



## 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 them to undergo the induction training programme. This will guide the Associate through the [Induction Training Manual](#) typically be via one of two routes:

- 1) Online Induction Training – a six session online course, once per week via Zoom.
- 2) One-to-One Training – delivered to a schedule that suits the Associate and Mentor – either online, by phone, or in person.

The [Head of Mentoring](#) will arrange for a Mentor to be assigned as soon as possible. The [General Secretary](#) will provide the new member with the link to the [Induction Training Manual](#) as well as copies of the [Rulebook](#) and [Manual of Football Officiating](#). In addition to rules and mechanics 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 at the discretion of the Director of Training), a "competency exam" is administered. If this is passed, the new "Competent Associate" is eligible to go on the field.

A suitable game for the Competent Associate's debut will be assigned by the Operations team. The mentor, or another experienced official (buddy), should accompany the Competent Associate on the field both as a supervisor and back-up official for that position for reasons of player safety. This will, where operationally possible, be at Line Judge without the clock. 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 between plays, at half time, and after the game. As the Competent Associate develops confidence, they can increasingly be left to officiate without interruption or comment.

If the Competent Associate is comfortable to do so, they can be assigned to games on their own. They should 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 Competent Associate should be scheduled to work Line Judge, Head Line, and Umpire at least once during their first ten games.

The Referee should obtain feedback ("areas performed well" and "areas for development") from

the crew after each game to provide constructive comments to the Competent Associate. This will be input into the online forms and will be available in the Competent Associate's profile on the BAFRA website. After the Competent Associate's tenth game, the [Director of Training](#) will liaise with the mentor to assess the Competent Associate's progress and decide whether they should be promoted to qualified status or if they require 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](#).

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

The [Director of Training](#) (subject to review by the Board of Directors) 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. The exam committee is responsible for setting and administering the exam. The results will be deemed final and submitted to the Director of Training, after consideration of appeals, seven days after the initial publication of results. Any further appeals may be heard by the Examination testers, at the discretion of the Director of Training and/or President.

A qualified member who does not sit the annual exam will have to pass the competency exam and work ten games as a "Competent Associate" before regaining "Qualified" member status. Members of the Examination Committee are expected to sit the exam at least once in every four-year period, unless granted an extension by the Board of Directors.

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

## Assessments

BAFRA relies on voluntary assessors to observe games and to complete an assessment report on the crew. Assessors are paid a fee and travel expenses from home. 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.
- Accurate references to Rules or Mechanics mentioned in any comments should be included for easy reference by the official.

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 considered 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 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.