



# SCOTTISH WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

## HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS COMPETITION RULES



**SEASON**  
**20**  
**26**

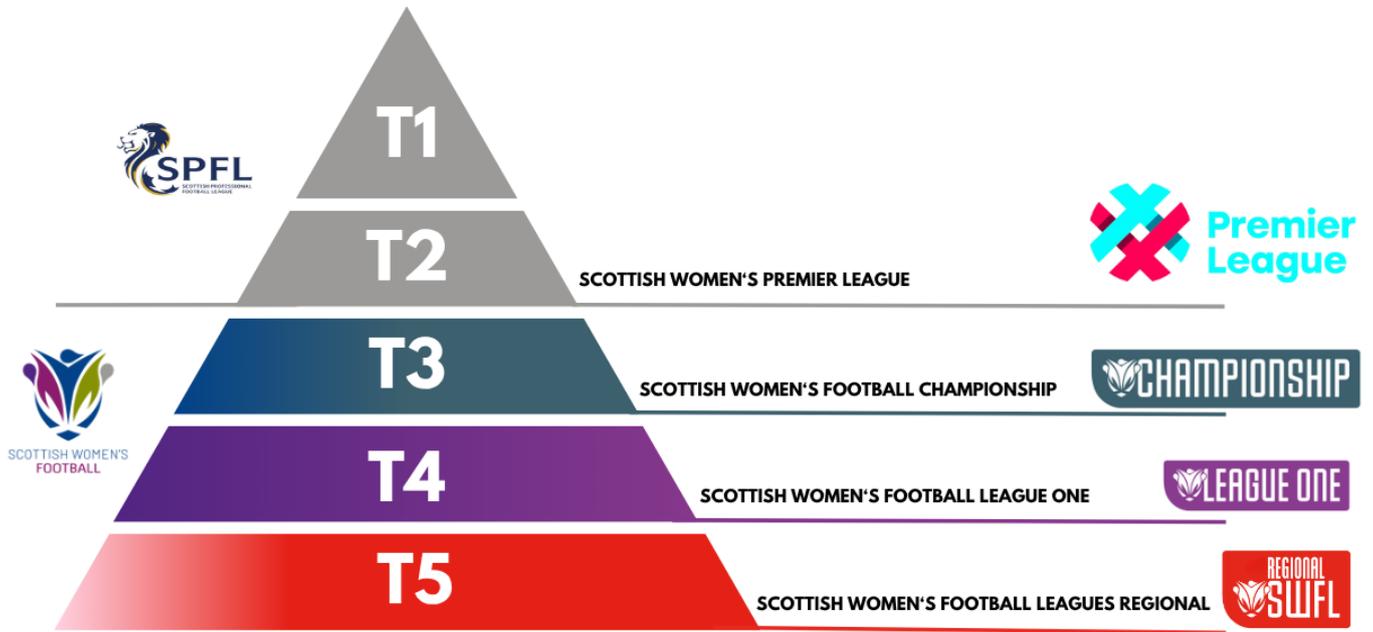




SCOTTISH WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

# WOMEN'S FOOTBALL IN SCOTLAND

## AND WHERE THE SCOTTISH WOMEN'S FOOTBALL LEAGUES SIT IN THE PYRAMID



**H&I**

ScottishPower  
HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS  
WOMEN'S LEAGUE

**YOUTH**

12s, 14s,  
16s, 18s

SCOTTISH WOMEN'S  
YOUTH LEAGUE

**YPL**

SCOTTISH WOMEN'S CENTRAL  
& NORTHERN WOMEN'S LEAGUE

**DEV**

SCOTTISH WOMEN'S  
DEVELOPMENT LEAGUE

### SCOTTISH WOMEN'S FOOTBALL CONTACTS

#### General Contact

swf@scotwomensfootball.com

#### League Administrator Contact

gareth@scotwomensfootball.com

#### Wellbeing Contact

wellbeing@scotwomensfootball.com

#### Competitions Operations Manager Contact

kirsty@scotwomensfootball.com

#### Media Manager Contact

tom@scotwomensfootball.com

#### PVG Contact

grassrootspvg@scottish-football.com



DEFINITIONS.....	4
1. INTRODUCTION .....	5
2. GOVERNANCE RULES.....	6
2.1 Competition Name and Structure.....	6
2.2 Confirmation of Eligible Clubs .....	6
3. PLAYING SEASON, CONDITIONS OF PLAY, ARRANGEMENTS AND FIELD OF PLAY.....	7
3.1. Playing Season .....	7
3.2 Conditions of Play.....	7
<b>3.3 Arrangements</b> .....	8
3.5 Field of Play .....	10
4. QUALIFICATION OF PLAYERS.....	11
4.1 Player eligibility.....	11
5. TEAMLINES, CLUB COLOURS, POSTPONEMENTS AND SUBSTITUTIONS .....	13
5. 1 Teamlines.....	13
5.2 Club Colours .....	13
5.3 Postponements .....	14
5.4 Substitutes .....	15
6. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES- Match Conduct .....	16
7. DETERMINING LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP .....	16
8. LEAGUE CUP RULES .....	17
8.1 League Cup Competition Format.....	17
8.2 League Cup Player Eligibility .....	18
9. TROPHY AND AWARDS .....	19
10. DISORDERLY CONDUCT.....	20
10.1 Spectator Conduct.....	20
11. INFRINGEMENT OF RULES .....	20
12. PROTESTS.....	20
13. CONTINUATION OF MEMBERSHIP OR WITHDRAWAL OF A CLUB.....	21
14. ALTERATIONS TO THE RULES.....	21
APPENDIX .....	22

Season 2026



The Rules of the Scottish Women's Football Highlands and Island Leagues and League Cup Competition.

