



# Scottish Lowland Football League Constitution and Rules

Version 8 – (1 June 2017)

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## A – GENERAL

- A1 The name of this combination of clubs will be called the Scottish Lowland Football League, and is thereafter referred to as the 'League'.

### Objectives

- A2 The objectives of the League shall be:
- a) To conduct each season League and League Cup competitions between the Clubs in Membership;
  - b) To conduct such other competitions as may be decided from time to time.

### Definitions

- A3 In these Rules the terms used shall (unless the context otherwise requires) have the following meanings:
- a) **Championship Play-Off Competition** means the competition which is held pursuant to Rule H3 to determine the Champion Club (as defined in Rule H3);
  - b) **Club** means a Football Club, which for the time being, is eligible to participate in the League and, except where the context otherwise requires, includes the owner and operator of such club;
  - c) **Completion Date** means 30<sup>th</sup> June each year or such other date set by the Board by which all business relating to the season must be completed. Any club failing to adhere to requirements relating to the Completion Date may forfeit membership of the SLFL.
  - d) **Confidential information** means all information, details and data of any kind in connection with the business or finances of the League or any Club which is confidential or which might reasonably be regarded as being confidential to the League or any Club
  - e) **Ex officio** means a person by virtue of the office held but does not have the right to vote;
  - f) **Judicial Panel** means the body with that name formed by the board of the Scottish FA in terms of the articles of association of the Scottish FA;
  - g) **Judicial Panel Protocol** means the protocol relating to the operation of the Judicial Panel promulgated by the board of the Scottish FA from time to time in accordance with the articles of association of the Scottish FA;
  - h) **Laws of the game** mean the laws of the game promulgated by the International Football Association Board from time to time;
  - i) **League** or the **Scottish Lowland Football League** means the combination of association football clubs comprising the Clubs known as the Scottish Lowland Football League or the League;
  - j) **Official Matches** means any fixture in a competition registered with the SLFL;



- k) **Play-Off Match** means a match played in the Pyramid Play-Off Competition or the Championship Play-Off Competition as the relevant context so requires;
- l) **Pyramid Play Off Competition** means the competition at the end of the season to determine which Clubs, if any, are to be relegated from the Scottish Professional Football League (SPFL) to the Scottish Highland Football League (SHFL) or the Scottish Lowland Football League (SLFL) and which clubs, if any, are to be promoted from the SHFL or the SLFL to the SPFL;
- m) **Pyramid Play-Off Rules** means the rules of the Pyramid Play-Off Competition as set out in Annex 1 hereto;
- n) **Registered Ground** means the ground of a Club registered or deemed to have been registered in accordance with the Scottish FA Articles and the words 'register' and 'registered' shall, where the context so permits, be construed accordingly;
- o) **Trialist** means a player who is under assessment and evaluation by a Club as to his ability, fitness or the like to play football for that Club in Official Matches and who is not registered to that Club;
- p) **The Scottish FA** means the Scottish Football Association Ltd;
- q) **The Scottish FA Articles** means the Articles for the time being of the Scottish FA;
- r) Unless the context otherwise requires, a reference to one gender shall include reference to other genders

## Designation of Rules by Letter and Numbering

- A4 Rules shall be designated or referred to by a letter and a number. The letter identifies the section of the Rules and the number identifies the numbered Rule within the Section.
- A5 References to a "Rule" shall, unless the context otherwise requires, means a reference to the Rule so designated by Section and Number within such Section in these Rules in which the reference is made.

## B - MEMBERSHIP OF THE LEAGUE

- B1 All clubs must, on the Completion Date, be licensed, full members of the Scottish FA.. The maximum number of clubs will be sixteen (16).
- B2 No club can have more than one team playing in the League or any other League which comes under the jurisdiction of the Scottish FA Professional Game Board.
- B3 It is mandatory as a condition of membership that clubs purchase group insurance organised by the league. Clubs will be invoiced by the treasurer when payment of premium is due.



## Admission to the League

- B4 Admission to Membership of the League will be by (a) written application until the maximum of sixteen (16) clubs is reached or (b) by promotion or relegation. Applications *must be received in accordance with procedures published by the Board on the SFA and SLFL website at least three months before the closing date for applications*. Applications will be considered by the Board of the League *whose decision regarding admission is absolute and final*. Thereafter, unless a vacancy arises through resignation or expulsion of a Club from the League, admission will only be through relegation from the SPFL as detailed in Pyramid Play-Off Rules in appendix1 or promotion from either the East of Scotland Football League or South of Scotland Football League. A play-off match will take place between the champion clubs of The East of Scotland Football League and The South of Scotland Football League, if both clubs meet the required criteria, to replace the bottom club in The Scottish Lowland Football League. The bottom club will be relegated to the League which will have been decided by the Boards of the three leagues prior to the start of each season. If only one of the Champion Clubs meet the criteria they will be promoted automatically. If neither of the Champion Clubs meets the criteria there will be no promotion.

*In order to maintain a membership of sixteen clubs, the following will apply if there is an inequality between clubs entering and leaving the league through promotion and relegation:*

- a) *In the event that a club is promoted to, but no club is received from, the SPFL, applications for membership will be considered. Irrespective of any timescales for application set out in accordance with B4 above, the relegated club will be permitted to apply for re-admission providing such application is received within two days after notification of relegation from the Secretary. Such application for re-admission will be considered on a fair and equal basis with other applicant clubs*
- b) *In the event that a club is relegated from, but no club promoted to, the SPFL the bottom club and, in the event that a club is promoted from the East of Scotland League or South of Scotland League, the second bottom club will be relegated to the League which will have been decided by the Boards of the three leagues prior to the start of each season.*

## Registered Ground

- B5 Each Club shall register its ground and playing field dimensions and no such club shall remove to another ground without first obtaining the consent of the Board. Any club wishing to make any alteration to its registered ground or its playing field dimensions must first obtain the written consent of the Board. Except as otherwise approved by the Board under a 'ground sharing' agreement, all clubs must also confirm that their ground is available to them on every Saturday of the season at no more than four (4) days' notice and also that the ground is available for midweek fixtures throughout the season at no more than four (4) days' notice.

## Provision of Services

- B6 All clubs must provide services and facilities pursuant to any contract relating to sponsorship, Radio and Television coverage of the League.



