



## **ESFA Sanctioning Policy and Procedures**

### **Purpose**

The ESFA is committed to the provision of high quality, safe and properly organised and officiated football for children and expects the same from all those providing schools football activities. This document outlines the policy and procedures for seeking sanctioning of football competitions.

### **Policy**

Any schools football requires ESFA sanction. Depending on the nature of the planned activity sanction must be sought, either from the ESFA nationally or from the relevant CSFA or DSFA.

Sanctioning is essential to ensure that:

- Those taking part are affiliated to the relevant Association;
- The rules governing the event comply with Football Association (FA) requirements;
- Activities can legitimately benefit from the use of registered match officials;

All affiliated Associations sanctioning competitions shall observe the rules and regulations of The FA and ESFA. Any rule, regulation or practice of any such Association or competition that is inconsistent with the rules and regulations of The ESFA shall be void and unenforceable. For the avoidance of doubt, the rules and regulations of the FA and the ESFA supercede those of any sanctioned activity, should that activity be in breach of such rules and regulations.

In order to be considered for sanction from The ESFA or an affiliated Association, a competition must have its rules approved by the sanctioning Association and provide a list of its participant schools and teams, all of which must be affiliated to an Affiliated Association for the appropriate season.

Applications to create a new competition involving schools/teams from existing competitions must allow time for the sanctioning Association to consult with the existing competitions and relevant Associations in order to assess the impact of the new competition before deciding whether to approve or reject the application.

For applications requiring national sanction, applications must be submitted no later than 28 days prior to the intended activity.

### **Application for Sanction: Criteria for all organisations**



## **Competition Rules**

- The rules of the proposed competition(s) (cups and leagues) shall be submitted with the application for sanction
- These proposed rules must be received at least 28 days prior to the proposed start date; late submissions may not be considered
- The request for approval must clearly set out the proposed departures from the Standard Code of Rules, highlighting any alterations.
- Proposed rules that do not comply with the mandatory elements of the Standard Code of Rules published by The FA from time to time will need to be amended to satisfy the requirements of the sanctioning Association before being officially sanctioned. Any proposed rule that runs contrary to FA/ESFA policies shall also be amended or withdrawn before being considered by the sanctioning body
- For competitions sanctioned in the previous season, only changes to the rules need be submitted. Such changes to the rules of the previous season must be set out clearly alongside the existing rule with an explanation for the proposed change (whether the change has been proposed by schools, the Management Committee or is a mandatory change required by The Association or sanctioning Association).
- Once approved, a competition is not allowed to alter its rules without the consent of the affiliated Association(s) sanctioning the competition.
- Rule changes may not be made after they have been approved by the sanctioning Association(s) giving consent to the Competition, unless such intended alteration has first been submitted to, and approved by, that Association, and subsequently by a General Meeting for an Association (where applicable).
- The sanctioning Association(s) may approve modifications of the Laws of the Game defined by the International FA Board in Competitions for players under the age of 16 and disability football

## **Additional criteria for non ESFA members**

- When required to do so by the sanctioning Association, Competitions shall provide a copy of the Balance Sheet and Statement of Accounts.
- All Competitions must have appointed a Welfare Officer (WO) before sanction may be granted.

<https://schoolsfootball.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Appointing-an-ESFA-Welfare-Officer.pdf>



### **Competition Entrants**

- Prior to the start of a Competition, the Competition shall ensure that all participating schools are correctly affiliated and shall make available to the sanctioning Association. Where a new competition is seeking sanction a list of the proposed teams, where possible, should be submitted with the application.
- All competition entrants should belong to its appropriate affiliated Association

### **Granting Sanction**

Only when satisfied that the above criteria appear to have been met shall the sanctioning body grant sanction. Competition organisers shall not allow matches to be played until their participating teams are affiliated and rules or rule changes are approved by the sanctioning Association(s).

If a difference of opinion arises between Affiliated Associations over the right of sanction and jurisdiction, any of the association(s) may appeal to The Association in accordance with the ESFA Appeals procedures

- In the event of a Competition being refused sanction or affiliation by an Affiliated Association the applicants have the right of appeal to The Association in accordance with the ESFA Appeals procedures

### **Insurance and other protection**

Failure to secure sanction results in:

- Certain insurances, including that provided by the ESFA for representative football, being rendered null and void, leaving players uninsured and creating potential liabilities for individual Associations
- Associations being unable to appoint registered match officials
- Activity not being protected by FA disciplinary processes
- The risk that incidents may not be properly managed through approved safeguarding procedures, putting children further at risk
- The sanctioning body being unable to deal with any issues arising.