



# **National Referee Development Programme**

## **Vision**

The FA's vision is to be the world leader in providing all newly qualified referees equitable support and development to maximise their potential and enjoyment in officiating within 11a-side football

## **Introduction**

The Football Association's National Referee Development Programme is a scheme designed for referees involved in 11 v 11 football. It is an initiative which is committed to retaining and developing enthusiastic, committed match officials with support and coaching in a safe and constructive learning environment. This will allow confidence to flourish and individual aspirations to be achieved.

This programme will support The Football Association in achieving their target of 8000 new active referees by 2012 and to build strong foundations for the future.

This will be achieved by each County Football Association under the leadership of their Referee Development Officer(s) managing the programme. They will appoint other staff from their volunteer workforce to support them in achieving this, including an assistant who may be the County Training Officer and a team of Mentors and Coaches to support and develop referees through the programme. The scheme will rely on the County establishing or building upon relationships with leagues and clubs who will become their partners in providing referees with the appropriate environment for their games to be supported and developed. Further details on all the roles and the structure will follow later in this document.

## **Key Partners & Personnel within the Programme**

### **The Football Association (FA)**

As the national governing body the FA will be responsible for overseeing the programme under the leadership of the National Referee Manager for Recruitment, Retention and Development

### **County Football Association (CFA)**

As the local representative of The FA the CFA will ensure the programme is managed effectively through the auspices of the Referee Development Officer (RDO)

### **Referee Development Officer (RDO)**

The RDO is responsible for managing the programme throughout the county

### **County Training Officer (CTO)**

The CTO when appointed is responsible for supporting the RDO in managing the programme

### **Workforce**

The workforce means any other volunteer / person who works for or within the NRDP

### **Partner Club**

Any club who fulfils the criteria (listed elsewhere in this document) will be eligible to join the scheme and in return will be awarded the National Referee Development Programme Partner “symbol” to be displayed as they wish. This club will need to be part of a Respect League and following the guidelines of the Respect Programme

### **Partner League**

Any League who fulfils the criteria (listed elsewhere in this document) and including being part of the Respect Programme will be eligible to join the scheme and in return will be awarded the National Referees Development Programme Partner “symbol” to be displayed as they wish.

### **Referee Academy / School of Excellence**

Any referee Academy or School of Excellence supported by the CFA will form part of this programme. This may be a link to a professional club in the county or be a county wide academy that supports the development of officials in stages 3 and 4 of the programme (further details later in this document)

### **Referee Mentor**

A referee mentor will be allocated to every new member in the programme to support them through their initial 6 games and then first season as a referee further details will be listed elsewhere in this document