## Relationship between Clubs and the League

- B7 In all matters and transactions relating to the League, each Club shall behave towards each other Club and the League with the utmost good faith.
- B8 No Club, either by itself or its Officials, shall by any means whatsoever disparage, belittle, discredit or unfairly criticise any other Club, or the League or in either case any such other Club or the League's officers, employees or agents (which shall, for the avoidance of doubt, exclude supporters).

## Confidentiality

- B9 A Club shall not either during its membership of the League or at any time after its membership has terminated disclose or divulge either directly or indirectly to any person, firm or company whatsoever or otherwise make use of any Confidential Information as to the business or finances of the League or any of its dealings, transactions or affairs or as to any other matters which may come to its knowledge by reason of its membership without the Board's prior written consent save when required by law to statutory and regulatory authorities (including by the Scottish FA in accordance with the Scottish FA Articles) and to such employees of a club to whom such disclosure is strictly necessary for the purpose of their duties and only then to the extent necessary.

## Communication

- B10 Clubs will engage with the League and will be required to respond timeously and effectively to all requests and instructions. Any Club which fails to respond as requested will be reported to the Board who will consider if any action is appropriate under article B15 of the Constitution and Rules.
- B11 Communications will be by e-mail. Clubs must maintain and monitor at least daily two e-mail addresses. E-mails will be considered to have been received when sent unless there is a failure of delivery notice.

## Official Return

- B12 Each Club shall complete and submit to the Secretary of the League by 15th June each year the Annual Return, showing details of their Board or Committee for the ensuing season.

## Club Directory

- B13 Each club will submit details to the Secretary for club directory as required by the League by 15th June each year.



## Obligations

- B14 All Clubs will agree to fulfil the fixtures cast by the League, adhere to the League Constitution and Rules for a period of twelve (12) months from the commencement of each football season and abide by the decisions of the Board, subject to the right of appeal as provided for under the current Judicial Panel protocol of the Scottish FA.
- B15 Each Club will be liable for a fine and/or expulsion from the competition in the event of their not fulfilling the obligations imposed on them by their acceptance of membership. The amount of fine on any one count will be subject to a maximum of Five Hundred Pounds (£500). All fines must be paid within fourteen (14) days; otherwise the offending Club will cease to be a member of the League.

## Commitment to National Teams

- B16 Each Club shall support the Scottish FA and other football associations in relation to all international matches in accordance with the provisions of the Scottish FA Articles and the FIFA Statutes and Regulations.

## Scottish Cup Competitions

- B17 Each Club shall compete in the Scottish Cup competition in each season if eligible to do so.

## Representative Games

- B18 All Member Clubs must release players for any representative match or training session organised by the League in accordance with Scottish FA Registration procedure. It should be deemed an offence for any Club Official to attempt to dissuade or discourage any player from accepting an invitation to represent the League in such a match or training session. If more than two players of any one Club are required for any representative game, the said Club will be allowed to postpone any League match due to be played on the same date as the representative game.

## Misconduct with intent to Influence Result

- B19 A Club, official, team official or other member of staff, player, or other person directly or indirectly offering or receiving a bonus or any other inducement to or from another Club, official, player, referee or other person to influence the result of a match or otherwise affect the conduct of a match shall be deemed guilty of serious misconduct.
- B20 Any Club. Official, team official or other member of team staff, player who has been approached to be the target or is the target of bribery must notify the League forthwith.



## Sponsorship and Broadcasting Matters

- B21 The League may enter into contracts with commercial sponsors and broadcasters and grant certain rights as the League may in its discretion determine to such parties in relation to the League and League Cup Competitions.
- B22 All clubs participating in the competitions undertake to provide any rights, facilities and other services as may be necessary for the League to perform the League's obligations.
- B23 Failure and/or refusal by a club to comply with any of the terms of the League's obligations as intimated shall be deemed to be an infringement of the Rules and such a club shall be liable to a fine, censure, suspension, ejection from the competition or a combination thereof.

## C – FINANCE

### Membership

- C1 All Clubs will, by the Completion Date each year, pay to the League Treasurer an Annual Subscription as determined by the Annual General Meeting.
- C2 New Clubs on being admitted to membership must remit the same annual subscription by that date or within seven (7) days of receipt of written notification of their acceptance as members if that date is after the completion date. New clubs will be required to pay a bond, to be set by the Board on admission of that club. The bond will be returned to the club on leaving the SLFL after deductions of any sums owing to the SLFL or its member clubs. No interest will be paid on the bond.

### Bank Account

- C3 The funds of the League will be controlled through an approved Bank Account standing in the name of the Chairman, Vice Chairman and the Treasurer of the League. Cheques or electronic transactions are to be approved (by signature when appropriate) by two of these persons.

### Financial Statement

- C4 A financial statement, duly examined and approved, will be submitted to each Club in membership prior to the Annual General Meeting. Two Auditors, with no official League connections, will be elected at the Annual General Meeting to audit the League's accounts.





## D - GOVERNANCE

### Office Bearers

- D1 The Office Bearers will consist of Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Treasurer who will be elected for a period of two years at the Annual General Meeting and will be eligible for re-election thereafter.

### Board

- D2 The affairs of the League shall be conducted by a Board the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and three (3) ordinary members elected by the member clubs of the League with no Club having more than one (1) representative on the Board. Members of the Board will be elected for a period of two (2) years at the Annual General Meeting. Retiring members will be eligible for re-election. As from 2016 AGM election of Chairman and two ordinary members will take place in even years and election of Vice Chairman, Treasurer and one ordinary member will take place in odd years. The Office Bearers and members of the Board must be named on their Club's annual return to the League and the Scottish FA. The Board will normally meet monthly during the playing season with 50% plus one (1) of the Board Members required to be present for the meeting to be quorate. All or any of the Board Members may participate in a meeting of the Board by means of a conference telephone or any communication equipment which allows all persons participating in the meeting to hear each other and provided the relevant quorum of Board Members participating as aforesaid (notwithstanding that such quorum is not present together in one place) such meeting will be quorate and subject to the provisions of the Rules and Constitution the meeting will constitute a meeting of the Board. A person so participating shall be deemed to be present in person at the meeting and shall be entitled to vote or be counted in the quorum accordingly. Such meeting will be deemed to take place where the largest group of those participating is assembled, or, if there is no such group, where the Chairman of the meeting then is located.

