



SCOTTISH FA: JUDICIAL PANEL PROTOCOL (“JPP”)

SUMMARY OF KEY CHANGES TO THE JPP FOR SEASON 2024/25

This document summarises the key changes to the JPP for Season 2024/25. The document is split into the following three sections:

1. Changes related to the restructure of the JPP to make it more user-friendly;
2. Summary of key substantive changes to the JPP for Season 2024/25; and
3. Summary of changes to Annex C to the JPP.

1. Changes related to the restructure of the JPP

The following table sets out a high-level summary of the changes that have been made to the JPP (version 2023/24) (“**Original JPP**”), along with a note setting out the reason for each change. An outline of the new structure of the JPP has been included in the Annex to this document.

As a headline point, the changes made to the Original JPP which will be taken forward to the JPP for Season 2024/25 are aimed at restructuring the document to make it more accessible and user-friendly. None of the changes set out in this section of this document are intended to be substantive changes.

PART/ ANNEX	ORIGINAL POSITION	NEW POSITION	REASON FOR CHANGE
PART 1 AND ANNEX B	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Definitions set out in Annex F to the JPP.• Certain terms defined by reference to relevant provision of the Articles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Definitions moved from Annex F to Annex B.• Definitions referring out to the Articles are now fully defined in the JPP.	Changes made to ensure the JPP is: (i) structured in a more logical order; and (ii) more user friendly by removing the requirement to refer to a separate document.

PART 2	Part 2 of the JPP covered the sections related to the disciplinary procedures for team staff and players and the Compliance Officer.	<p>This Part has been renamed “Compliance Officer, Judicial Panel and Tribunal – Overview and Powers”.</p> <p>This Part now outlines the provisions related to the parties (e.g. Compliance Officer, Judicial Panel. Tribunal etc.) involved in the disciplinary procedure.</p>	It was considered that the provisions related to the main parties involved in the overall disciplinary procedure should be set out in one Part rather than across two separate parts as previously drafted.
PART 3	Part 3 of the JPP covered sections relating to the Judicial Panel and the Tribunals.	<p>Part 3 has been renamed “Disciplinary Procedures and Tribunals Proceedings”.</p> <p>Part 3 now incorporates all sections related to: (i) the disciplinary procedures and rules (including evidence) and (ii) Tribunal proceedings.</p> <p>These provisions have been drafted in logical order in line with each step in the disciplinary procedure. The provisions related to Fast Track Proceedings have been separated into their own section.</p>	<p>These provisions had previously been set out across a number of different sections which meant that there was some difficulty in navigating and finding relevant provisions in the Original JPP.</p> <p>This Part now follows a logical order and clearly delineates Fast Track Proceedings given the differences in the rules and procedure associated with these proceedings.</p>
PART 4 AND PART 5	Part 4 of the JPP covered various sections related to procedural rules, rules of evidence, sanctions and appeals.	The sections related to “Sanctions” and “Appeals” have now been set out in separate Parts to the JPP (namely Part 4 (Sanctions) and Part 5 (Appeals)).	It was not logical for “Sanctions” and “Appeals” to be included in the middle of Part 4 to the Original JPP. It was considered that moving these sections out of the original Part 4 and into new Parts which follow the new Part 3 (as noted above) more accurately reflected the steps in the disciplinary procedure.

PART 6 (NEW)	The boilerplate provisions were previously included within Part 3 of the Original JPP (sections 16 and 17).	The “boilerplate” provisions have been moved to a new Part 6 named “General Provisions”.	It was considered that as the majority of these provisions are general/boilerplate terms (e.g., data protection, confidentiality etc.) that these should be separated from the procedural rules and included in a new Part 6 at the end of the JPP.
GUIDANCE NOTES	Various Annex were included in the original JPP which covered “Guidance Note”. These were previously contained in Annexes B, E, G and H-M of the Original JPP.	All “Guidance Notes” are now included within Annex E. Each “Guidance Note” has its own “part” within this Annex.	It was considered that it would make logical sense for all “Guidance Notes” to be included within the one Annex. This means that if new “Guidance Notes” are added, these can be included as a new part to Annex E rather than a new Annex to the JPP. This will simplify the JPP and ensure all Guidance Notes are easily accessible for users.
SOLICITOR UNDERTAKING	Annex G set out the template for the solicitor’s undertaking. This was named “Annex G – Template”.	Annex is renamed “Template Disclosure of Sensitive Documents – Solicitor’s Undertaking”.	To ensure clarity regarding the use of this Annex.

2. Summary of key substantive changes

2.1 Football Agents

The previous terminology of “Intermediaries” has been replaced by “Football Agents”, to reflect the replacement of the Working with Intermediaries Regulation by the Football Agent Regulations, with effect from 1 January 2024.