### **Referee Coach**

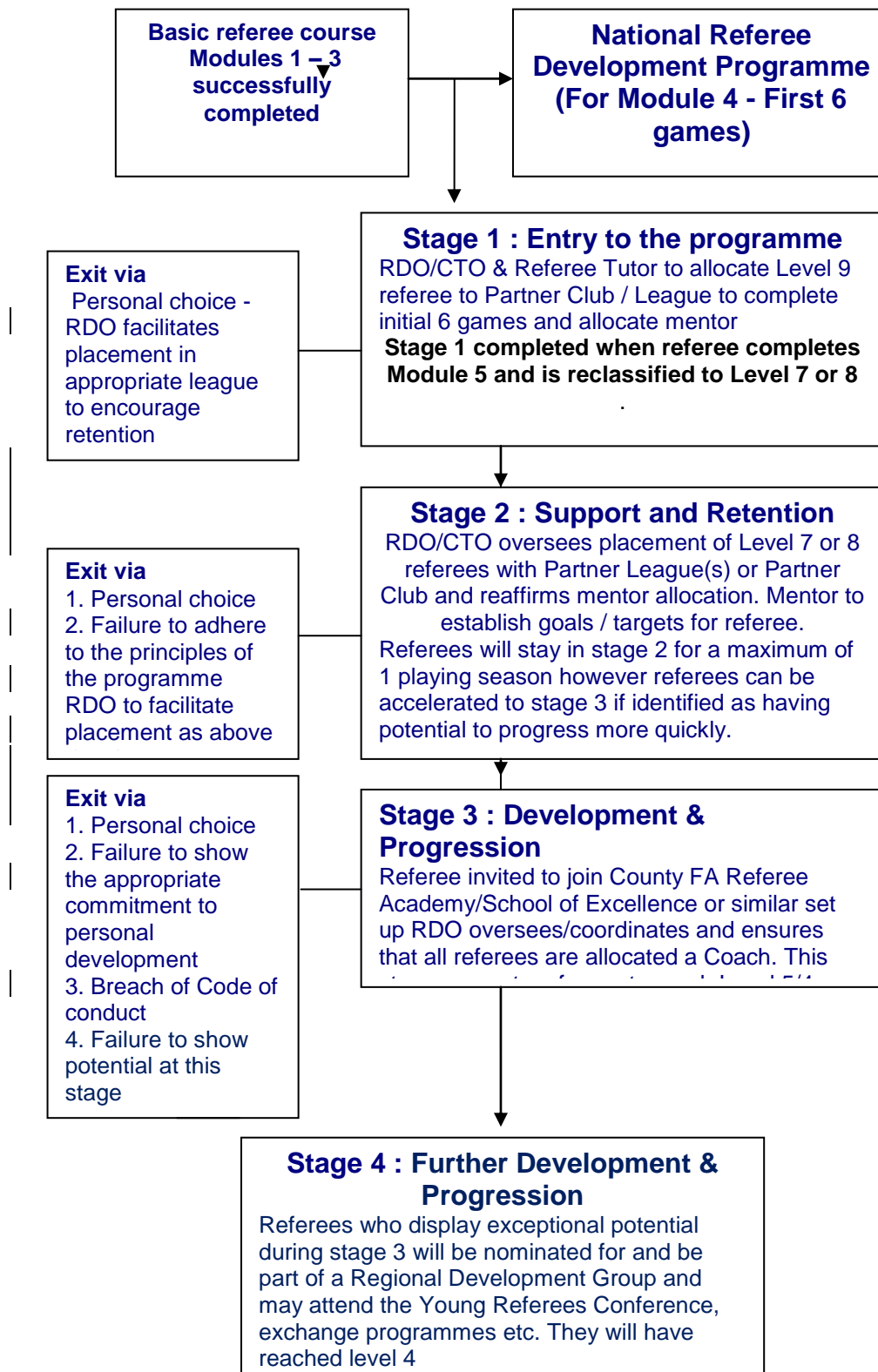
A referee coach will be allocated to members of the scheme from their second year onwards details of the role and responsibilities are listed elsewhere in this document

### **Regional Development Coordinator**

A Regional Development Coordinator will be appointed for each of the 8 Football Regions in England. Their role will be to look after stage 4 of the programme in their region. Full details of their role and responsibilities are listed elsewhere in this document.

## National Referee Development Programme (NRDP) Process

The FA National Referee Development Programme has been designed to ensure that all referees are supported in completing their initial 6 games and are retained through the early stages of their refereeing career. Beyond this programme, once they have finished their basic training, those demonstrating further potential and commitment after their first season are given every opportunity to fulfil their potential and develop onto the later stages of the programme



## **National Referee Development Programme Outline**

### **Stage 1 : Entry to the programme:**

- Registered with County FA as Level 9
- Successfully completed modules 1-3 in the basic referee training course
- Received Respect Programme training
- Advised of inclusion in the first stage of the programme
- Received Safeguarding Children awareness training
- CRB cleared (where applicable)
- Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) checked (where applicable this will replace CRB checks in season 2010/2011)
- Have signed a referee code of conduct
- Be placed with suitable partner leagues/clubs
- To be assigned to a Mentor
- To be advised of the criteria for moving to Stage 2 of the programme

### **Stage 2 : Support and Retention**

- Entry to the programme is subject to having completed Stage 1
- The Code of Conduct is reinforced
- Assignment to Referee Mentor reaffirmed
- Personal targets are discussed with the referees mentor
- Advised of partner leagues/clubs and assigned (if agreed with referee)
- Advised of the In Service training programme for the season
- Attend a minimum of one CFA / RA-FA in service training event in the programme
- Advised of how they can progress further
- Other benefits to be determined

#### ***Exit strategy:***

- *Personal choice*
- *Failure to adhere to the principles of the programme*
- *Failure to show potential at this stage*

