



**ACCREDITED  
LEAGUE**  
PART OF ENGLAND FOOTBALL

# ***LEAGUE SUPPORT AND SERVICE AGREEMENT***

## **GUIDANCE NOTES**

# CONTENTS

<b>The delivery plan</b>	<b>3</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Section one: League details</b>	<b>3</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Transition</b>	<b>4</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Section two: a review of last season's initiatives</b>	<b>5</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Section three: S.W.O.T analysis</b>	<b>5</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Consultation summary</b>	<b>5</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Section four: this season's initiatives</b>	<b>6</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Section five: County FA support</b>	<b>7</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Section six: declaration</b>	<b>8</b>
<hr/>	
<b>League Accreditation criteria checklist</b>	<b>8</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Transition</b>	<b>9</b>
<hr/>	
<b>The review meeting</b>	<b>9</b>
<hr/>	

# THE DELIVERY PLAN

We've created these guidance notes to help Leagues and County FAs understand the England Football League Accreditation process.

Note: If your League is just short of the criteria, you are encouraged to complete and use this delivery plan to achieve the missing criteria, by working in partnership with your County FA

## Section One: League details

### League Vision

By involving as many Clubs and people as you can in the League you can establish a 'shared vision' that represents your members and clearly identifies your purpose.

For example: "Creating opportunities for all involved in the League" or "To be a League that delivers an excellent service to its member Clubs and consistently seeks to create solutions to the challenges facing those Clubs."

If you are struggling to set a League vision ask your County FA for some support around this. This might be one of your league initiatives for the season.

**Here are a few areas that can help you evaluate your current Vision Statement or create a new one:**

- Future focused – provides the "big picture" and clearly describes what the League will be like in several years
  - Directional – serves as guide to plans and strategies
  - Specific – clear and focused enough to shape decision-making
  - Relevant and purpose-driven – reflects the League's response to the challenges of the day
  - Values-based – implies the set of values that are required to support the League
  - Challenging – inspires members to do great things and achieve a higher level
  - Unique and memorable – highlights what makes the League different and why it matters
  - Inspiring – appealing and engages people.
- 

If the League does not offer a full player pathway itself, it must provide supporting evidence proving a direct link to another League. This could be a letter or email dated (no more than 6 months old) from the other League's secretary approving the link.

### Legal status

Is the League a Company limited by guarantee, a Charity, a Community Interest Company? If not, then state none.

## Section one - League details

League name	Enter League name
County FA	Enter County FA
League Vision	Detail links with other Leagues in terms of player pathway (provide supporting evidence)
League Legal status	Enter details – if none, state none
Number of teams in League	Add number of teams in League
Number of teams with England Football Accreditation	Add number of Accredited teams
Percentage of Clubs with England Football Accreditation	Enter percentage
Season when Accredited League status was awarded	Add the season date

## **TRANSITION**

We require Leagues to have 85% of all their teams Accredited after three years to maintain the award. To help transition from Charter Standard to League Accreditation, all existing Charter Standard Leagues will become accredited and the annual timeframe to submit a delivery plan will start, once moved to the new framework.

## Section two -

### A review of last season's initiatives

The purpose of this section is to reflect on what went well and what would be better if. This will help to inform the delivery initiatives for the coming season.

We ask all Leagues to list last season's initiatives along with any details of progress made since then.

If this is the first time completing the form, simply enter details of any initiatives the League performed last season.

## Section three – S.W.O.T. Analysis

The S.W.O.T. analysis will enable the League to focus on and demonstrate how and when it engages with its Clubs, players, spectators, referees and so on.

**Tip:** Use League cup finals, presentation evenings, and surveys.

# CONSULTATION SUMMARY

## Example

### Who have you consulted?

Consulted all our players, coaches, Club officials, referees.  
We consulted with the County FA Youth Council

### Consultation methods

We held a League survey that we promoted on the League newsletters, website and social media channels.  
We attend local Referee Association meetings.

We attend the County FA Youth Council meeting.

We held a League development day.

## Example

Please enter below the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats that the League faces:

### Strengths:

Quality and size of Clubs  
Quality and quantity of match officials  
Relationship with County FA

### Weaknesses:

Quality of pitches  
Use of social media

### Opportunities:

To establish a working relationship with other Leagues to improve transition and share match officials  
To make better use of IT solutions including social media

### Threats:

Access to facilities  
Behaviour on the sidelines

## Section four - This season's initiatives

In a change to the process of previous seasons, we ask Leagues to focus on just one initiative in each area.

Those initiatives don't have to be finished within that season, but we'll review them when the application form is submitted annually.