### Representative to the Scottish FA's Congress

- D3 The League's representative on the Scottish FA's Congress will be elected by the member clubs of the League at the Annual General Meeting and serve for a period of two years This person must be named on their Club's Annual Return for the current year. This person will be an ex officio member of the Board if not already a member and will be eligible for re-election.

### Representative to the Scottish FA's Professional Game Board

- D4 The League's representative on the Scottish FA's Professional Game Board will be elected by the member clubs of the League at the Annual General Meeting and for the period of one year. This person must be named on their Club's Annual return for the current year. This person will be an ex officio member of the Board if not already a member and will be eligible for re-election.



## Secretary

- D5 The Secretary will be appointed by the Board and paid an honorarium to be agreed at the Annual General Meeting. His appointment will be subject to the approval of the member clubs at a General Meeting. He will not be allowed to vote at any meeting, nor be connected with any member club. All reference to the Secretary in the Rules and Constitution, except as otherwise defined, will refer to the Secretary of the Scottish Lowland Football League. All communications must be addressed to the Secretary, who will conduct the correspondence of the League and maintain all records of meetings etc.

## Expenses

- D6 Members of the Board or other Representatives of Member Clubs shall be entitled to reimbursement of out of pocket expenses properly incurred by them in representing the League on official business. In those cases where the expense incurred is for travel the rate paid shall be on the same basis as the rates paid to referees. In all other cases the rate will be determined by the Board and receipts will be required.

## E - THE BOARD

### Management

- E1 A member of the Board at Board Meetings will not be entitled to vote on any issue when the club he represents is involved. At the discretion of the Chairman any member may be asked to leave the meeting once he has stated his club's case and answered any questions from his fellow members. Should such a request be made by the Chairman the member involved must comply.
- E2 The Board will have full executive powers to deal with any Member Club, Club Official, or player as they deem fit, either by expulsion, suspension, fine deduction of points or any such sanction as is deemed appropriate. Appeals against decisions of the Board or League in General Meeting must be lodged with the Scottish FA under the terms of the current Judicial Panel Protocol.
- E3 Any matter not provided herein will be determined by the Board whose decision will be final and binding on all Clubs and parties concerned.
- E4 The Board may from time to time appoint Sub-Committees to deal with particular matters. Sub-Committees will have power to co-opt any person who it felt would have particular knowledge applicable to its remit. There must at all times be a majority of Member Club representatives at any Sub-Committee meetings. Sub-Committees will report directly to the Board.
- E5 The Board shall have the power to temporarily suspend, amend or add to the rules as circumstances may dictate from time to time, as it deems appropriate in its reasonable discretion, to facilitate the smooth running of the competition, or in order to ensure the



League is capable of meeting any commitments put upon it under the terms of any contracts or agreements with other bodies or sponsors.

## F – MEETINGS

### Voting

- F1 At Annual and Special General Meetings and General meetings of the League, each Club has one vote and the Chairman will have the casting vote only. All decisions arrived at will be by a majority vote of members present at the meeting.

### Venue

- F2 All meetings will be held at a venue approved by the Board. In the event of the designated venue being unavailable the Office Bearers will select a suitable alternative. Sub-Committee Meetings will be held at a suitable venue.

### General Meetings

- F3 Four General Meetings of the League will be held annually to which each club in membership will be allowed to send two representatives who must be named on the club's Annual Return as amended from time to time. One of these general meetings will be the "Annual General Meeting", which will be held in May or June. The Board has powers to cancel a General Meeting if, at its sole discretion, it is considered that there is insufficient business to justify the meeting.

### Annual General Meeting

- F4 The Annual General Meeting will be held between 15<sup>th</sup> May and 30<sup>th</sup> June each year, at which clubs in membership will be allowed to send two representatives.
- F5 Notice of the Annual General Meeting and all the business to be transacted will be intimated to the clubs in writing, by the Secretary, at least fourteen (14) days before the date of the meeting.

### Special General Meeting(s)

- F6 Any three member clubs may apply to the Secretary for a Special General Meeting to be held. The written application must state the specific business for which the meeting is required and if found to be competent, the meeting will be convened within twenty one (21) days, at a suitable venue. Only the business stated in the application will be discussed. At Special General Meetings, Clubs will have the same rights as at the Annual General Meeting.



## Alterations to the Constitution and Rules

- F7 No alterations will be made to the Constitution or the Rules except at the Annual General Meeting or at a Special General Meeting summoned for this purpose. Notice of the proposed alteration(s) must be intimated to the Secretary, in writing, on or before 30th April each year. A copy of such alteration(s) will be circulated by the Secretary on or before 15th May for inclusion on the agenda of the Annual General Meeting. A copy of such alterations will be sent to each Club in membership at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting convened to deal with the matter.

## G – COMPETITION RULES

### General

- G1 All matches will be played according to the Laws of the Game as recognised by the Scottish FA.
- G2 All matches must be played on a ground where a gate can be taken. Should any Club's ground be unavailable to host a league match for any reason with the exception of being declared unplayable it becomes the home club's responsibility to secure the use of another registered Scottish Lowland Football League ground or suitable ground which complies with Club Licensing for the playing of the fixture. Such ground must be either closer to or a similar distance from the visiting Club's ground unless the visiting Club agrees otherwise and such change of venue must have the prior approval of the Board.
- G3 Each club on their annual return must detail their first, second and, where applicable third choice colour of shirts, shorts and socks. The first and second choice colours must be different and distinct. Clubs are required to wear their first choice strips, save that a club shall be permitted to play in colours which are not first choice, provided they have been registered on their annual return and the opposing club and the referee appointed for such match are advised forty eight hours before the match. Clubs cannot change from their first choice strip if change means clash with their opponent's first choice strips. If there is a clash of first choice strips the away team should play in their second choice strip unless agreed otherwise by both clubs. Goalkeepers will wear colours which distinguish them from other players and the referee. The player's jerseys must be clearly numbered. The numbers must be distinct in colour and appear on the back of players jerseys.
- G4 The make of ball used in both League and League Cup games must be the one recommended by the Board.
- G5 The Secretary will for all intents and purposes be the legal holder of the Trophies in trust for the Board.
- G6 Each Club must play its full strength team in all matches, unless a satisfactory explanation is offered to the Board.
- G7 The League will provide Member Clubs each season with Visitors Complimentary Tickets up to a maximum of ten (10) for use of Club Officials' listed on the Official Return to be used at away games which will allow entry to the ground and Boardroom. No member of the



committee of the visiting club will be entitled to enter free without producing the official ticket. Any Club permitting its tickets of admission to be used by unauthorised persons will be liable to have disciplinary action taken against them by the Board.

