeting held on

Date: - _____

Signed: - _____

Position: _____

APPENDIX III - MEDICAL ROOM EQUIPMENT

The ground should be equipped with a dedicated room for first aid and medical treatment of players and officials.

The minimum equipment expected is;

- 1 Examination/Treatment Table or couch
- 1 Portable Stretcher
- 1 Washbasin
- 1 Medicine Cabinet
- 2 Ice Bags
- 1 Blood pressure gauge
- 1 Oxygen Bottle with mask
- 1 Defibrillator

Access to a telephone is also required at all times when the ground is in use.