



BRITISH AMERICAN FOOTBALL REFEREES ASSOCIATION LIMITED

Training, Assessment and Review

Induction Training Programme

When a new member joins BAFRA, the [Director of Training](#) will arrange for him/her to undergo the induction training programme. This can be done in a variety of ways, including:

- a Local Mentor will be appointed by the [Director of Recruitment](#) to help guide the trainee through the [Induction Training Manual](#) over a number of sessions.
- a guided reading of the [Induction Training Manual](#) via email, Skype, or telephone.

Which way depends on the new member's availability and also the location of the nearest suitable Mentor.

The [General Secretary](#) will provide the new member with copies of the [Induction Training Manual](#) and [Induction Training Log](#), as well as the [Rulebook](#) and [Manual of Football Officiating](#). In addition to rules and mechanics (where to stand and what to look for), the course will cover the fundamentals of officiating and the structure and aims of BAFRA. Details about [uniform and how to obtain it](#) should also be explained at this stage. The new member will be made aware of the commitment necessary to officiating both on and off the field, including attendance at meetings, local, regional and national.

In addition to the induction training course, the new member is encouraged to attend local association meetings, regional clinics, development clinics and the annual training convention and to talk to other members about their on-field experiences. They are also encouraged to watch games on TV or video, to learn to read formations and possibly spot infractions, and to read other books on officiating in addition to the [Rulebook](#) and [Manual of Football Officiating](#).

At the end of the induction training course (or earlier if the new member is ready), a "competency test" is administered. If this is passed, the new "Competent Associate" is eligible to go on the field.

The rookie, the mentor and the scheduler should agree on a suitable game for the rookie's debut. The mentor or another experienced official should accompany the rookie on the field both as supervisor and also as back-up official for that position for reasons of player safety. The back-up official will guide the trainee through the procedures they learned in induction training and give them encouragement and support. Comments can be made both between plays and at half time and the end of the game. As the rookie develops confidence they can be left more and more to their own devices.

After their first game, the rookie official can be assigned to games on their own, providing that they can be placed on a reasonably strong crew that can give them support and guidance, particularly on the procedures that don't occur in every game. Whenever operationally possible, a rookie official should be scheduled to the same position for their first four games. Before assigning a rookie to a new position, the mentor, rookie, and Operations Team will agree to that assignment.

The referee or another senior official should fill in a page of the [Induction Training Log](#), for each

game, making constructive comments about the rookie's progress. After the rookie's 10th game, the Log should be completed and sent to the Director of Training for validation. At this point the [Director of Training](#) will assess the trainee's progress with his Mentor to decide whether the trainee has qualified or requires more training.

Problems with the above process, including but not limited to lack of training material or problems with training officers, should be referred to the [Director of Training](#).

The BAFRA Membership Categories

Full members are considered to be in one of two categories relating to their capability to officiate, these are: Associate and Qualified.

Associate members who pass the competency test will be considered "Competent Associate" members and competent to take the field. Qualified members may progress to different levels (1 through 4) depending on their capability to officiate as per the [Level System for BAFRA Officials](#). Each official must spend a minimum of one year at any level, whilst achieving minimum standards, to be considered for promotion by the [Director of Training](#).

After joining, a member must take and pass a competency test in order to be able to officiate. Once 10 games have been completed satisfactorily, the trainee sends their log book to the [Director of Training](#) who decides with their mentor if they have achieved Qualified status.

Elite status can only be granted by the BAFRA Selection Committee.

The [Director of Training](#) (subject to review by the Executive Board) may deem a member qualified or may elevate a member to a higher level if they have evidence of considerable experience of American football officiating (e.g. in another country or as a BAFRA member in the past). This procedure will be used on an individual basis but will not normally be used to give qualified or higher status to someone who has been inactive for more than 2 years or who has not sat the most recent BAFRA annual exam.

Officials are expected to, at least, maintain performance at the level required to attain their current officiating level. Any official who fails to do so (measured after annual exam scores are published), will be contacted by the [Director of Training](#) (or representative) to discuss any issues, extenuating circumstances, or additional Training requirements to return to performing at previous levels. Any official who fails to meet their current level's standards in consecutive years will be demoted by not more than one level.

Examinations

The Annual BAFRA Examination is held annually in the five weeks following the Convention. The exam is in open-book format. A small committee is responsible for setting and administering the exam.

A qualified member who does not sit the annual exam will have to pass the competency test and work 10 games as a "Competent Associate" before regaining "Qualified" member status. Members of the exam committee are exempt from this process.

A qualified member who does not meet a minimum score of 40% will be referred to the Officiating Review Committee.

Assessments

BAFRA relies on a volunteer band of assessors to observe games and to complete an assessment report on the crew. Assessors are paid the same fee as an official working that level of game and travel expenses from home. Friendly games count as league games for the payment of assessors. As part of an Elite programme commitment to help the wider BAFRA membership, Elite programme members must perform (if assigned) at least one crew assessment to a satisfactory standard during the year.

The following guidelines for assessments are offered as good practice:

- The assessor should make themselves known to the crew and attend the pre-game conference and post-game debrief. The assessor's name should be included on the Game Report form.
- Assessment reports should be forwarded to the [Director of Training](#) (preferably electronically) within 7 days of the game. Failure to do so may result in no fee being paid.
- Assessors should concentrate primarily on evaluating the officials' mechanics: other factors such as rules knowledge and application are secondary. Fundamentally, is each official in the right place at the beginning of the play, do they react appropriately as the play develops, are they in the right position when the play becomes dead, and do they carry out the correct duties between downs?
- Assessment reports must include comments for each item that provides clear and constructive criticism. Things done well should be highlighted as well as things to improve officiating. The "any other comments" at the bottom will contain a synopsis of the game, and expand on any points that contain deductions.

The quality of the comments will determine the game score given to the assessor. Failure to adhere to these principles won't automatically disqualify an assessment from consideration but may be taken into account by the [Director of Training](#) in whether a particular individual should be used as an assessor again.

Officiating Review Committee

The Officiating Review Committee is responsible for judging individual officiating standards. It deals with complaints that an official, in one of more aspects of their on-field performance, is deficient in rules application, mechanics, procedures or judgement. Anyone can make a case to the Committee (via the [Director of Training](#)), but it must be in writing and supported by independent evidence (e.g. a videotape or statements from independent witnesses). The Committee shall invite the official concerned to make a written submission to it in defence or mitigation. The evidence will be examined by the Committee who will decide whether the official's performance was inadequate. If so, the Committee may take the following action against an individual:

- issue them with a warning concerning their officiating standard;
- place restrictions on the games they may work;
- demote them by one or more level;
- suspend them from officiating for a period of time of up to one year;
- recommend expulsion from membership;

Normally in the first instance a warning would be given together with a plan of additional training. Further action may be taken if the warning is not heeded. A member has the right of appeal to the Executive Board concerning action taken against them.