- G8 All games must commence promptly at the times officially set by the Secretary, unless both Clubs agree to an alternative date and/or time which must be advised to the Secretary for approval before the date of the game.

## Postponed Games

- G9 The reason for non-fulfilment of a fixture on a stipulated date shall be intimated in writing to the Secretary within three (3) days (Sunday included as a day) of the stipulated fixture unless the ground is unplayable. Failure to comply with this will be considered by the Board at the same time as dealing with the reason for non-fulfilment of the fixture.
- G10 If a Club requests the postponement of a fixture because of injuries to or illness of players they must inform the Secretary 30 hours prior to the game and the Board will have the discretion to postpone the fixture after considering all the available evidence. The Board have the right to request the submission of medical certificates or such other evidence as may be available should they think fit. The Board will only in exceptional circumstances consider the matter if less than the required notice is given.

## Protests

- G11 All questions relating to the qualification of competitors, or interpretation of the rules, or any dispute or protest whatever, shall be referred to the Board. Every protest must be made, in writing, and must contain particulars of the grounds upon which it is founded. One copy of the protest must be lodged with the Secretary of the League, by Registered Post or Recorded Delivery, accompanied by a fee of £100, within three (3) days of the match to which it relates (Sunday and public holidays not included) and an exact copy sent to the Secretary of the club protested against by Registered Post or Recorded Delivery within the same timescales. The fee may be retained by the League if the protest is considered to be trivial and groundless.
- G12 The Board may order any Club engaged in dispute or protest to pay such sum as may be considered necessary towards defraying the expenses incurred in hearing the protest. Also Disciplinary Panels may recommend that clubs engaged in any disciplinary hearing are required to pay such sum as may be considered necessary towards defraying the expenses incurred in such a hearing.
- G13 Any protest relating to the ground, goal posts or bars or other appurtenances of the game shall not be entertained by the Board unless there is evidence that an objection has been lodged with the Referee and captain of the opposing team prior to the commencement of the match. The Referee shall require the responsible Club to remove the cause of the objection if this is possible without unduly delaying the progress of the match.



## Inspection of Grounds

- G14 Where it is clear that due to surface water, snow or frost, a pitch is unplayable the home Club must arrange for a pitch inspection. Exemption for this inspection may be given by the Secretary. If there is the slightest doubt as to whether the pitch is playable the home Club must have it inspected by a qualified referee. If the home Club considers the ground unplayable they must inform their opponents, the referee and the Secretary not later than 10am on the day of a match, or by 2pm for an evening match, or later if agreed by both clubs. A Club may only declare a pitch unplayable the day before a fixture date in the event of extreme weather conditions or on the grounds of health and safety of the players, officials or spectators of both clubs. The Secretary, if requested by either the visiting Club or the Board may appoint a referee to carry out a pitch inspection. The cost of such an inspection will be divided equally between the two clubs.
- G15 In the event of the match referee declaring the ground unplayable, he and each assistant referee who has travelled to the ground, shall receive half tariff along with travel expenses (as applicable), shared between both clubs.

## Referees

- G16 The Scottish FA shall appoint referees for all games. The home Club will be responsible for notifying the appointed referee and visiting Club, hour of kick-off etc at least 48 hours before the scheduled date of the match. They shall be responsible for all expenses, including referee's and assistants' tariff and travel expenses. at the rate agreed by the Board.
- G17 Clubs must record Tariff and Expenses paid to the referee and assistant referees and obtain signatures from all officials. The form as approved by the Board to be used for this purpose. At the end of each playing season Member Clubs will submit to the Secretary a statement of all match officials' expenses for league games. Average expenses will be calculated and the club charged or reimbursed the difference between the average and the actual expenses they have paid as appropriate.

## Pitch Protection

- G18 In order to protect the pitch and unless otherwise agreed between both participating Clubs, the following procedures shall be adopted by Players and Officials in the periods immediately before and after and at half time during a League, League Cup Match or Play-Off Match;
- a) The pitch shall only be used for warming up or warming down by Players named on the lists of Players provided to the Referee not less than half an hour before the time of kick-off;
  - b) pre- match warming up by either team shall not commence until at the earliest 45 minutes before the scheduled kick-off time and shall end not later than 10 minutes before the scheduled kick-off time;
  - c) if portable goals are provided they shall be used for all goalkeeping drills other than crossing practice;



- d) the goalmouth area shall be used by goalkeepers only if portable goals are not provided or for crossing practice and then only for not more than 20 minutes;
- e) for the purpose of warming up and warming down each team shall use only part of the pitch between the edge of a penalty area and the half way line or as otherwise directed by the officials of the home club;
- f) all speed and stamina work shall be undertaken off the pitch normally parallel to the touchline opposite the side to be patrolled by the assistant referee or, in the absence of sufficient space in that part of the pitch as otherwise directed by the officials of the home club;
- g) Players using the pitch at half time shall give due consideration to any other activity or entertainment taking place on the pitch at the same time;
- h) The Home Club may water the pitch at half time provided that it gives reasonable notice to the referee and the other Club that it intends to do so and that any such watering is carried out evenly over the entire length and width of the pitch;
- i) any warming down after the conclusion of the match shall last for no longer than 15 minutes and for that purpose neither penalty area shall be used.