### **Stage 3 : Development and Progression:**

- Entry to the programme is subject to having completed Stage 2 and having displayed potential to progress
- Attend an induction event
- Code of Conduct to be revised and signed
- Assigned to a Referee Coach (RC)
- Personal targets discussed with RC
- Allocated to the CFA Referee Academy, School of Excellence or similar set up
- Advised of the programme for the season
- Attend a minimum of 50% of appropriate CFA / RA-FA in service training events in the programme
- Advise what other benefits are available in the current season and how to progress further

#### ***Exit strategy:***

- *Personal choice*
- *Failure to adhere to the principles of the programme*
- *Failure to show potential at this stage*

### **Stage 4 : Further Development and Progression**

- Entry to the programme is subject to having completed Stage 3 and having displayed potential to progress

- Advised they are now part of the Regional Development Group and may be nominated for the Young Referee Conference (Criteria permitting)
- Introduced to the Regional Development Coordinator who will oversee this stage of their development
- Attend an induction event
- Code of Conduct to be revised and signed
- Review and reassigned to a Referee Coach
- Personal targets discussed with RC
- Advised of the programme for the season
- Attend a minimum of 75% of the Regional events and other CFA, RA-FA In service events if they wish or are invited to support their more junior colleagues
- Advise what other opportunities are available for referees involved in this stage

**Exit strategy:**

- *Personal choice*
- *Failure to adhere to the principles of the programme*
- *Failure to show potential at this stage*
- *Promotion to level 3*
- *Maximum time at stage 4 is normally three seasons unless there are special circumstances*

## **National Referee Development Programme:** **Further Detail and Definitions**

### **Stage 1 : Entry to the Programme**

Upon successful completion of modules 1 -3 of the Basic Referees Course, all referees will join the National Referee Development Programme.

The structure required for this stage is to identify a number of Partner Leagues / Clubs to participate within the programme. Once within the programme, an official will be offered a position on one or more of the Partner leagues/clubs to officiate their first 6 games, this will act as their initial retention tool to complete module 4 of the basic referee training course.

At this stage the development programme will be focussed on the basic skills required to be a referee, which will include allocating a Referee Mentor (RM) initially for the first 6 games during which the RM will advise them on a one-to-one basis. The purpose of the RM role will be to support the referee during this early stage to boost their confidence and increase the chances of them being retained as a referee and carrying on to the second stage of the programme.

In-service training will be limited at this time to attending Module 5 of the Basic Referee Training Course having officiated 6 games. This will be an opportunity to reflect on their initial training and their experiences in the first 6 games. After this point they will be reclassified as Level 7 or Level 8 (Under 16) referee.

The official will be invited to provide contact details to create a network of contacts which will encourage contact between match officials, colleagues and their RM should clarification be required on any matter which currently requires discussion.

Officials may leave the programme for the following reasons:

#### **Inactivity**

- Following a review of the referee with their RM and with feedback provided for the RDO/CTO it is decided that the initial 6 games are not going to be completed.

#### **Personal choice**

- The referee may find the commitment required too much or for any other reason the referee has. At this point the RDO will speak to the referee to try and maintain retention by allocating the referee to a local league outside of the programme.

### **Stage 2 : Support and Retention**

Entry at this stage of the programme will be available to those officials who have successfully completed Stage 1 and wish to continue their development. Those who have successfully progressed through Stage 1 will be accepted following the signing of a Code of Conduct and attending an induction meeting at which time the invitation can be made or withdrawn.

All referees will be allocated:

- Partner League(s)/Club(s) (these may be the same as originally allocated)
- A Referee Mentor (RM) this will normally be the same mentor as originally appointed in stage 1.
- Referees will be reminded within their Code of Conduct of the need to maintain regular contact with their RM
- Referees will be made aware of the CFA In Service programme and the relevant training they should/could attend.

- A network of contacts will again be available to discuss any matters which arise between contact with the RM therefore any current issue is dealt with immediately; this may lead to a training requirement.

Officials may leave the programme for the following reasons:

**Failure to adhere to the principles of the programme**

- This may include breaching the code of conduct or any other reason and will be followed up initially by the RM and passed on to the RDO/CTO for further action and possible removal from the programme.

**Personal choice**

- The referee may find the commitment required too much, or may wish to withdraw for any other reason. At this point the RDO will speak to the referee to try and maintain retention by allocating the referee to a local league outside of the programme.