## DEFINITIONS

In these rules:

**"AGM"** means Annual General Meeting.

**"Appeal"** means to appeal a decision made by the LMC in accordance with the Scottish Women's Football Appeals Procedure and Guidelines.

**"Appeals Committee"** means the Committee that handles Appeals in accordance with the Scottish Women's Football Appeals Procedure and Guidelines.

**"Club"** means a for the time being in membership of the Competition and **"Team"** means a side from a Club especially where a Club provides more than one Team in accordance with the Rules.

**"Competition"** means the H&I League and Cup Competitions.

**"COMET"** refers to the Football administration system that is used by the ScottishFA and affiliates to support the governance of the entire sport across Scotland.

**"Development Team"** means the second Senior Team that belongs to a Club that plays in the SWFL.

**"Entry Fee"** means the fee a Club shall pay to participate in their respective League.

**"H&I"** means Highlands and Islands.

**"Home Club"**, means the Club on and at whose ground the Match should be or should be played, or where ground sharing is in operation or the Clubs play at a neutral venue, the Club whose name is drawn first.

**"Judicial Panel Protocol" or "Judicial Panel"** means the disciplinary rules and procedures overseen by the SFA and may be referred to as the "JPP".

**"League Administrator"** means the individual employed by SWF to conduct the administration of the competitions.

**"League Management Committee" or "LMC"** means in the case of a Competition, the committee elected to manage the running of the competition.

**"Match Officials"** means the referee, the assistant referees and any fourth Official appointed to a Competition Match.

**"Player list"** means a submitted list of the Players from Clubs with more than one Team within Scottish Women's Football Pyramid Leagues.

**"Player Catalogue"** means the list of players assigned to a Team.

**"Playing Season"** means the period between the date on which the first competitive fixture in the Competition is played each year until the date on which the last competitive fixture in the Competition is played.

**"Perform and Win Committee"** means the Committee that is made up of representatives from The Championship, League One and the SWFL alongside SWF representatives, and external representatives who oversee the overall governance of the Scottish Women's Football Pyramid Leagues.



**“Pyramid Leagues and or Cups”** means SWF Senior Competitions in the pyramid (referring exclusively to The Championship, League One and the SWFL)

**“Recognised Team”** means the Team in which a Player features in the Teamlines most often.

**“Registered Ground”** means the ground that is the default Home ground for a Team.

**“Sanction(s)”** means a penalty imposed for infringement of the Rules.

**“ScottishFA”** refers to the governing body of football in Scotland.

**“Short season”** means a season which is shorter than that of a traditional season.

**“Slip date”** means the next available Match date pencilled in the calendar.

**“Summer season”** means a season which runs February to October.

**“SWF”** means Scottish Women’s Football.

**“SWFL”** means Scottish Women’s Football League, the lowest division, or *“Tier 5”*, of the Scottish Women’s Football Pyramid Leagues. These Leagues are Regional based Competitions.

**“Team”** means Team affiliated to a Club, including where a Club provides more than one Team in the Pyramid.

**“Teamline(s)”** means a form provided by the Competition on which the names of the Players taking part in a Competition Match are listed.

**“Tier 5”** means the Scottish Women’s Football Leagues (Regional Leagues)

**Traditional Football Season”** means a season that runs August to June.

**“Trialist”** means an unregistered Player.<sup>1</sup>

**“Visiting Club”**, means the Club which should play or should have played any Match on and at the ground of the Home Club and where ground sharing is in operation or the Match is to be played or is played at a neutral venue, the Club whose name is drawn second.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

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<sup>1</sup> On the COMET system a Trialist may be known as an “Unofficial Registration”.



- A) Unless the context otherwise requires, words or expressions contained in the Competition Rules shall bear the same meaning as noted above or where failing in the Articles of Scottish Women's Football.
- B) Unless the context otherwise requires, words importing the singular only shall include the plural and vice versa.
- C) The headings are inserted for convenience only and shall not affect the construction of the Rule.
- D) All references to a ground shall mean a registered ground, unless otherwise specified, within the context of these Rules.
- E) For Governance Rules and Information please refer to the Highlands and Islands Constitution Document.

## 2. GOVERNANCE RULES

### 2.1 Competition Name and Structure

- A) The Competition will be known as "Highlands & Islands League" or such other name as the Competitions may adopt via sponsorship)
- B) SWF organise and administer the Competitions in accordance with the Rules and the Laws of the Game, and as directed by the LMC in conjunction with the Perform and Win Committee.
- C) All Clubs shall adhere to the Rules. Every Club shall be deemed, as a member of the Competition, to have accepted the Rules and to have agreed to abide by the decisions of the Perform and Win Committee, the LMC and the League Administrator in relation to them.

### 2.2 Confirmation of Eligible Clubs

- A) The Clubs competing in the Highlands and Islands League and the League's Cup Competitions must be in membership of SWF.
- B) All Clubs shall complete the annual affiliation process to SWF which includes:
  - i) payment of the Club Annual Affiliation Fee and any outstanding fines, fees, and monies from the previous season; and
  - ii) agreement to adhere to the Laws of the Game, these Rules, the Articles, the Code of Ethics, and all SWF Policies.
- C) A Club shall not participate in these Competitions until the Affiliation Fee has been paid. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in the Club being rejected from participation in any Competitions.
- D) Teams will be confirmed by entry application.



- E) New clubs/ teams applying to play in the Highland and Island league must notify the league administrator, in writing, by the 1 November that they are seeking admission to the Highlands and Islands league for the following season.