## Pitch Conditions

- G19 Each Club shall ensure that the field of play at its Registered Ground and at any other ground at which it is the Home Club for a League, League Cup or Play-Off Match is;
- a) smooth and in good condition and repair; and
  - b) equipped with an efficient and effective drainage system so as to minimize the chance of the pitch becoming unplayable due to flooding.
- G20 The Board may, without prejudice to any sanction that might be imposed on a Club for failure to comply with Rule G19 require the Club concerned to take such steps within such time and on such conditions as the Board shall specify, if the Board is not satisfied that the club concerned is complying or has complied in all respects with Rule G19.
- G21 Clubs will ensure that they have floodlights of sufficient quality to play competitive matches midweek throughout the season. If a club does not have adequate floodlights it must apply for a dispensation from the Board by the Completion Date each year and provide evidence that it has an agreement to use alternative ground(s) for midweek fixtures under floodlights. Such ground must be (a) the registered ground of a club in membership of the SLFL or SPFL and for which that club holds a current Club Licence or (b) another ground which complies with the requirements for Club Licensing and has been approved by the Board.

## H - THE LEAGUE COMPETITION RULES

- H1 The Competition will be known as The Scottish Lowland Football League. The Board may from time to time rename the Competition in terms of any sponsorship agreement or agreements which may be concluded.





- H2 The gross receipts of all League matches will be retained by the Club cast as the 'home' club for the fixture. The 'home' club will be responsible for the payment of any agreed rental to the club hosting the match if it is not at the ground of the home club. Such payment must be made within seven days of the match..
- H3 The winning of the Championship of the League will be decided on results of the Home and Away matches between the Clubs in membership, three points for a win, one point for a draw. The Club scoring the highest number of points will be declared the Champion.
- a) In the event of two or more Clubs being equal in points, goal difference will decide the Championship;
  - b) In the event of the points and goal difference being equal, the club scoring the most number of goals will decide the Championship;
  - c) If the points, goal difference and goals scored are the same the Championship will be decided by a Championship Play-Off Competition at a venue to be decided by the Board;
  - d) If a decision in the Play-Off Match to determine the Champion Club has not been reached by the end of ninety (90) minutes, extra time of fifteen (15) minutes each way will be played. If at the end of extra time there is still equality the winners will be determined by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with the system laid down by the International Football Association Board. The cost of Match Officials, Ground Rent, Catering etc, for the play-off will be met from the gate receipts and any surplus thereafter will accrue to the League
- H4 If any Club in membership intimates their withdrawal from the League Competition all games played by the Club will be declared nul and void. Also if their delegate is a Board member they must retire.

## Fixtures

- H5 Clubs shall receive a fixture list from the Secretary. Fixtures will be cast from a date to be decided by the Board and 31st May in the succeeding year and Clubs will be required to fulfil fixtures between those dates.
- H6 Only Scottish Cup, South Region Challenge Cup and any other cup competition at the discretion of the Board shall have precedence over League fixtures.

## Abandoned Fixtures

- H7 In the event of any match being unfinished owing to fog or other causes which neither Club has any control, floodlight failure excepted, the Board have the discretion to order the match to stand as a completed match or replayed for the full ninety (90) minutes. In the event of floodlight failure the circumstances will be discussed and decided by the Board.

## Registration of Players

- H8 Subject to Rule H10 below, all players must be registered for their Club by the Scottish FA.





- H9 To be eligible to play in matches held under the auspices of the League and for registration, a player must have attained the age of 16 years.
- H10 A “trialist” (an unregistered player or a player registered with a club playing under the jurisdiction of another body who is otherwise eligible and has received the relevant permissions to play) may play trial games in League competitions (excluding Cup Competitions other than League Cup group stage).
- H11 No trialist can play (*i.e.*, take part in the match as a player) more than five games in total per season for any one club in the League Competition or League Cup group stage and no Club may list in excess of four trialists in any one match.
- H12 Trialists must be named on the Team Lines and marked as Trialist with their address and date of birth.
- H13 Any player registered to a Member Club or registered to a Full Member of the Scottish FA whose registration is cancelled with the League Secretary or the Scottish FA or who is subject to a transfer between any combination of the aforementioned Clubs on or after April 1st cannot play for any other Club during the current season. Additionally, any player who is the subject of an international clearance application submitted on or after April 1st cannot be played in League Competitions in the current season.
- H14 It is the duty of a member Club or the Secretary to report any contravention of Rule H8 to H13 to the Board.

## Number of Player and Substitutes

- H15 A team shall consist of eleven players and is permitted to list up to a maximum of seven (7) substitutes of whom not more than three (3) may take part in the match. The team list may include two (2) recognised goalkeepers.

## Team Lines

- H16 The Official Team Lines for matches in the Competition shall permit the listing of eleven players up to a maximum of seven substitutes, and six technical personnel. The template of the Official Team Line shall be provided by the League. This template must be used and any club wishing to customise the template must obtain permission from the Secretary before the customised template is used
- H17 Not later than 30 minutes before the start of the match, each Club shall hand to the referee and to its opponent a duplicate of the Official Team Line. The Official Team Line shall contain accurate and complete details of the numbers, full player names (as registered with the Scottish FA) in relation to not more than 18 players, together with full names of the technical personnel to be seated within the technical area (subject to a maximum of 6 such technical personnel). It is the club’s responsibility to ensure that all sections of the team line are completed in block capitals, and signed by the Secretary or other accredited official. Upon signature by the Secretary or other accredited official, such Official Team Line will be deemed to be complete and binding on the club concerned.



- a) The players named in the Official Team Line must be clearly shown to be commencing the match or designated as substitutes.
- b) The numbers on the players' shirts must correspond with the numbers indicated on the Official Team Line. The goalkeepers and team captain must be identified.
- c) Only three of the substitutes listed on the Official Team Line may take part in the match. A player who has been substituted may take no further part in the match.
- d) Trialists must be listed on the Team Lines as per Rule H12.

## Replacement of players on the Official Team Line

- H18 If any of the players listed to start the match on the Official Team Line is not able to start the match due to unexpected physical incapacity or other extreme circumstances (which are explained to and accepted by the referee), he may only be replaced by one of the named substitutes. The substitute(s) in question may then only be replaced by an eligible player(s) not originally on the Official Team Line as signed, so that the quota of substitutes is not reduced. During the match, three players may still be substituted.
- a) If for any reason changes require to be made to the Official Team Line (and the said changes are accepted by the match official) then the Club must notify its opponent and if appropriate the press immediately thereafter.
  - b) If any of the named substitutes listed on the Official Team Line is not able at the start of the match to be fielded due to unexpected physical incapacity or other extreme circumstance (which are explained to and accepted by the referee), he may only be replaced by an eligible player not originally listed on the Official Team Line as signed.