**Stage 3 : Development and Progression**

Entry at this stage of the programme will be available to those officials who have successfully completed Stage 2 and wish to continue their development. Those who have successfully progressed through Stage 2 will be accepted by attending an induction meeting at which time the invitation can be made or withdrawn.

All referees will be allocated:

- A Referee Coach (RC) to replace their Referee Mentor as the emphasis on the programme now becomes development as retention should be much higher at this stage
- The referee should be allocated to the appropriate Referees Academy/Referees School of Excellence or other set up as operated by the County
- The referee may continue to operate within the Partner League (s) and for the Partner club (s) as they did in Stage 2 but will also be encouraged to operate in leagues outside of this and if aged 16 could now to move to open age football.

In addition appropriate In Service Training should be offered by the County FA in order for these referees to develop further. This training may include the following:

**Training as an assistant referee:**

- Introduce appropriate training to all schemes, delivered by the RDO/CTO or other Tutors
- Referees will be encouraged to act as assistant referees on a supply league as well as possibly in a school of excellence/academy linked to a professional club

**Training as a referee with neutral assistant referees:**

- Referees will have experienced operating with club assistant referees and will now have possibilities of operating with neutral assistants possibly again in a school of excellence/academy linked to a professional club or in midweek youth leagues and some county cup competitions

**Training surrounding procedure to deal with:**

- Position at corner kicks
- Procedure to deal with a free kick on the edge of the penalty area
- Procedure to deal with a penalty kick
- These are all areas that will have been covered by their RM but now they can be developed further

Officials may leave the programme for the following reasons:

**Failure to adhere to the principles of the programme**

- This may include breaching the code of conduct or any other reason and will be followed up initially by the RC and passed on to the RDO for further action and possible removal from the programme.

**Personal choice**

- The referee may find the commitment required too much or may wish to withdraw for any other reason. At this point the RDO will speak to the referee to try and maintain retention by allocating the referee to a local league outside of the programme.

**Stage 4 : Further Development & Progression**

For the fourth and final stage of the programme each year, every County will be invited to nominate a maximum of 4 Referees who have demonstrated potential in stage 3. Before the nominations are made, a discussion should take place between the RDO and Regional Development Coordinator (RDC) as to the suitability of each individual. When this has been agreed, the group of Referees would form a Regional Development Group, who would attend a minimum of two sessions a year with the Regional Development Coordinator, one of which should contain a fitness assessment/test.

From this group, the RDC will nominate the candidates to attend the Young Referees Conference each year (providing they meet the criteria). As is the case now, this should work out to two places per County, but should give the RDC flexibility to select the best candidates.

All candidates will be allocated / re-allocated:

- A Referee Coach (RC) who maybe their existing referee coach but this may change as now they have been highlighted as one of the newer referees in their county with potential and will be working in the regional group
- The referee may continue to operate within the Partner League (s) and for the Partner club (s) as they did in Stage 2/3 but will also be asked to operate in leagues outside of this to broaden their knowledge and experience.
- Ideally the referee will have reached Level 4 through the normal promotion processes and will be operating as a Supply League referee and Contributory League Assistant referee

They may attend county In Service Training if they wish but will be expected to attend regional events which will include a fitness element.

Officials may leave the programme for the following reasons:

**Failure to adhere to the principles of the programme**

- This may include breaching the code of conduct or any other reason and will be followed up initially by the RC and passed on to the RDO for further action and possible removal from the programme.

**Personal choice**

- The referee may find the commitment required too much or may wish to withdraw for any other reason. At this point the RDO will speak to the referee to try and maintain retention by allocating the referee to a local league outside of the programme or possibly returning to stage 3 within their CFA Academy/School of Excellence

**Promotion to Level 3**

- When this level is achieved the requirements of the official are such that their needs are dealt with at Senior Referee Development level. These officials will be encouraged to take part in the programme in other roles should they wish to do so.

**Three years in programme**

- Referees will have a maximum of three years in stage 4 of the programme unless there are special circumstances

## **Operating Criteria for Partner Clubs and Leagues**

The success of The FA National Referee Development Programme in retaining and producing quality officials will be determined by the choice of partner leagues and clubs that are selected by the FA and CFA's to support the programme.