### 3. PLAYING SEASON, CONDITIONS OF PLAY, ARRANGEMENTS AND FIELD OF PLAY

#### 3.1. Playing Season

- A) The Highlands and Islands Competition shall run as directed by the Perform and Win Committee with recommendation from the League Management Committee. This will run between February and October.
- B) The fixture schedule shall be determined by the perform and win committee on confirmation of compliant Teams. The League Administrator shall issue the fixtures to the Clubs, a minimum of 4 weeks prior to the commencement of each season. Receipt of fixtures shall be acknowledged in writing by each Club.

#### 3.2 Conditions of Play

- A) In accordance with the Laws of the Game, the minimum number of Players which will constitute a Team for a Competition Match is 7.
- B) The Home Club must allow their opposition access to the facilities a minimum of 60 minutes in advance to the kick-off. Facilities must meet the necessary league criteria. The Home Club must allow the opposition to have access to the main pitch (half pitch each) at least 30 minutes prior to the fixture. If half the pitch is not available for warm up, an alternative warm up area must be provided to the opposition at least 30 minutes before kick-off.
- C) It is the responsibility of the Home and Away Club to ensure that first aid cover is available at Matches played at its registered and standby grounds. It is best practice that an appointed Club medical officer and Club physiotherapist are in attendance. Failing this, a Club representative in possession of a current Sports First Aid Certificate or equivalent qualification recognised by SWF shall be in attendance.
- D) Full size goals with goal nets and corner flags (unless conditions make this dangerous) shall be used at all Matches.
- E) Where possible, spectators should be separated from the field of play by a wall, a rope, a railing, or a fence. If none of these are available cones to separate the spectators from the field of play by at least one meter is the minimum requirement.
- F) Technical areas as denoted in Field of Play rules must be used at all Matches. All named Team Staff must comply with the technical area boundaries as described in 3.5 B ii)



- G) Minimum of three footballs of first grade quality\* shall be provided by the Home Club for each Match played. \*Specified type and brand as per SWF partnership agreement.
- H) A Match will consist of two halves each of 45 minutes in duration.
- I) A Match which has started and which for any reason is abandoned, may not be continued as a “friendly” Match.
- J) The half time interval shall be of 15 minutes duration, or as otherwise determined by the referee.
- K) At the end of all Matches a fair play handshake should take place between both Teams, Players, Officials and Referee.

### 3.3 Arrangements

- A) All Competition Matches shall be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game as determined by the International Football Association Board.
  - i. All competition Matches shall be played on pitches that meet the required criteria standards set by SWF. If through any fault of the Home Club a Match must be replayed, the LMC shall have power to order the venue to be changed.
  - ii. The final round of League fixtures in each season shall have all Matches scheduled with the same time of kick-off, unless otherwise agreed by the LMC.
  - iii. The LMC have powers to alter fixture dates and times from time to time to facilitate the smooth running of the Competition.
- B) The times of kick-off shall be between 11:30 and 16:00 unless otherwise agreed by mutual consent of the two competing Clubs and the League Administrator. Referees must order Matches to commence at the appointed time and must report all late starts to the League Administrator.
- C) Any disputes between two or more Clubs will be referred to the League Administrator on the first instance. Where no resolution can be made cases will be referred to the LMC.
- D) The Home Club shall, not later than 5pm on the Monday preceding the Match, confirm the venue (including travel directions), kick-off time and the colour(s) they are intending to play in to the opposing Club, the League Administrator and Local Referee Co-ordinator in writing. It is the responsibility of the Home Team Club to advise the Match Official(s) once appointed of the Match arrangements as outlined above. The Visiting Club shall acknowledge receipt of such notification within 24 hours of receiving the notification.

For midweek Matches, the Home Club shall, not later than 5pm on the Wednesday during the week preceding the Match, confirm the venue (including travel directions), kick-off time and the colour(s) they are intending to play in, in writing to the opposing Club, the League Administrator and the and Local Referee Co-ordinator. The Visiting Club shall acknowledge receipt of such notification within 24 hours.



Failure to comply will result in a fine in accordance with the [2026 Disciplinary Procedures](#)

Refer to Appendix 6 for standardised format for how match arrangements should be issued in.

- E) It is the responsibility of the Home Club to notify the Match result, to the League Administrator within 24 hours of the Match.

**Table 1: Duration of time of League Matches and Cup Matches**

<b>League Matches</b>	<b>Duration of Match</b>	90 minutes (2x 45-minute halves)
	<b>Duration of half time</b>	15 minutes (or otherwise determined by the referee or mutually consented by both Clubs)
<b>Cup Matches</b>	<b>Duration of Match</b>	90 minutes (2x 45-minute halves)
	<b>Duration of half time</b>	15 minutes (or otherwise determined by the referee or mutually consented by both Clubs)

- F) Fulfilment of Fixtures
  - i. Clubs failing to fulfil fixture obligations, League, or League Cup, may face sanctions determined by the LMC, including but not limited to point deductions, fines and/or expulsion.
  - ii. Any Club failing to fulfil its fixture obligations shall be liable to pay compensation for any actual expenses incurred as a direct result of its failure. Applications for reimbursement shall be lodged in writing with the League Administrator not later than five days following the Match.

Failure to comply will result in a fine in accordance with the [2026 Disciplinary Procedures](#)

### 3.4 Appointment of Match Officials

- A) Match Officials shall be appointed by Referee Co-ordinators acting on behalf of the Scottish FA Referees' Association.

For Cup Final Competition Matches - Referees and Assistant Referees will be appointed by the SWF through the Scottish FA.

- B) A Club may not refuse the services of any Match Official.
- C) The appointed referee shall have power to decide the fitness of the Ground in all Competition Matches and that decision shall be final subject to the determination of the Local Authority or the owners of a ground, which must be accepted.
- D) The Home Club is responsible for the payment of the Match Officials' fees for League Matches and for all League Cup ties up to, and including, the Semi Final Round. The Home Club shall pay the Officials their fees immediately after the Match, except for the League Cup Finals which will be



paid by SWF. Payment may be by cash or electronic transfer. Cash payments paid on the day, and electronic payments must be completed within 48 hours.