## Temporary Transfers / Loans

- H19 The temporary transfer of a player and his registration shall be permitted from and to clubs in membership of the SLFL and/or a football club in membership of any other League, providing the rules of such other League so permit.
- a) A club shall not during any part of a season have more than four players registered to it on the basis of temporary transfers.
  - b) On the expiry of the term or other termination of a temporary transfer, the registration of the player concerned shall automatically revert back to the transferor club.

## Admission Charges

- H20 The Home Club in its absolute discretion shall determine admission charges for League Games. In the event of a game being abandoned the admission charges will be the same as the original fixture unless the two clubs come to an amicable agreement.



## Replacement of Match Officials

H21 In the event that any match official is unable to start or continue the match:

- a) If that official is the match referee, he/she will be replaced by Assistant Referee 1
- b) If that official is an Assistant Referee (or an Assistant Referee replaces the Referee), that Assistant Referee may be replaced by any Qualified Referee in attendance at the match failing which he/she will be replaced by an official of the Home Club (or first named club in the event of the match being played on a neutral ground) acceptable to the Referee
- c) Qualified referees may fulfil the full functions of the Assistant Referee under the Laws of the Game. Club Officials may indicate when the ball is out of play.

## I – PYRAMID

- 11 A Pyramid Play-Off Competition shall take place each year and shall be played in accordance with Pyramid Play-Off Rules as detailed in annex 1.



## ANNEX 1

### PYRAMID PLAY-OFF COMPETITION RULES

#### I Definitions, Interpretation and Infringement of these Pyramid Play-off Competition Rules

- a) In these Pyramid Play-Off Competition Rules, the following words and terms shall (unless the context otherwise requires) have the following meanings:

"Club 42" means the Club occupying position 42 or if there are more than 42 Clubs in the Scottish Professional Football League ("SPFL") in the relevant Season the Club occupying the lowest position in the SPFL at the end of the relevant Season;

"Membership Criteria" means the membership criteria of the SPFL;

"Pyramid Play-Off Competition" means the competition at the end of the season to determine which Club, if any, is to be relegated from the SPFL to the Scottish Highland Football League ("SHFL") or the Scottish Lowland Football League ("SLFL") and which Club, if any, is to be promoted from the SHFL or the SLFL to the SPFL;

"Radio Transmission" means any terrestrial or satellite, analogue, digital or otherwise radio broadcast or transmission of sounds and/or commentary upon any match taking place as part of the Pyramid Play-Off Competition not consisting solely of storage and distribution of recorded sounds in tangible form whether such radio transmission is on a live or recorded basis in whole or as excerpts or clips;

"Rights, facilities and properties" includes, but is not limited to, all contractual and property (whether tangible or intangible) rights, all rights in and relating to intellectual property, including all rights held by way of license, all image and other similar rights held in respect of Players and all rights of access to databases and database rights generally;

"Team Lines" means the team lines using the format set out in the annex to these Pyramid Play-Off Rules which shall be utilised for all matches played in the Play-Off Competition; and

"Transmission" means the transmission through any available device or medium of any terrestrial or satellite broadcast or transmission of television of moving pictures (with or without sound) and any other means of transmission of moving pictures, including, without limitation, by broadband, IPTV, mobile network or any other new or other media means or mode of transmission of any match taking place as part of the Pyramid Play-Off Competition or cable relay of such broadcast or transmission or inclusion of such moving pictures in a cable programme service not consisting solely of the storage and distribution of recorded pictures with or without sound in tangible form whether such broadcast or transmission is on a live or recorded basis in whole or as excerpts or clips.



- b) References to rules within these Pyramid Play-Off Rules are references to the rules that are contained within this annex unless otherwise stated. Capitalised words and phrases not defined in these rules have the meanings ascribed to them in the Rules of the SPFL.
- c) Any amendment to these Pyramid Play-Off Rules must be agreed by each of the Scottish FA, SPFL, SHFL and SLFL prior to it becoming effective.

## II Infringement of Pyramid Play-Off Competition Rules

- a) Any club, Official, Player, or other person, who infringes any of these Pyramid Play-Off Rules, shall be liable to a fine, censure, suspension, order to replay a Pyramid Play-Off Match (in the case of a club), ejection from the Pyramid Play-Off Competition (in the case of a club) and/or any such other sanction(s) as specified within the Judicial Panel Protocol of the Scottish FA.
- b) The Judicial Panel is empowered to consider and determine any allegations of infringement of these Pyramid Play-Off Rules and to impose such sanction(s), as specified within the Judicial Panel Protocol or in these rules, as it considers appropriate in order to deal justly with the case in question except where the sanction for a specific infringement is mandatory. In particular (but without prejudice to the generality):
  - i) a club which is found to have infringed these Pyramid Play-Off Rules, may be ordered to replay the Pyramid Play-Off Match in question, at a time and venue and subject to whatever conditions (including as to allocation and/or indemnification of financial benefits and liabilities) as deemed appropriate by the Judicial Panel in its absolute discretion;
  - ii) where a club is found to have named within Team Lines a player who is not eligible to participate in the relevant match in the Pyramid Play-Off Competition pursuant to these Pyramid Play-Off Rules and/or the disciplinary procedures of the Scottish FA, then such Club will be ejected from the Pyramid Play-Off Competition. No party or other body (including but not limited to the Judicial Panel) shall be entitled to waive or modify the application of this Rule in any circumstances; and
  - iii) in the event of disorderly conduct by a club in breach of the Articles of Association of the Scottish FA, such club may be ejected from the Pyramid Play-Off Competition.
- c) For the avoidance of doubt, the provisions of this rule II do not supersede or override the terms of any other rule which addresses sanctions for infringement thereof.
- d) no appeals shall be permissible from a Judicial Panel decision in relation to an infringement of these Pyramid Play-Off Rules.
- e) notwithstanding the terms above, the Scottish FA has the power to investigate any matter pursuant to the operation of the Pyramid Play-Off Competition.