All leagues and clubs used in the programme will be signed up to and actively participating in the FA Respect Programme

These partners need to be aware of their responsibilities towards the development of selected match officials and create an environment where potential and commitment will be encouraged to develop.

To ensure that all partners are fully conversant with these responsibilities the following operating criteria needs to be written into the National Referee Development Programme: Code of Conduct for Clubs and Officials. This document should be signed by all parties and continually monitored to ensure on-going commitment.

### **Partner Clubs**

Partner Club status will only be afforded to those clubs which:

- Meet all Safeguarding Children, CRB and ISA requirements
- Member of a league operating the FA Respect Programme
- Provide constructive feedback on performance to match official and referee mentor as requested
- Provide a safe environment for match officials at all times
- Provide appropriate changing and showering facilities ensuring separate areas are available for girls and those match officials aged under-16
- Give match official and referee mentor at least one week's notice of forthcoming fixtures
- Ensure correct match fees are paid to officials at agreed time
- Ensure appropriate Competition Rules are available for each match to be officiated
- Provide appropriately qualified Assistant Referees as required
- To ensure that Partner Clubs retain their commitment to the National Referee Development Programme the FA and CFA s should endeavour to regularly up-date them on the programme's progress and address any issues that may be raised
- To abide by the NRDP code of conduct for clubs and officials

Referee Mentors (RM) and Referee Coaches (RC) should be charged with the responsibility of ensuring that Approved Clubs abide by the Code of Conduct. Any concerns should initially be addressed to the appropriate club contact. Should this fail to improve the situation, the RM or RC should bring the concern to the attention of the RDO.

### **Partner Leagues**

Approved National Referee Development Programme League status will only be afforded to those leagues which:

- Are affiliated to the FA or CFA
- Are signed up to the FA Respect Programme
- Ensure all key officers are CRB/ISA checked and have completed a Safeguarding Children Workshop.
- Ensure all key personnel are conversant with the objectives of the National Referee Development Programme including the Referee Appointments Officer (who is dealt with separately elsewhere).

- Organise fixtures and appointments with at least one weeks' notice ensuring copies are sent to both the match official and the RM or RC.
- Involve the match official in any appropriate training organised by the league.
- Are either Charter Standard Leagues or are working towards achieving Charter Standard League Status or can demonstrate their commitment to refereeing best practise principles through a development plan
- To abide by the NRDP code of conduct for clubs and officials.
- To encourage partnerships between bordering County FA's

### **NB Charter Standard Leagues**

Where a league has achieved Charter Standard League status or is working towards this, it will have or will be working upon a development plan. The ideas and principles contained within the National Referees Development Programme are an ideal fit for leagues that want to commit to the development of refereeing in the workforce section of these development plans. County RDO's and League Officials should therefore actively encourage leagues to include elements of the NRDP in their plans where this will clearly benefit the leagues their clubs and referees.

### **Referees Appointments Officer**

The key league contact with the match official and RM /RC will be the Referees' Appointment Officer and it is imperative that this officer is fully conversant with their responsibilities to the National Referee Development Programme.

The National Referee Development Programme will require Referees' Appointment Officers to:

- Attend update meetings held by the FA or CFA
- Liaise closely with the RM/RC to discuss forthcoming appointments, ensuring games of an appropriate level are offered
- Update the RM/RC on performance feedback – including club marks and assessments.

### **Support to Approved Clubs and Leagues**

The FA and CFAs acknowledge that the National Referee Development Programme will be unable to retain or develop match officials without the support of their network of Partner Clubs and Leagues.

It is therefore imperative that the FA and CFA give on-going support and advice to these partners. This support should include appropriate training to officers, guidance on changes in legislation and feedback on performance where required.

It is also important that Approved Clubs and Leagues are invited to share in the successes of the National Referee Development Programme. The FA and CFAs need to acknowledge that the retention and development of match officials is not only a success for the programme but also those partners who Support it

Partner Clubs and Leagues will be entitled to receive recognition of their status by using an appropriate badge to confirm their status.

This will be confirmed in due course but maybe the Respect logo with partner club / league on it.