- E) Should a Match Official not be notified of the postponement of a Match before travelling, they shall be entitled to payment of one half of the Match fee from the Home Club.
- F) In the event of a Competition Match not being played because of circumstances over which the Clubs have no control, the Match Officials, if present, shall be entitled to half the Match fee.
- G) Should a Match Official conduct a pitch inspection, they shall be entitled to payment of one half of the Match fee from the Home Club.
- H) Where a Match is not played due to one Club being at fault, that Club shall be ordered to pay the Officials, if they attend the ground, their full Match fee.
- I) A Match fee is deemed to be inclusive of expenses.

**Table 2: Match Officials Match Fees**

<b>Match Official Fee League*</b>	Total (£)	<b>Match Official Fee Cup*</b>	Total (£)
H&I Match Referee	50	H&I Match Referee	50
H&I Assistant Referee	25	H&I Assistant Referee	25

\* Match fees are set by SWF in collaboration with the SFA Referees Department before the start of each season.

### 3.5 Field of Play

- A) All League and League Cup Competition Matches shall be played on a natural grass surface or on an artificial turf surface. Artificial turf surfaces must comply with quality standards set for football by FIFA. The Home Club is also responsible for advising participants of footwear requirements when confirming Match arrangements in accordance with Rule 3.3.

Home Clubs with artificial turf surfaces will be required to provide confirmation of ground compliance with Health and Safety regulations. All Clubs in the Leagues shall have a registered ground, the specific details of which will be provided to the League Administrator, prior to the commencement of the season.

- B) Dimensions of the Field of Play
  - i. The field of play shall be compliant with the IFAB Laws of the Game.
  - ii. Technical areas, on the same side of the field of play as each other, marked by lines/markers etc., shall be provided at each ground.



## 4. QUALIFICATION OF PLAYERS

All players across each tier of SWF's competitions are required to register as set out below. These requirements are aligned to the SFA's Football Administration System- COMET.

### 4.1 Player eligibility

- A) A Player is one who, being in all other aspects eligible, has:
- i. signed a fully and correctly completed Scottish Football Association Player Registration Form, have the status confirmed on their COMET Player Profile and has subsequently been added to a team's Player Catalogue. A Player must be added to a team Catalogue by no later than 4pm on the Friday before a Sunday Competition Match, or no later than 4pm on the day of a midweek Competition Match, and the Catalogue has been confirmed by SWF prior to that Player playing in a Competition Match.  
Guide: [Register a new player](#)  
Guide: [Register an existing player](#)  
Guide: [Add player to Catalogue](#)
  - ii. If a Player is under 16 years of age, the registration form must be signed (in pen or electronically) by the Player's guardian.

Any registration that is not fully and correctly completed will be returned to the Club unprocessed and the Player classed as unregistered. If a Club attempts to register a Player via the Player Registration System but does not fully and correctly complete the necessary information via the Player Registration System, the registration will not be processed.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the [2026 Disciplinary Procedures](#)

- B) When a Club wishes to register a Player who is already registered with another Club it may approach the Player in question in the manner described by the SWF Player Approach Policy. If a Club is found to be in breach of this Policy, they will be liable to Sanctions as per [SWF Board Policy Over Player Approach 2026](#)

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the [2026 Disciplinary Procedures](#)

- C) It is the responsibility of each Club to ensure that its Players are eligible to play in Competition Matches. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the [2026 Disciplinary Procedures](#), where the team won the Match, the result shall be reversed to a 3-0 win to the opponent.

- D) To be eligible to participate in senior Competition Matches, Players must be 15 years of age<sup>2</sup>.

- E) Team List Submission:

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<sup>2</sup> A Player must be 15 years of age to participate in the SFA Women's Scottish Cup.



- i) Clubs with more than one Team within SWF Pyramid Leagues must submit Team lists at the beginning of the season, confirming the Players allocated to each Team.
- ii) Player Movement Upward:
  - a. Players may move from the Development Team to the Senior Team without restrictions, subject to Rule 4(E) above.
  - b. Players must not participate in more than one Match in a single day.
- iii) Player Movement Downward:

Player movement between senior team to the development team is restricted and only permitted in exceptional circumstance. This restriction includes under 18's playing with the senior team. Circumstances that may be considered for player movement include recovery from long term injury or illness. Return to play following concussion, return to play following maternity leave, Player development – a player who is not a regular playing member of the starting team. A player playing out with their player list must be notified to the League Administrator 7 days in advance of a match. Application must be sent for any and all matches and will be considered by the LMC and League Administrator.
- iv) Competition Matches:
  - a. The Player lists will apply to League and League Cup competitions under the authority of SWF.

Cup tied rules apply (see rule 8.2)

- F) Any Team fielding an ineligible Player in a Match or Matches may have any points gained from that Match or Matches deducted from its record in the League, up to a maximum of 12 points, and/or the result being awarded 3-0 in favour of the opposing Team, and/or be liable to other such penalties as the LMC may decide. The LMC reserves the right to apply additional sanctions that may result in a fine in accordance with the [2026 Disciplinary Procedures](#)
- G) If a Player participates in a League fixture or a League Cup tie whilst being ineligible to play in the Match as a result of a suspension imposed by the SFA, SWPL or SWF, the Team for which the Player has participated may have the following sanctions applied:
  - i. If the Match is won or drawn, the result will be awarded 3-0 in favour of the opposing Team.
  - ii. If the Match is lost, the Team may be deducted points from its points total in the League (or Cup Group if applicable)
  - iii. And/or be liable to other such penalties as the LMC may decide.
- H) Suspensions imposed by the Referee, or any other relevant Committees can only be served by registered Players. Suspensions must be served for a Player's Recognised Team.
- I) A Player who has an outstanding Suspension is not eligible to participate in any competitive football Match until this suspension is served. For the avoidance of doubt this does not include friendlies or international Matches.
- J) A Player may only sign for a maximum of three Clubs in one Season. For the avoidance of doubt, the Player can play competitively at all three Clubs.