### III Team Eligibility and Running of Competition

- a) The League Champions of the SHFL and the SLFL at the end of season 2015/2016 and in each season thereafter will (subject to rule III(f)) take part in the Play-Off Match which shall consist of a home and away two-legged match approved and organised by the Scottish F.A to determine, subject to these rules, which club shall take part in the Pyramid Play-Off Match. A draw supervised by the Scottish FA will determine which club has home advantage in the first match.
- b) The winner of the match detailed in rule III(a), or the team determined in accordance with rule III(f), will enter a home and away two-legged match against Club 42 known as the "Pyramid Play-Off Match". The Pyramid Play-Off Match pursuant to this rule III(b) shall be approved and organised by the SPFL and the basis on which the Pyramid Play-Off Match shall take place shall be as specified in the SPFL Rules. The winner of the Pyramid Play-Off Match will be entitled to be a member of and play in the SPFL League Two during the immediately succeeding Season and shall thereafter comply with the Rules and Regulations of the SPFL.
- c) In the event of Club 42 losing the Pyramid Play-Off Match, it will be relegated to the SHFL League if its Registered Ground is located North of Degree of Latitude 56,4513N or to the SLFL if its Registered Ground is located South of Degree of Latitude 56,4513N and it shall thereafter comply with the rules and regulations of the relevant league.
- d) The winning club in the Play-Off Match will be the club which scores the greatest number of goals over the relevant two match tie. In the event that the aggregate scores are equal after the second leg of the tie, extra time of thirty minutes (fifteen minutes each way) will take place and thereafter if necessary kicks from the penalty mark will be taken in accordance with the rules laid down by The International Football Association Board, which will determine the winner.
- e) The two legs in each of the Play-Off Match and the Pyramid Play-Off Match will take place on dates and at times determined by the SPFL Board.
- f) In the event that one of the Champion Clubs in the SHFL or the SLFL fails to comply with the Membership Criteria in circumstances where it is required to do so as the Candidate Club in terms of the SPFL Rules, and the SPFL Board has not granted any waiver, relaxation or period of grace in respect of that club's requirement to comply with the Membership Criteria, there will be no Play-Off Match in terms of rule III(a) and, the other Champion Club will automatically go forward to the Pyramid Play-Off Match in terms of rule III(b).
- g) In the event that neither the Champion Club of the SHFL nor of the SLFL complies with the Membership Criteria in circumstances where it is required to do so as the Candidate Club in terms of the SPFL Rules, and the SPFL Board has not granted any waiver, relaxation or period of grace in respect of both Clubs' requirement to comply with the relevant part of the Membership Criteria, there will be no Pyramid Play-Off Competition at the end of the relevant Season and Club 42 will retain its place in the SPFL in the immediately succeeding Season.



## IV Competition Rules — General

### Laws of the Game

- a) All matches will be played according to the Laws of the Game as recognised by the Scottish Football Association Ltd.

### Appointment of Match Officials

- b) Match officials shall be appointed by the Scottish FA from those referees whose names are included in the list of referees maintained by the Scottish FA.
- c) A Club may not refuse to accept the services of any match officials appointed by the Scottish FA. If any Club refuses to play a match due to an objection or concern about the identity of any match official, it shall be liable to ejection from the Play-Off Competition together with such other sanctions as are imposed pursuant to the provisions above under the heading of Infringement of Pyramid Play-Off Rules.
- d) Fees and expenses of match officials shall be paid by the Scottish FA in accordance with paragraph (ff) of these Pyramid Play-Off Rules.

### Clash of Colours

- e) When the colours of the two competing clubs in the same match are alike or similar, the visiting club shall change to its second choice colours or a combination of its first and second choice colours (or, if applicable, third choice colours) provided that these do not include any of the basic colours of the home club. Whether or not there is a clash shall be determined by the referee in his sole discretion.
- f) The colour of the goalkeeper's shirt must, in all cases, be clearly distinguishable from the colours of the shirts worn by all outfield Players of both participating clubs in any match and from those of the match officials. Whether or not there is a clash shall be determined by the referee in his sole discretion.

### Number of Players and Substitutes

- g) Except for the circumstances described below under Replacement of Players on a Team Line, a team shall consist of eleven players and is permitted to list a minimum of five substitutes up to a maximum of seven, of whom not more than three may take part in the match. The team list must include two recognised goalkeepers, one of whom must be named as a substitute.

### Eligibility of Players

- h) Only a Player registered at the Scottish FA by a Club on 31 March in the year of the relevant Play-Off Competition shall be entitled to be listed on the Team Lines of said Club for the purposes of playing in the Play-Off Competition.
- i) All Players in the Pyramid Play-Off Competition must be eligible to play in the relevant match having regard in particular (but without prejudice to the generality to the Registration Procedures and the Disciplinary Procedures.

### Team Lines





- j) Team Line for matches in the Pyramid Play-Off Competition shall permit the listing of eleven players, a minimum of five substitutes up to a maximum of seven, and six technical personnel. The Team Line must be submitted in order to enable a Club to participate in a match in the Pyramid Play-Off Competition.
- k) Not later than 60 minutes before the start of a leg of a match, each Club will hand to the Referee and to its opponents a duplicate of the Team Lines for that club for the relevant leg. The Team Line shall contain accurate and complete details of the numbers, full player names in relation to not more than eighteen players, together with full names of the technical personnel to be seated within the technical area (subject to a maximum of six such technical personnel). The Team Line must be completed in block capitals, and signed by the club secretary or other accredited official. Upon such signature, such Team Line shall be deemed to be complete and binding on the Club concerned.
- l) The eleven first named players on the Team Line must commence the match. The other named players are designated a substitutes. The numbers on the players' shirts and/or shorts must correspond to the numbers indicated on the Team Line. The goalkeepers and team captain must be identified.
- m) Only three of the substitutes listed on the Team Line may take part in the match. A player who has been substituted may take no further part in the match.
- n) It is recommended that a club's doctor and physiotherapist are listed on the Team Line and accommodated in the technical area within the category of technical personnel.