## **The Role of Referee Mentor (RM) in the Programme**

The role of the Referee Mentor will be key in ensuring the programme starts effectively and that referees are fully supported through the first two stages. This will involve supporting the referee on a match day and from a distance the latter of which will be more frequent but each of which will be important. Both elements will be covered fully in the Mentor Workshop which will be available for RM's to attend with their CFA.

*Suitable skills for this post will include:*

- Good organisational qualities
- Good Listening skills
- Ability to manage and support people
- Ability to deal with senior members of partner leagues / clubs
- To be selected following attendance at an FA Referee Mentor Workshop

*Responsibilities will include:*

- To support referees through their first 6 games and their first season
- To attend at least one of their first six games to support them
- To attend other games when possible and when required following discussion with the referee
- To meet/speak to referee on other occasions to provide guidance and support to help their confidence in their first season
- Advise each official of their individual performance and how to make the required adjustments.
- At the end of the season, review and feedback officials' progress with the RDO / CTO
- Report any issues or concerns to the RDO / CTO at the end of each weekend session
- Inform the RDO with In-service training requirements during the season.

## **The Role of Referee Coach (RC) in the Programme**

The role of the Referee Coach (RC) will be to build on the work started by the Referee Mentor in ensuring the programme continues to be effective in developing the referee. This will happen once the referee enters the third stage of the programme and will focus on maximising a referee's potential by coaching and supporting their development. This will involve coaching the referee on a match day identifying strengths and development areas and also from a distance, the latter of which again will be more frequent. Both elements will be again covered fully in the Coaches Workshop which will be available for RC's to attend with their CFA.

*Suitable skills for this post will include:*

- Good organisational qualities
- Good Coaching Skills
- Good Listening Skills
- Ability to manage and support people
- Ability to deal with senior members of partner leagues / clubs
- To be selected following attendance at an FA Referee Coaching Workshop

Responsibilities will include:

- Ensure officials adhere to the dress code on their arrival at the ground and their kit meets the standard required.
- Ensure match officials deliver pre-match instructions appropriately.
- Advise the match officials which match they are covering whether as Referee or Assistant Referee.
- Ensure the officials carry out a pre match warm up.
- Advise each official of their individual performance and build on their strengths whilst addressing their development areas.
- To review the assessments of those officials who have applied for promotion.
- At the end of the season reviews and feedback officials progress with the RDO / CTO.
- Report any issues or concerns to the RDO / CTO at the end of each weekend session.
- Inform the RDO/CTO with In-service training requirements during the season.
- Suggest the next step for individual official's career path.
- Work with the official to produce an action plan for the future in association with RDO / CTO

### **Procedure for a Referee Coach (RC)**

Appointments will be made by the Partner League Appointments officer and each RC will be allocated a referee (s) to work with and a match venue to attend if possible including kick off time and length of time played.

The RC will meet the official at the venue or even travel together (*subject to Safeguarding Children best practice*) prepare the official and ensure everyone understands their role for the forthcoming game.

Following pre-match preparations the RC will advise on all matters previously outlined during the match, if working alone then the RC will advise both the referee and the assistant referee's on their performance and any improvements he is able to offer during the breaks in play.

Following the match the RC will offer verbal feedback including a maximum of three development areas and at least three “strength’s” plus any comment the RC believes will motivate the official to heed the advice given.

Upon reflection if the RC believes there are areas which may need to be addressed he will inform the RDO/CTO so that the next in-service event will cover that area.

## **Role of Regional Development Coordinator**

The role of the Regional Development Coordinator (RDC) will be to build on the work started by the Referee Mentors and continued by the Referee Coaches in ensuring the final stage of the programme continues to be effective in developing the referee. This will happen once the referee enters the fourth stage of the programme and will focus on maximising a referee's potential by leading a group of coaches in supporting their development. The role will carry significant responsibility as it will be responsible for co-ordinating the coaches and arranging training events to support the further development of the referees identified as having the most potential in the Region. .