- K) No more than three unregistered Players (“Trialists”) may be allowed to play or be listed as a substitute for a Club in any League Match.
- L) Trialists are permitted to play in League Cup competition during the group stages. They are not permitted to play during the knockout rounds.
- M) Each Trialist may be allowed to play in, or be listed as a substitute for, a maximum of three games (including any Match not completed) for any one Club, provided she is otherwise eligible to do so.

There are no date restrictions to playing Trialists.

## 5. TEAMLINES, CLUB COLOURS, POSTPONEMENTS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

### 5.1 Teamlines

- A) Not later than 30 minutes before the start of a League Match, each Club shall submit the Team Line on COMET. Handwritten Team lines are not permissible. Should any nominated Player or substitute sustain an injury or due to extenuating circumstances be unable to participate after the submission of the list of Players to the referee and prior to kick-off, the following provisions shall apply:
  - i. If any of the first 11 Players listed on the Team Line is not able to start the Match for any reason, they may be replaced by any of the 7 substitutes.
  - ii. If any of the 7 substitutes listed on the Team Line is not able to be fielded for any reason, they may not be replaced, which means that the quota of substitute Players will be reduced accordingly.
  - iii. If a goalkeeper listed on the Team Line cannot be fielded for any reason, she may be replaced by another goalkeeper not previously listed on the Team Line.
  - iv. The referee shall complete the match report on Comet on completion of the match. On which they shall intimate the result, the goal scorers, time of goal scorers, time of goals and which substitute or substitutes played in the Match. The referee shall also submit a misconduct report.

Failure to comply will result in a fine in accordance with the [2026 Disciplinary Procedures](#)

- B) Only Team Officials named on the Team List are allowed on the benches/in the technical area.

The Team Officials must remain on the benches or in the technical area unless permitted to come onto the pitch by the referee, e.g. to assess or treat an injured player.

Only one person at a time is allowed to stand and coach.

### 5.2 Club Colours



- A) Every Team must register via Comet, the colour of its shirts, shorts, and socks with the League Administrator who shall decide as to their suitability.
- B) The nominated Away/Second kit of a Team must be materially different in colour to the Home/First kit.
- C) Goalkeepers must wear colours which distinguish them from other Players and the Match Officials.
- D) Any Team not being able to play in its normal colours as registered with the Competition shall notify its opponents of the colours in which they will play (including the colour of the goalkeeper's shirt) at least 4 days before the Match.
- E) If, in the opinion of the referee, two Teams have the same or similar colours, the Visiting Team shall make the change. If the second/ away kit of the visiting side is still deemed to be similar colours, the home side shall make the change.
- F) Shirts must all be numbered and correspond to the numbers appearing on any Team sheet, and no two shirts shall have the same number.

### 5.3 Postponements

- A) Except by permission of the LMC all Competition Matches must be played on the dates originally agreed, which may include on a day other than Sunday. Priority shall be given to SWF Cup Competitions and the SFA Women's Scottish Cup. All other Matches must be considered secondary. In the event of a clash SWF Cup Competitions and the SFA Women's Scottish Cup, the league match shall be automatically rescheduled to the next slip date, with a minimum of 7 days' notice provided to the opposition, or on an earlier date mutually agreed by both clubs. Failure to confirm such agreement to the League Administrator will mean the LMC shall have the power to stipulate the rescheduled fixture date.
- B) If a Team wishes to move a Match, Teams must inform the League Administrator, the opposition and the referee coordinator, the details of any fixtures in within 5 days of the fixture being scheduled. All postponement request to play a Match on a later date than the originally scheduled fixture, must be approved by the LMC. Clubs may mutually agree to play a Competition Match on an earlier date than the originally scheduled fixture with the consent of the League Administrator.
- C) Any fixture rescheduled as a result of an agreed postponement shall be played on the rearranged date. The rearranged fixture date shall not be altered except in circumstances beyond the control of the participating Teams.

Clubs may not apply for any postponement after the 1<sup>st</sup> October in any season.



**Table 4:** Postponement requirements

Postponement requirements	H&I
Timescale	5 days prior
Postponement form	Required
Agreement of opponent	Required
<b>Max number of Postponements per Team</b>	3

- D) The postponement of any Match due to unplayable ground or other causes over which neither Club has control, or abandonment of League fixtures requires to be immediately reported in writing to the League Administrator by the Club(s) concerned. Any Club failing to comply with instructions in this regard shall be referred to the LMC.
- E) Any Match not completed, except as provided for in [“Infringement of Rules”](#), may be ordered to stand as a played Match or may be replayed in its entirety as the LMC may determine.
- F) If, for unforeseen reasons, the Home Club is forced to change ground, the Club must notify the League Administrator, the visiting Club, and the appointed Match Officials immediately.
- G) Where a Club’s ground (or alternative ground) is unplayable or unavailable on the day set for the playing of the Match, both Clubs can agree to reverse the venue. The clubs are responsible for notifying any appointed official and the League Administrator.
- H) The abandonment of League fixtures requires to be immediately reported in writing to the League Administrator by the Club(s) concerned.
- I) Abandoned fixtures shall be automatically rescheduled to the next available slip date, with a minimum of seven days’ notice provided to the opposition, unless an earlier date is mutually agreed by both clubs. Any such agreement must be confirmed to the League Administrator. LMC shall have the power to stipulate the rescheduled fixture date. If no slip dates remain, the clubs must agree a new fixture date within seven days; failing this, the LMC will determine the date.
- J) In extenuating circumstances, the LMC shall have the power to re-schedule Matches, other than those prescribed in this Rule, to facilitate the smooth running of the Competition.