**Leagues must select a minimum of five of England Football Accredited initiatives listed below.**

### Topic

**By:** Insert date **Measurables:** What does success look like?

---

**Description:** What are you going to do and how are you going to do it? Include any costs involved.

---



### Safeguarding

- Is this embedded in the League? How is it?
  - How can you further embed safeguarding?
  - Who checks and challenges safeguarding within your League?
- 



### Respect

**You will need to demonstrate that your League:**

- Promotes the adoption of Respect by all member Clubs by providing a pre-season briefing and regular management updates
  - Offers Respect Awards to incentivise and recognise positive and improved Club behaviours
  - Displays a commitment to Respect by incorporating branding on League websites, handbooks, social media platforms or at key events such as cup finals
  - Has a named person on the League committee responsible for the promotion of Respect
  - Monitors and implements measures such as use of touchline barriers or spectator lines, use of technical areas, consideration for Referees
  - Requires all Clubs to submit Respect Marks following the completion of fixtures
  - Makes proactive use of Respect Marks to improve standards of behaviour
  - Improves the levels of positive Respect marks year to year
  - Supports England Football, The FA or CFA campaigns to improve the environment of youth football
-

## **Equality and Diversity**

- Are you representative of the community?
  - Have you worked with the CFA Inclusion and Advisory Group?
- 

## **Technology - running the game**

- How are you using technology now?
  - What would you like to do that you are currently not able to do?
- 

## **Attracting and retaining players**

- Are you seeing a growth in the number of teams?  
The number of players?
  - How do you know this?
  - What are your players' entrance and exit routes?
  - Have you considered split season?
  - Do you have any recreational offers?
  - Do you know the views of players and teams that have left the League?
- 

## **Engaging players**

- How do you engage with players?
  - Are your rules player focused (rolling subs, flexible kick off times etc)?
- 

## **Finding volunteers - workforce succession planning**

- Where is the talent within the League to possibly be the next Chair, Secretary, Treasurer etc?
  - Are you looking outside football for potential volunteers?
  - Do you have defined roles for each League role?
- 

## **Supporting League Officials**

- How are you coping with the League work?
  - Do you have defined roles for each League position?
  - How do you reward your League Officials?
  - Do you offer any CPD for League Officials?
- 

## **Referee recruitment, retention and support**

- How can you find and attract potential referee candidates?
  - How do support and reward your referees?
  - Do you have a referee mentor?
- 

## **Communication and marketing**

- How do you promote the League?  
How do you know it's working?
- 

## **Coaching**

- How do you involve and engage coaches to develop?
- 

## **League initiatives**

Add a minimum of two and max of five initiatives that the League wants to achieve.

They could follow the England Football themes or introduce new ones. For example, sponsorship – look to have a sponsor by the end of the season when the existing deal expires. Or they could develop their facilities, should the League want to go down central venue football or futsal.

## **Section five - County FA support**

Explain and document how you will support the League to achieve its initiatives. As a CFA you may want to complete this section and then hold a review meeting with the League to clarify any initiatives and how the CFA will support them.

## Section six – declaration

In this section we ask the League Officer that oversees the League Development Plan process to sign the document off as being a true and accurate record, and ask the parent County FA to sign the plan off on the basis that:

- (a) the initiatives the League has listed align to the County FA's local objectives and
- (b), that the County FA have been fully embedded in the process to create the plan.

If a League does not engage with their parent County FA, The FA reserve the right not to award the Accreditation.

To be awarded the Accreditation the League must meet the following criteria.

## LEAGUE ACCREDITATION CRITERIA CHECKLIST

Criteria	Yes	No
A sanctioned League	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The League has its own bank account	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The League has accreditation on its League agenda and minutes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The League has signed up to The Football Leadership Diversity Code	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Completed Delivery Plan agreed by the League and County FA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Links to another League if not offering a full player pathway	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Must have 60% of teams with the Club Accreditation award when first applying and then have 3 years to reach a minimum of 85% of teams	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If the Leagues is short of the criteria, then they can still complete the delivery plan and should be strongly encouraged to do so. This will then enable the League to gain the support it requires to achieve the criteria and once met can be awarded.

The areas missing should be recorded along with the actions the League will be taking along with the support the County FA will be giving to tackle the missing areas.

### Process

1. League submits application
2. CFA review application across the whole of the CFA involving all departments.
3. CFA arranges development meeting with the League (work through the sections and add to the development plan together – this should be a partnership document).
4. CFA and League agree and sign-off the plan.
5. CFA submit the delivery plan to England Football.



# **TRANSITION**

We require Leagues to have 85% of all their teams Accredited after three years to maintain the award.

To help transition from Charter Standard to League Accreditation, all existing Charter Standard Leagues will become Accredited and the annual timeframe to submit a delivery plan will start, once moved to the new framework.

## **THE REVIEW MEETING**

The review is an opportunity to discuss the League and their future as described in the delivery plan.

**For the meeting to be a success, we recommend preparing the following:**

- Discuss the League delivery plan with all County FA staff and ask them how they can contribute to the plan as part of the County FA support
  - Gather any League feedback you've received to share with and discuss with the League
  - Identify solutions that are covered in the delivery plan
  - Gather any League data to share
-