*Suitable skills for this post will include:*

- Excellent organisational qualities
- Excellent Coaching Skills
- Excellent Listening Skills
- Ability to manage and support a group of referees and coaches
- Ability to deal with senior members of partner leagues / clubs
- To be selected by The FA following recommendations from the County FA's in the Region

Responsibilities will include:

- Liaising with and reporting to The FA National Manager for Recruitment, Retention & Development.
- The formation of members within the group.
- The selection and management of the coaching and management team.
- The administration of the scheme which will include but is not limited to; distributing invitations to meetings, notification of coaching groups etc.
- The organisation and implementation of the training programme.
- Managing the allocated annual budget issued by the National Manager for Recruitment, Retention and Development.
- Liaising with the RDO's from the counties within the Region and providing feedback on the performance of their referees

## **Areas of focus for Referee Coaches**

The following topics are suggested areas for Referee Coaches to concentrate on with their referees. The list is not exhaustive and the RC will be encouraged to focus on those of greater need with their officials:

### **As Referee**

- Pitch inspection
- Pre-match instructions
- Pre-match protocol
- Path of patrol
- Body language
- Application of Law
- Signals
- Decision making (recognition)
- Fitness
- Control
- Player management

### **As Assistant Referee**

- Path of patrol
- Offside
- Signals
- Support for the referee
- Substitution
- Technical area
- Player management

### **Further Detail as Referee**

#### **Pitch inspection**

- All match officials will be guided through the correct procedure to carry out inspections on the field and with players prior to entering the field of play.
- Explanations of how to deal with issues which either have arisen or may arise whilst conducting this procedure.

#### **Pre-match instructions**

- Guidance as to how and when to deliver pre-match instructions
- Consideration of instructions for club assistants as well as neutral assistants
- For neutral assistants all instructions should include:
- Seniority
- Path of patrol
- Offside procedure
- On-field offences (penalty kicks)
- Throw in
- Positioning of officials
- Other duties

#### **Pre-match protocol**

- Guidance should be given regarding contacting the teams coaches
- Preparing for substitutions
- Period of play
- Introductions to the captains
- Respect Programme protocol

#### **Path of patrol**

- All match officials will be guided to operate with assistant referees at outside right

- Guidance will be given in an effort to inject flexibility in positioning
- Emphasis will be placed upon proximity and viewing angles

#### **Body language**

- Guidance as to how to develop appropriate body language in various situations will be offered
- This will be a reactive process dependent upon game situations

#### **Decision making (recognition)**

- Support and guidance will be given to ensure correct recognition of offences takes place
- Advice will be given regarding viewing angles
- Advice on proximity to challenges
- Advice based upon correct definition of challenges, careless, reckless excessive force, leading with the arm, violent conduct, and serious foul play basically injecting appropriate terminology to aid recognition

#### **Application of Law**

- Guidance will be offered to ensure Law is applied fully at all times
- Any sanctions which cannot be managed must be issued
- Guidance will be given to ensure official sanctions are issued only when management is exhausted

#### **Signals**

- Guidance as to the use of the whistle
- Advice to ensure all arm indications are correctly delivered
- Guidance surrounding the signal for advantage and when to offer a free kick

#### **Fitness**

- Guidance on any shortcomings regarding mobility
- Ensure that details of fitness sessions are known

#### **Control & Player management**

- Advice of the application of law and management of players is offered
- Guidance as to how to control through management should be offered at all times

### **Further detail as Assistant Referee**

#### **Path of patrol**

- Guidance as to how to carry the flag appropriately when operating as outside right patrol
- Ensure goal line decisions are monitored appropriately
- Ensure goal kick positioning is checked appropriately
- Ensure the goal keeper holding the ball at the edge of the penalty area is checked appropriately

#### **Offside**

- Ensure that a good level of understanding of Law 11 is on display
- Ensure that only actively involved players are penalised
- Ensure that any flag indications are held for the appropriate length of time
- Ensure the follow up signal is held in the correct position and for the appropriate length of time

#### **Signals**

- Ensure that all signals are as laid out in the Laws of the game

- It is vital that all flag indications which do not adhere to those laid out are corrected immediately

**Support for the referee**

- Ensure that guidance as to when to offer support is given at the appropriate time
- Ensure that the big decisions are made correctly (penalty kick / free kick)
- Ensure there is evidence of eye to eye contact

**Substitutions**

- Ensure that these are correctly carried out
- Mirror flagging if required

**Technical area**

- Ensure that is appropriate the management of the technical area is carried out efficiently

**Player management**

- Ensure that if necessary any interaction with players is conducted in an efficient and professional manner

## **Suggested Annual Development Programme for Stage 3/4**

Fitness programme outlined:

- target setting
- weekly session (variety of structured sessions)

Training as an assistant referee

Training as a referee with neutral assistant referees

Training surrounding procedure to deal with:

- position at corner kicks
- procedure to deal with a free kick on the edge of the penalty area
- procedure to deal with a penalty kick

Group to attend a game collectively:

- sub groups to watch specific areas of performance and the impact upon performance
- Provide a written account of strengths and development areas to deliver to the other sub-groups
- Session to be led by the match assessor/RDO/CTO
- Referee to be invited if available to next session
- Follow up session either the next evening or as soon as possible.

