

Minimum Operating Criteria

To: All Registered Member Club

The Scottish FA is committed to raising standards across all levels of the game, and to ensuring that football in Scotland is safe, accountable and sustainable.

As part of this commitment, the Scottish FA Articles require that all registered members must comply with **Minimum Operating Criteria** (MOC), for season 2026/27. The Scottish FA has worked with the members of the Non-Professional Game Board to devise the MOC, which will form the baseline for all clubs that are registered members of the Scottish FA.

It is important to note that the MOC is separate from, and does not replace, the requirements that clubs must satisfy to become members of an Affiliated National Association (ANA) or to participate in a particular competition. Clubs are reminded that they must continue to satisfy such requirements of membership and participation.

In a similar vein, the MOC does not replace the Scottish FA Board Directive regarding the implementation of minimum standards for child wellbeing and protection in Scottish football (CWB Board Directive). Clubs remain required to comply with the CWB Board Directive and their compliance with the CWB Board Directive will continue to be monitored separately.

Full and evidenced compliance with the Minimum Operating Criteria will be a key requirement for clubs seeking to access future Scottish FA funding, facility development programmes and related support opportunities

During this initial season of operation of the MOC, the focus is on ensuring that all registered members are compliant. The MOC are not designed to create barriers, but to provide a consistent baseline of governance, safeguarding and operational practice. They will help improve the overall standard of the game, ensuring every club is well-run, every player is protected and every environment supports development.

Affiliated National Associations/Leagues

The ANAs/Leagues involved in the process are listed below. Please note that if a club is a full member of the Scottish FA and therefore required to comply with the Scottish FA's Club Licensing Procedures, they do not need to follow the MOC process as well.

Scottish Youth FA (SYFA); Scottish Women's Football (SWF); Scottish Amateur FA (SAFA); Scottish Para-Football (SPF); Scottish Welfare FA (SWFA); Scottish Communities FA (SCFA); East of Scotland Football League (EoSFL); West of Scotland Football League (WoSFL); South of Scotland Football League (SoSFL); North of Scotland Football League (NoSFL); Midlands Football League (MFL); North Caledonian Football League (NCFL).

What Clubs Must Do

The MOC apply to all clubs which are registered members, with some differences between the requirements for youth and adult football clubs. Below is a summary table outlining the MOC in each case:

	Youth Football Club (U18 players and below) SYFA/SWF/SPF	Adult Football Club (18+ Players) SAFA/SWFA/SWF/SPF/SCFA/EoSFL/WoSFL/SoSFL/NoSFL/MFL/NCFL.
1. Governance & Financial Accountability	Constitution must be in place, outlining governance structure and operational practices. A club bank account must be in place for all transactions.	Constitution must be in place, outlining governance structure and operational practices (template available). A club bank account should be in place for all transactions.
2. Coach Education	Minimum of one qualified coach per team/activity with the Scottish FA Introduction to Coaching qualification. Coaches within the SYFA must ensure they have the additional Scottish FA Certificate qualification in place relevant to their pathway. All coaches are recommend attendance at a relevant Player Journey Workshop.	Not currently mandatory for adult football – but coach education strongly encouraged.
3. Wellbeing & Protection	Wellbeing & Protection Policy in place (template: https://www.scottishfa.co.uk/scottish-fa/wellbeing-protection/). Named Child Wellbeing & Protection Officer (trained, with visible contact details). Appointment & selection procedure for staff/volunteers, including PVG membership. All staff/volunteers trained in wellbeing & protection	General wellbeing and conduct policies should be in place as per the Scottish FA directive – https://www.scottishfa.co.uk/scottish-fa/wellbeing-protection/).

	(https://www.scottishfa.co.uk/scottish-fa/wellbeing-protection/) . Code of Conduct in place (template available).	
4. First Aid	One person per team/activity must hold an up-to-date First Aid certificate (minimum 6 hours, covering CPR, concussion and sports injuries) – please check with your ANA about suitable providers.	For over 18 football activity, clubs must ensure that they have adequate first aid cover in place, which is appropriate to the competition/activity and environment in which they are participating. By way of example, this could be by way of a qualified first aider and/or the first aid cover in place at the venue for the match in question. The foregoing provision is without prejudice to any applicable PVG membership scheme requirements. Note - For adult football falling under the auspices of SWF and SPF, this is a requirement and all First Aiders in a recognized role must be PVG checked Please check with relevant ANA/League for further information.
5. Insurance	Liability insurance and personal accident insurance must be in place as per requirements of your ANA / competition organiser	Liability insurance and personal accident insurance must be in place as per requirements of your ANA / competition organiser

Compliance and Spot Checks

All clubs must complete a **Club Declaration Form** annually via COMET, confirming compliance with the MOC. The Scottish FA will conduct **random spot checks** to verify that clubs are complying with the MOC.

Timeline for Implementation in 2026

- **24th August 2026** – Information circulated to all clubs
- **1st September 2026** – Process goes live on COMET and links will circulate
- **31st December 2026** – Final deadline for all clubs to complete Club Declaration

Next Steps

We encourage registered member clubs to begin preparing now for complying with the MOC by:

- Reviewing governance documents.
- Ensuring PVG membership checks are up to date.
- Arranging any required coach education or first aid training.

For guidance, templates and supporting materials, please visit:

- Any question email - MOC@scottishfa.co.uk
- Wellbeing & Protection: [Wellbeing & Protection - Scottish FA](#)
- Coach Education: [Coach Education - Scottish FA](#)

We thank you for your cooperation and commitment to improving the game in Scotland. Together, we can ensure that every player has the opportunity to enjoy football in a safe, supportive and high-quality environment.