#### 5.4 Substitutes

- A) Rolling substitutes may be used in any Match.
- B) Concussion Substitutes are permitted (in accordance with [IFAB regulations](#)).

A Substitution made due to concussion does not count as one of the five permitted substitutes or one of the three substitute opportunities.

**Table 5:** Information on maximum number of substitutes who can take part, Maximum number of Substitutes, and Maximum number of Officials on the teamline.

League	Max No. of Subs on bench	Max. No of Subs that can take part	Max No. of Officials on Official Teamline.
H&I	7	No maximum.	6

## 6. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES- Match Conduct

- A) SWF shall carry out the Disciplinary Procedures for Players and Club Officials misconduct in accordance with the Scottish Women's Football Disciplinary Procedures. [2026 Disciplinary Procedures](#)

## 7. DETERMINING LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP

- A) Team rankings within the Competition will be decided by:
- Three points to the winner.
  - One point to each Team in the event of a draw.
  - No points to the loser.
- B) If there remains equality among two or more Teams, then these Teams will be ranked according to Table 6.

**Table 6:** Rankings shall be determined by the following in this order:

	Determination of Team ranking if Teams finished on equal points
1	Goal Difference
2	Most goals scored
3	Head-to-head
4	Goals scored Away from Home
5	Still equal – Play off (conditions determined by the LMC)

- B) If, following the application of the criteria previously mentioned, the Teams are still level, the determination of a League Championship, relegation from a League, or qualification for other competitions shall be determined by the Teams playing a deciding game, or games, in such manner and under such conditions as the LMC may decide.



When the winning Club is ascertained, the League shall deliver the Cup to the Club. The Club shall be responsible for its return to the League as per details in Section 9.

The structure of each League will be determined by the Perform and Win Committee before the commencement of each season.

- C) There will be no promotion or relegation from the H&I.
- D) A Club which operates more than one Senior Team in Women's Football in Scotland, can only have a second Senior Team competing in H&I.
- E) If any team(s) in the Leagues is expelled, resigns, or retires for any reason before the commencement of the playing season, the Management Committee will have full powers to deal with the situation as it deems appropriate.
- F) In the event of a Club withdrawing during the playing season, all points gained by Clubs winning or drawing against the Club withdrawing from a League shall be deducted. Similarly, goals for and against shall be declared null and void.
- G) All circumstances not covered in the paragraphs above, will be referred to the Perform and Win Committee.

## 8. LEAGUE CUP RULES

- A) The H&I Cup shall be called the Highlands & Islands League Cup. The Competition name may change only to reflect a title sponsor.

### 8.1 League Cup Competition Format

- A) H&I League Cup competition shall be determined by the Perform and Win Committee at the start of each season. This may either be a knockout competition or compromise of group stages.
- B) Where the Competition is played on a knock-out basis. The ties shall be drawn as soon as possible after each round. In each tie the game shall be played on the ground of the Club first drawn, unless otherwise mutually arranged, with the consent of the LMC.

In all rounds in a knock-out basis, including the Final, 90 minutes must be played in all Matches. If the Teams are level after 90 minutes, the winner will be determined by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark, in accordance with the [Laws of the Game](#).

- C) League rules apply to the Cup Competitions unless a specific rule is listed in this section.
- D) If a Competition contains Group Stages, Team rankings within the Competition will be decided by:
  - Three points to the winner.
  - One point to each Team in the event of a draw.
  - No points to the loser.



The respective LMC will determine the progression format for the respective competition. If two or more Teams are equal on points upon completion of the League Cup Group Stages, the following criteria are applied to final Group position:

**Table 7:** Determination of Team ranking if Teams finished on equal points in Groups.

	<b>Determination of Team ranking if Teams finished on equal points</b>
1	Goal Difference
2	Most goals scored
3	Head-to-head
4	Still equal – Play off (conditions determined by LMC)

- E) The Finals of all League Cup Competitions will be played at a neutral venue.
- F) A Club which is drawn to play in a Match in a Round is ejected from the Competition in accordance to a sanction imposed by the LMC before the Match takes place, such Club shall be replaced in the said Match by the Club which it played in the immediately preceding Round or, if any Club which is so ejected from the Competition has not already played a Match in the Competition in the relevant Season, the Club which it has been drawn to play will receive a bye into the next Round.
- G) If a Club which is drawn in a Group in a Competition, is ejected from the Competition pursuant to a sanction imposed by the LMC during which that Competition is taking place, all results in relation to that Team will be declared null and void.

## 8.2 League Cup Player Eligibility

- A) Only Players registered for a SWF Club in accordance with [Qualification of Player Rule 4](#) shall be eligible to play for that Club in any one season.
- B) To be eligible to participate in the final of a League Cup Competition, a Player must have been registered to play on the date the Semi-Final<sup>3</sup> tie was played. Goalkeepers may gain exemption from this rule, only on the written agreement of the LMC.  
  
A goalkeeper who gains exemption may not for any reason whatsoever play in any other position.
- C) The Players in a Team may be changed from Match to Match, but a Club or a Team may not play or list as a named substitute any Player who has already played (as one of the eleven first-named Players or as a fielded substitute) for another Club or Team in the SWFL or Championship and League One League Cups.
- D) A Player who has completed a change of Club and has previously competed in the Scottish Women's Premier League Cup, cannot then compete in the H&I League Cup competitions.