Ensure a network of contacts is available to discuss any matters which arise between meetings therefore any burning issue is dealt with immediately; this may lead to a training requirement.

Other meetings may attract motivational delivery from Premier/Football League referees or County matters

## **Expectations of Referees involved in the Programme**

When referees agree to be part of the programme whether at Stage 1 or in joining it at a later date, there will be certain expectations of them to demonstrate their commitment and will to improve and fulfil their potential

Responsibilities will include:

- To sign and adhere to the code of conduct provided at all stages
- To ensure vacant and closed dates are reported to the appropriate authorities.
- To ensure a professional attitude is adopted at all times
- To ensure everyone involved in the programme is treated with respect
- To maintain regular contact with their allocated referee mentor / referee coach
- To ensure any issues causing the officials concern are relayed directly to the RM /RC
- To ensure they display respect to member clubs, their personnel
- To ensure that all matters of discipline are carried out appropriately by issuing cautions and dismissals
- Ensure the relevant reports are sent to the appropriate authority

## **Example of a Referees Code of Conduct for the Programme**

- Apply The Laws of Association Football consistently.
- Behave as a role model in promoting good behaviour and showing respect towards everyone involved in football.
- Manage the game in a positive, calm and confident manner.
- Communicate clearly with players, encourage fair play.
- Respond to any request for clarification by team captains in a concise, calm and confident manner.
- Manage any poor behaviour appropriately including any further action where required (e.g. yellow and red cards).
- Consider the wellbeing and safety of each player when applying The Laws of Association Football.
- Prepare fully for a match, both physically and mentally.
- Give support to fellow match officials, mentors, coaches and the National Referee Development Programme as and when required.
- Are honest and completely impartial at all times, irrespective of the teams, players or team officials involved in the match.
- Not tolerate inappropriate language from players and/or officials.
- Complete and submit accurate concise reports as required for games I officiate.

**The County FA or The FA may take action if referees do not adhere to this Code of Conduct and in particular if they:**

- Behave inappropriately e.g. use offensive insulting or abusive language.
- Fail to submit misconduct reports to the County FA.
- Fail to attend disciplinary Hearings on matters they have reported
- Apply The Laws of Association Football inappropriately.

**As a result, The County FA could carry out the following:**

- Remove referees from the NRDP
- Ask them to attend a personal hearing
- Ask them to serve a suspension

## **Appeals Procedure for Referees removed from the Programme**

Where the referee is not satisfied with the decision to remove them from any stage of the programme they may appeal against the decision, in writing stating the reasons why they believe the decision is wrong. This should be done within 10 working days to the RDO in their County FA or to the Regional Coordinator if they are in Stage 4 of the programme. This may be referred to the National Manager for Recruitment, Retention and Development for guidance before a final decision is made. A meeting may be arranged following the appeal if this is deemed appropriate. Confirmation of the outcome will be given in writing. The referee may be accompanied by a colleague or a representative at the meeting and if a meeting is held, the decision of this meeting is final.

## **Benefits of the National Referee Development Programme**

The benefits of adopting this programme are many and would include:

- Uniformity in the way referee development is structured across the country
- A clear path for officials to follow from their Basic Training to senior football
- A clear focus initially on retaining active officials and then fully developing them
- A link from the work in Counties and Regions into the Young Referees Conference
- Development taking place for Referees on a Regional Basis, as well as at National Level
- Potential Development of 'Regional Academies'
- A clear vision for the Young Referees Conference

## **Summary**

The new programme will be formally launched at the start of season 2010/2011 and all supporting workshops and materials will be available from the FA by the beginning of August 2010

Roger Vaughan  
National Referee Manager  
Recruitment, Retention and Development