2.2 Fast Track Claim Fees and Submission Deadlines

The fees for submitting a Claim in Para 11.9.8 have been increased to:

	First Team	All Other Teams
SPFL Premiership Clubs	£650	£375
All other SPFL Clubs	£325	£165
All other clubs	£165	£80

It should be noted that the Claim fee only requires to be submitted in the event that the Claim is dismissed. If the Claim is upheld/upheld in part, there is no requirement to submit the fee payment.

The Claim deadlines in Paras 11.9.17 and 11.9.24 have been slightly adjusted to improve the efficiency of the process. The Referee Statement will be delivered to the Claimant by 12noon on Working Day 2 (previously 1pm), and the Claimant will be required to lodge evidence and submissions by 4pm on Working Day 2 (previously 5pm).

2.3 Claim being deemed frivolous/having no prospect of success

Paras 11.9.37, 13.21.8, 17.9 and 18.2.2 have been amended to remove the reference to Claims having no prospect of success, with the reference to frivolous Claims retained and extended to include Claims which are vexatious or entirely without merit.

2.4 Application of Sanctions

New Paras 15.3.5 and 15.3.6 have been added in relation to the application of suspensions, as follows:

- Where a Tribunal imposes a suspension for a number of matches on a Player, and the suspension is not applied to all football, the suspension will be applied to the Player's league competition; and
- Where a Tribunal imposes a suspension for a number of matches on a Player, and the suspension is applied to all football, the suspension will be served and measured by the Player's Club playing the requisite number of matches at the level of football in which the incident occurred,

in each case, unless otherwise Determined by the Tribunal.

All football suspensions will continue to be applied to a number of matches. When an individual receives an all football sanction, they will be suspended on the system. It will be the responsibility of the individual's club to advise the Scottish FA when it believes the individual has served the requisite number of matches in accordance with the Tribunal's Determination as to the level of football at which the suspension is to be served. Subject to verification by the Scottish FA, the suspension on the system will then be lifted.

2.5 Leave to Appeal Process

A new process has been introduced in Para 17.2.2 in relation to Appeals submitted under JPP Sections 14 and 15. This process require a party to secure Leave to Appeal before proceeding to the actual Appeal. We believe this will lead to an improved overall Appeals process.

2.6 Annex A (Disciplinary Rules)

- DR 72 – uplift to the sanctions for Team Staff and players (from 2/4/6 match suspension to 4/6/8 match suspension).
- DRs 101/102 – “Compliance Officer” added to the wording of both Disciplinary Rules to explicitly detail that requests by the Compliance Officer for information must be complied with.
- Disciplinary Rules updated to reflect amendments to the Articles, Cup Rules and Registration Procedures.
- New Disciplinary Rules introduced to deal with breaches arising from the Scottish FA Football Agent Regulations.
- New Disciplinary Rules introduced to deal with breaches arising from the Scottish FA Comet Regulations.

2.7 Annex D – Disciplinary Procedures for Team Staff and Officials

The only substantive change here is to give the Compliance Officer or a JP Tribunal the ability to include the completion of an online Touchline Behaviour education course as part of the sanction imposed on a member of Team Staff or official.

3. **Summary of changes to Annex C**

Annex C has been amended to remove the concepts of “Recognised Teams” and “Competition Groups” and suspensions incurred for all offences (including A1/A2/A3 sending off offences) will now be served in the competition in which they were incurred, rather than across a player’s Recognised Team’s competitions.

Section 1 and 2

The references to Recognised Team have been removed and some other wording and formatting has been changed.

Section 3

This is the Schedule of Offences.

Section 4 – Part A League Competitions

All suspensions for sending off offences are now competition specific. Previously, if a player was sent off for A1, A2 or A3 in league competitions, it would result in a suspension of 2 Recognised Team matches immediate, which was applied to the player’s Recognised Team’s league and cup matches. This has been changed and the suspension will now be 2 league matches immediate, for these type of offences.

The suspensions for A4, A5, A6 and A7 remain the same as in previous Seasons.

The system for the accumulation of cautions remains the same as in previous Seasons.

Additional Misconduct

Where a player is reported for a sending off offence, and that player has also committed an additional sending off offence in the same match, or has previously been reported for a sending-off offence in the same league in a Season, an additional suspension of one league match for each previous sending-off offence will be applied. Any additional suspension shall become effective immediately and apply to the same league competition.

This is a change to the rules, as the extra match will no longer be dated 7 days from the date of the red card; this previous rule has now been removed and the extra match will be an immediate suspension instead.

Section 4 – Part B Competition Groups

This section has been removed and each competition previously listed in a competition group has been separately listed under either league competitions or cup competitions. The competition groups will no longer be used.

The sections will now be league competitions, cup competitions, specified cup competitions and friendly matches.

New Cup Competition section

In the Cup Competitions section, the suspensions for sending off offences are now competition specific to each cup. Some of these cup competitions would have been part of a competition group before and suspensions would have been served in matches in the competition group. All suspensions for sending off offences will only be applicable to matches in that same cup competition. If a player is sent off for an A1, A2 or A3 offence, the suspension will be 2 cup matches immediate. If a player is sent off for an A4, A5, A6 or A7 the suspension will be 1 cup match immediate. These should be served in the same cup competition where the offence was reported.