<sup>3</sup> In the scenario where there are no semi-finals a Player must be registered by the final Group Stage Match.



- E) Where a Player has played in any Round(s) for one Highland and Islands Club in a Season (either as a Starting Player or a Fielded Substitute) and such Club ceases to exist during such Season, such Player may subsequently play for another Highland and Islands Club in the Competition.
- F) A Player(s) shall not be deemed to have played (as one of the 11 Starting Players or as a Fielded Substitute) in a Match where such Match has been abandoned or is declared void, except where such Match was abandoned or declared void because of the conduct of such Player(s) acting in breach of the Disciplinary Rules.
- G) Any Team found to have played an ineligible Player in a Match or Matches may be removed from the Competition, have points deducted, or have the tie awarded to the opposition. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the [2026 Disciplinary Procedures](#)
- H) In League Cup ties, the players in a team may be changed from match to match. Note: For the avoidance of doubt, players who have played in, Youth Regional League cup/plate or Youth Performance League Cup(s) competitions would be eligible to play in the Highland and Island League Cup\*

\*Please note that SWFL and Championship and League One Players are Cup tied to their respective Cup Competitions and ineligible to play in the Highland and Islands league. Please refer to section 9.2 League Cup Player Eligibility in Pyramid rule book for details

See [Section 4](#) for Qualification of Players

## 9. TROPHY AND AWARDS

- A) The trophies, including any replicas, are the property of Scottish Women's Football.
- B) The League trophies shall be presented to the Team which is determined the winner of the Leagues in the Scottish Women's Football Pyramid.
- C) The League Cup trophies shall be presented to the Team which is determined the winner of the Cup in the Scottish Women's Football Highlands and Islands League Cup Competitions.
- D) All trophies and plates shall be returned, with the appropriate engraving, at the League Administrators request on or before 31<sup>st</sup> August in the ensuing year in good order and condition. Failure to comply will result in the Club being invoiced for the repairs or replacement of the trophy the Team or Club may also be liable to a sanction imposed by the appropriate LMC.
- E) SWF shall present a medal, 25 in total, to the winners of each League. The runners up of each of the Leagues will be presented with a commemorative souvenir.
- F) SWF shall present a medal, 25 in total, to the winners and the runners up of each of the League Cup Competitions.



## 10. DISORDERLY CONDUCT

### 10.1 Spectator Conduct

Clubs are responsible for the behaviour of their Players, Officials, members, supporters, and any person carrying out a function at a Match on their behalf. In the event of damage being sustained to a ground where a Competition Match is played as a consequence of misbehaviour by a Player, Official, member, supporters, or any other person acting on behalf of or associated with a Club, then that Club shall be responsible for any costs arising. The LMC shall have the power to request such reports as may be necessary in determining responsibility for restitution and may additionally impose upon any Club a censure, fine, expulsion from the competition or suspension if, in the opinion of the LMC, a ground is the subject of damage by that Club's representatives or those associated with it.

## 11. INFRINGEMENT OF RULES

- A) Any Club, Official, player, or other person, who infringes any of these Rules, shall be liable to a fine or suspension, or both or such other sanction(s) as specified within these Rules. The LMC has the power to investigate, consider and determine any allegations relative to the infringement of these Rules and to impose such sanction(s), as specified within these Rules, as it considers appropriate to deal justly with the case in question.
- B) A Club which is found to have infringed these Rules, may be liable to replay a specific Match in question, at a time, venue, and other conditions as deemed appropriate by the LMC in its absolute discretion.
- C) If the Management Committee decides to impose a replay or suspension on a Club which is found to have infringed these Rules, an appeal from the Club against such decision must be dispatched in writing to Scottish Women's Football within three days.

## 12. PROTESTS

- A) All questions of eligibility, qualifications of Players or interpretations of the Rules shall be referred to the League Administrator in the first instance. The Secretary or other accredited club official shall be required to confirm the protest, to the League Administrator by the end of the third day, following completion of the match. These may be escalated to the LMC.
- B) Any determinations of the LMC shall be binding subject to the right of appeal in accordance with the Scottish Women's Football Appeals Procedure and Guidelines.

Determinations of the LMC must be notified in writing to those concerned within seven working days.

The decision against which any appeal is made will only be set aside when the appeal is received by Scottish Women's Football and agreed to be in order, and confirmation is received in writing by the parties concerned in accordance with Article 44 of the Scottish Women's Football Articles: Appeals Procedure and Guidelines.



Any decision taken by Scottish Women's Football is subject to appeal to the Judicial Panel of the Scottish FA in accordance with the Scottish FA Articles of Association and Judicial Panel Protocol.

- C) If a member of the LMC relates to a Club which is involved in a protest, or in any disciplinary hearing where a penalty may be imposed on the Club or an Official or a player of the Club, then he/she shall not sit in the Management Committee while the matter is being determined.
- D) Any objection to the ground, goal posts, crossbars, or other appurtenances of the game shall be intimated to the referee before the start of the match. The club on whose ground the match is played shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with Rule 15, and Law 1 of the Laws of the Game - The Field of Play.

### 13. CONTINUATION OF MEMBERSHIP OR WITHDRAWAL OF A CLUB

- A) On conclusion of Playing Season - A Club intending, or having a provisional intention, to withdraw a Team from the Competition on completion of its fixtures and fulfilment of all other obligations to the Competition must notify the League Administrator in writing by 31<sup>st</sup> October each season.
- B) Following fixtures being issued - A Club intending, or having a provisional intention, to withdraw a Team from the Competition once the fixtures have been made and sent to Clubs or during the Playing Season, will not be entitled to the reimbursement of their League entry fee.
- C) During a Playing Season - Where a Team wishes to resign from the Pyramid League at any time it should do so in writing to the League Administrator at least five working days prior to the Official date of the dissolution of the Club and or Team.
- D) Any Club failing to fulfil its fixture obligations in respect of any such Match in the League or League Cup on the appointed date or dates shall be liable to such sanctions as the LMC may determine, but not limited to including the deduction of points, fine or expulsion.