#### **Replacement of Players on the Team Line**

- o) If any of the first eleven players listed on the Team Line is not able to start the match due to unexpected physical incapacity or other extreme circumstances (which are explained to and accepted by the referee), he may only be replaced by one of the named substitutes. The substitute(s) in question may then only be replaced by an eligible player(s) not originally listed on the Team Line as signed, so that the quota of substitutes is not reduced. During the match, three players may still be substituted.
- p) If any of the named substitutes listed on the Team Line is not able at the start of the match to be fielded due to unexpected physical incapacity or other extreme circumstances (which are explained to and accepted by the referee), he may only be replaced by an eligible player not originally listed on the Team Line as signed.
- q) If none of the goalkeepers listed on the Team Line is able to be fielded due to unexpected physical incapacity or other extreme circumstances (which are explained to and accepted by the referee), then one may be replaced but only by an eligible goalkeeper not originally listed on the Team Line as signed.
- r) If for any reason changes require to be made to the Team Line pursuant to the above provisions (and said changes are accepted by the referee) then the club must notify its opponent immediately thereafter.





- s) The club concerned must in addition to the requirements set out above, upon request, provide the Scottish FA and/or the SPFL with necessary medical certificates and/or a full written explanation of the circumstances that caused the change.
- t) The Scottish FA and/or the SPFL shall keep a register of the names of all of the players who take part in the Pyramid Play-Off Competition. The register shall be open for inspection by all clubs taking part in said Pyramid Play-Off Competition.

#### **Pitch Protection**

- u) In order to protect the pitch and unless otherwise agreed between both participating clubs, the following procedures shall be adopted by players and Officials in the periods immediately before and after and at half time during a match in the Pyramid Play-Off Competition:
- v) the pitch shall only be used for warming up or warming down by the players listed in the Team Lines;
- w) pre-match warming up by either team shall not commence until at the earliest 60 minutes before the scheduled kick-off time, shall not last for more than 30 minutes, and shall end not later than 10 minutes before the scheduled kick-off time;
- x) if portable goals are provided they shall be used for all goalkeeping drills other than crossing practice;
- y) the goalmouth area shall be used by goalkeepers only if portable goals are not provided or for crossing practice and then only for not more than 20 minutes;
- z) for the purposes of warming up and warming down each team shall use only part of the pitch between the edge of a penalty area and the half way line or as otherwise directed by the groundsman;
- aa) all speed and stamina work shall be undertaken off the pitch parallel to the touchline opposite the side to be patrolled by the assistant referee or, in the absence of sufficient space at that location, in that part of the pitch as directed by the groundsman;
- bb) players using the pitch at half time shall give due consideration to any other activity or entertainment taking place on the pitch at the same time;
- cc) the home club may water the pitch provided that it gives reasonable notice to the referee and the other club that it intends to do so and that any such watering is carried out evenly over the entire length and width of the pitch; and
- dd) any warming down after the conclusion of a match shall last for no longer than 15 minutes and for that purpose neither penalty area shall be used.

#### **Admission Charges and Abandoned Matches**

- ee) The Home Club in any leg in a Play-Off Match or any leg in a Pyramid Play-Off Match shall, in its absolute discretion, determine admission charges (subject to these being the same for home and away supporters for broadly comparable facilities).
- ff) The Home Club in any leg in a Play-Off Match or any leg in a Pyramid Play-Off Match shall be responsible for all match expenses and shall (subject to Part IV of these



Pyramid Play-Off Rules) retain the net receipts in relation to said Play-Off Match. The fees and expenses of the match officials will be the responsibility of the Scottish FA. The

- gg) Scottish FA and / or SPFL shall be entitled to request that the Home Club in any Play-Off Match provides a written statement of gate receipts and expenses incurred.
- hh) In the event of a leg in a Play-Off Match or a leg in a Pyramid Play-Off Match being abandoned the Board of the SPFL shall determine the requirement and/or arrangements for any such leg being replayed or the Board of the SPFL may determine a deemed result of such leg and, said decision of the SPFL Board shall be final and binding and shall not be open to challenge.

## V Commercial Rules

- a) The clubs taking part in a Pyramid Play-Off Competition and each of them agree to centrally pool and market their rights, facilities and properties relating to and concerning, Radio Transmission and Transmission of matches in the relevant Pyramid Play-Off Competition for exclusive exploitation by the SPFL and the Scottish FA.
- b) The clubs taking part in a Pyramid Play-Off Competition and each of them hereby authorise the SPFL and the Scottish FA to enter into commercial contracts for the commercial exploitation of the matches (or any of them) in the relevant Pyramid Play-Off Competition (the "Pyramid Commercial Contracts") including but not limited to Pyramid Commercial Contracts in relation to any Radio Transmission, Transmission, sponsorship or advertising of or at the matches (or any of them) in the Pyramid Play-Off Competition.
- c) The Clubs taking part in a Pyramid Play-Off Competition and each of them shall license and otherwise provide to the SPFL and the Scottish FA the use of such of their other rights, facilities and properties as may be required by the SPFL and the Scottish FA to enable the SPFL and the Scottish FA to enter into and fulfil its/their obligations under and in terms of Pyramid Commercial Contracts entered into or to be entered into by the SPFL and the Scottish FA in relation to the relevant Pyramid Play-Off Competition.
- d) Except pursuant to a Pyramid Commercial Contract, there shall be no and, each of the clubs shall in respect of a match in a Pyramid Play-Off Competition played at their home ground procure that there shall not be any Radio Transmission and/or Transmission of all or any part of a said match without the prior written approval of the SPFL and the Scottish FA.
- e) The clubs taking part in a Pyramid Play-Off Competition and each of them shall not by any act or omission infringe any exclusive rights granted by the SPFL or the Scottish FA in a Pyramid Commercial Contract or otherwise cause any breach thereof to occur.
- f) The SPFL and Scottish FA shall determine in their absolute discretion any costs, expenses, charges or any other sum or amount to be charged and/or off-set against any income generated by Pyramid Commercial Contracts before any distribution in terms of rule V(h).
- g) The SPFL and Scottish FA shall not be permitted to make a charge or set-off in terms of rule V(f) except in relation to or in respect of any cost, expense, liability or charge



incurred or for which either or both may be liable arising out of or related to the Pyramid Play-Off Competition and/or the operation of the Pyramid arrangements generally.

- h) Any net profit generated by the SPFL and by the Scottish FA pursuant to this Part IV of these Pyramid Play-Off Competition Rules shall be distributed to the Clubs participating in the Pyramid Play-Off Competition on a basis agreed from time to time by the SPFL and Scottish FA.