Accumulation of cautions in cup competitions

OFFENCE	SUSPENSION	APPLICATION OF SUSPENSION
Accumulation of two cautionable offences during a Season	1 match suspension	Effective immediately in the same cup competition
For every further accumulation of two cautionable offences, the player will be suspended for 1 match.		

Caution totals zero prior to the start of the semi final rounds.

Additional Misconduct

Where a player is reported for a sending off offence, and that player has also committed an additional sending off offence in the same match, or has previously been reported for a sending-off offence in the same cup in a Season, an additional suspension of one cup match for each previous sending-off offence will be applied. Any additional suspension shall become effective immediately and apply to the same cup competition.

This is a change to the rules, as the extra match will no longer be dated 7 days from the date of the red card; this previous rule has now been removed and the extra match will be an immediate suspension instead.

Section 4 – Part C Specified Cup Competitions

In the Specified Cup Competitions section, the suspensions for sending off offences are now competition specific to each cup. Some cup competitions have been moved from Specified Cup to the Cup Competition section. All suspensions for sending off offences will only be applicable to matches in that same cup competition. If a player is sent off for an A1, A2 or A3 offence, the suspension will be 2 Specified Cup matches immediate. If a player is sent off for an A4, A5, A6 or A7 the suspension will be 1 Specified cup match immediate. These should be served in the same Specified Cup Competition where the offence was reported.

Previously, if a player was sent off for A1, A2 or A3 in a Specified Cup competition, it would result in a suspension of 1 Recognised Team match immediate and 1 Specified Cup match immediate. The way A4, A5, A6 and A7 offences are dealt with has not changed.

Accumulation of cautions – this has changed. An accumulation of every two cautionable offences during a Season will result in a 1-match suspension. Caution totals will revert to zero prior to the start of the semi-final rounds and also earlier for the following competitions:

SPFL League Cup – prior to Round 2

SPFL Challenge Cup – prior to Round 3

Women's Scottish Cup – prior to Round 3

Scottish Cup – prior to Round 4

Previously, the number of cautions allowed before a suspension was applied was dependant on the round at which the club entered the competition.

Additional Misconduct

Where a player is reported for a sending off offence, and that player has also committed an additional sending off offence in the same match, or has previously been reported for a sending-off offence in the same Cup in a Season, an additional suspension of one cup match for each previous sending-off offence will be applied. Any additional suspension shall become effective immediately and apply to the same specified cup competition.

This is a change to the rules, as the extra match will no longer be dated 7 days from the date of the red card; this previous rule has now been removed and the extra match will be an immediate suspension instead.

Section 4 – Part D Friendly match misconduct

Any suspensions incurred in friendly matches will now only be served in friendly matches rather than applied to competitive matches, as they were before.

Section 4 – Part E General Rules for Player Suspensions

These rules have been separated into the relevant sections of the new Annex C. Some have been deleted.

Section 4 – Part F – Rules regarding suspensions for A1, A2 and A3

This part has been removed as the reference to Recognised team has been removed.

Section 5 – Suspensions for Players in Women's Football

Sections 4 and 5 have been merged together, and men and women's competitions are dealt with together, rather than listed separately.

July 2024

ANNEX

NEW JPP STRUCTURE – OVERVIEW

1. Part 1: Overview

- a. Introduction
- b. Founding Principles
- c. Interpretation and Definitions

2. Part 2: Compliance Officer, Judicial Panel and Tribunal – Overview and Powers

- a. Compliance Officer
- b. The Judicial Panel
- c. Appointment of Tribunal
- d. Tribunal Jurisdiction and Powers

3. Part 3: Disciplinary Procedures and Tribunals Proceedings

- a. Disciplinary Procedures– which refers out to Annexes C and D
- b. Notices of Complaint
- c. General Procedural Rules
- d. Procedural Rules for First Instance Proceedings
- e. Procedural Rules for Fast Track Proceedings
- f. Children’s Evidence
- g. Evidence from Vulnerable Witnesses
- h. Disclosure of Sensitive Documents

4. Part 4: Sanctions

- a. Sanctions

5. Part 5: Appeals

- a. Right of Appeal
- b. Procedural Rules for Appeals Proceedings

6. Part 6: General Provisions

- a. Costs
- b. Miscellaneous Procedural Rules

7. Annex A: Disciplinary Rules (including Sanctions)

8. Annex B: Definitions

9. Annex C: Disciplinary Procedures for Players

10. Annex D: Disciplinary Procedures for Team Staff

11. Annex E: Guidance Notes

- a. all “Guidance Notes” are included within this Annex E (i.e. Guidance Notes in original Annexes B, E and H-M included within one Annex).

12. Annex F: Template Disclosure of Sensitive Documents – Solicitor’s Undertaking

- a. Previously Annex G but moved to Annex F given other Annexes are being moved elsewhere in the new structure.