### 14. ALTERATIONS TO THE RULES

- A) Alterations shall be made to these Rules only at the Annual General Meeting or at an Emergency General Meeting of the Scottish Women's Pyramid Leagues.

For H&I - Notice of proposed alterations to be considered at the AGM shall be submitted to the Perform and Win Committee via the League Administrator by the 15<sup>th</sup> November each year.

The Perform and Win Committee will determine the competency of rule proposals submitted. The Committee will then review and note any competent rules to be put forward to Clubs for vote at the AGM. Amendments can be submitted throughout a season on the form in Appendix 5 A proposal to change a Rule shall be carried if a majority of those present, entitled to vote and voting are in favour.



- B) The rules may be changed at any time by the SWF Board with the proviso that all Clubs are informed timeously and there has been consultation with the Perform and Win Committee.

# APPENDIX

**APPENDIX 1** – SWF Appeals Process

**APPENDIX 2** - Match Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures



**APPENDIX 3** – Player Approach Policy

**APPENDIX 4** – Codes of Conduct

**APPENDIX 5** - Rule Alteration Form

**APPENDIX 6** - Standardised format of Match Arrangements

## **APPENDIX 1 - SWF APPEALS PROCESS**

As per Scottish Women's Football's (SWF) Appeals Procedure and Guidelines, any determination made by a recognised football body of a judiciary nature is appealable to the SWF Appeals Committee. The SWF Appeals Committee comprises of members who shall make a determination which shall be final and binding on the parties concerned unless the decision is appealed by the unsuccessful appellant to the Scottish FA subject to grounds for appeal.



The Appeals committee deal with various appeals including Dispensation, Rule breach, player Approach. Please note this is not the process for appealing Red Cards. Please see the senior competitions page for details of this.

The Appeals Committee should consider the appeal based on the appellant's grounds for appeal, with reference to the submissions made by all parties and not on the original decision.

The Appeals Committee do not have to give reasons for their determination; however, the appellant may request for further information.

**The SWF Articles detail further appeal information:**

[SWF Appeals Procedures and Guidelines](#)

[SWFA APPEALS PROCEDURE AND GUIDELINES](#)

[SWF Appeals Form](#)

[SWF Appeals Form](#)

## **APPENDIX 2 - Match Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures**

**Disciplinary Procedures Governance**

[H&I - SWF REGIONAL FOOTBALL DISCIPLINARY PROCESS](#)

[Disciplinary Procedures for 2026 Season](#)

**For the avoidance of doubt, H&I teams cannot appeal red cards.**



### **APPENDIX 3 - PLAYER APPROACH POLICY**

There is only one acceptable method to make an enquiry to a club about a player registered with them and that is in writing from a club official. The club that holds the registration then must inform the player and their parents to see whether there is any desire to take the enquiry further. It is good practice to copy [swf@scotwomensfootball.com](mailto:swf@scotwomensfootball.com) into initial player approach emails between club secretaries.

Where a Club wishes to report an Illegal Approach to one of their players, they should formally communicate this to SWF and evidence their complaint using the SWF Breach of Policy form.



Evidence including photographs and/or statements from relevant personnel are strongly advised to support the complaint. The complaint shall follow SWF's Complaint Handling Process.

Note: Approaches made over 4 weeks prior to lodging the complaint shall not be investigated.

Full details can be found: [SWF Board Policy Over Player Approach 2026](#)

#### APPENDIX 4 - CODES OF CONDUCT

<b>Adult Players</b>	<a href="#">SWF Adult Player Code of Conduct</a>
<b>Coaches/Officials</b>	<a href="#">Coaches Code of Conduct</a>



<b>Parent and Carers</b>	<a href="#">Parent Code of Conduct</a>
<b>Young Players</b>	<a href="#">Young Player Code of Conduct</a>



## APPENDIX 5 - Rule Alteration Form

### Scottish Women's Football

#### Rule Alteration

To: Highlands and Islands League Administrator

<b>H&amp;I</b>	
Date of submission	

Current Rule Number (if applicable)	
-------------------------------------	--

Current rule

New/Amended Rule proposal	

Rational	

Submitted by:

Position at Club:

Signed:

Date:



#### Notes for Clubs:

- All requests to change rules should be submitted to **Gareth@scotwomensfootball.com** by the date prescribed for the relevant competition.
- The Perform and Win Committee will determine the competency of rule proposals submitted. The Committee will then review and note any competent rules to be put forward to clubs for vote at the AGM.
- For avoidance of doubt, supported amendments submitted timeously on the appropriate form will be circulated to clubs 21 days in advance of end of season meetings.
- All supported and voted for suggestions will then be presented at SWF's Annual General Meeting and voted upon as per SWF's Articles of Association.
- For rules to be passed at SWF's AGM, a majority of 75% of the votes of the appointed representatives is required as per SWF's Articles of Association (Article 11).
- All rules passed will then be reviewed within the SFA governance structure.



## APPENDIX 6 – Standardised format of Match Arrangements

In advance to matches, the home club should share the following information with their opposition, the referee and the League Administrator in the format set out below.

Match: Home team v Away team

Venue:

Pitch surface:

Warm up access time:

Warm up surface type (if different to match pitch surface):

Team changing facility information:

Kick off time:

Colours:

Spectator arrangements:

Hospitality arrangements if hosting:

Match being recorded: Yes/No (highlight appropriate)

### Additional required information

Nearest hospital:

Nearest defibrillator arrangements:

