

2021-22 LEAGUE AND CUP COMPETITION RULEBOOK

RULE 17: PROTESTS, WALKOVERS AND APPEALS

- 17.1 AoC Sport Protests, Walkovers and Appeals process has 4 stages
- Playing under protest
 - Walkover request
 - Stage 1 appeal
 - Stage 2 appeal
- 17.2 Institutions should report to AoC Sport any breaches of competition rules or failure to comply with the minimum operating standards as soon as they are known.
- 17.3 A Playing Under Protest form can be submitted if a team feels that their opponent has not complied with rules or standards relating to facilities, match officials, exchange of team sheets or eligibility of players. Full details of the process can be found in rule 12.
- 17.4 A Walkover Request Form must be submitted where an institution wishes to claim a voluntary or involuntary walkover. Full details of the process can be found in rule 7.
- 17.5 The Competition Administration Officer will review the evidence and investigate the issue raised in 17.3 and 17.4 before deciding to either reject the protest/walkover or impose a sanction on the team found to have been in breach of rule or standards in accordance with rule 18.
- 17.6 A 1st stage appeal can be submitted where it is felt that AoC Sport has been incorrect in:
- rejecting a protest
 - issuing a sanction for a breach of rule
 - their interpretation of a competition rule
 - awarding a walkover
 - rejecting an application to play in competition
- 17.7 The stage 1 Appeal must:
- (1) identify the specific decision(s) being appealed;
 - (2) set out the ground(s) of appeal and the reasons why it would be substantially unfair not to alter the original decision;

- (3) set out a statement of the facts upon which the appeal is based;
- 17.8 The grounds of appeal available to the institution shall be that AoC Sport:
- (1) failed to give the appellant a fair hearing and/or
 - (2) misinterpreted or failed to comply with the rules or regulations relevant to its decision and/or
 - (3) came to a decision to which no reasonable such body could have come and/or
 - (4) imposed a penalty, award, order or sanction that was excessive
- 17.9 The appeal commences on receipt by AoC Sport of the Stage 1 (S1) appeals form available to download from the AoC Sport website. The appeal must be sent to appeals@aoc.co.uk.
- 17.10 A stage 1 appeal form must be completed within seven days of the incident/decision for league competitions and 24 hours for play-off and cup competitions.
- 17.11 A copy of the opponent's team sheet must be attached where the eligibility of a player is being questioned.
- 17.12 The stage 1 appeal will be dealt with by the Senior Administration Officer or the Competition Manager and will be based upon the written or photographic evidence produced by the appellant.
- 17.13 The evidence will be reviewed and investigated, a decision made, and both parties informed within 10 working days of receipt of the form.
- 17.14 Institutions wishing to make an appeal against the stage 1 appeal decision must do so within five days for league appeals and two days for cup appeals using the stage 2 appeals form available in the competition section of the AoC Sport website and must enclose a surety of £100 in the form of a cheque or purchase order number.
- 17.15 The stage 2 Appeal must follow the same process as in 17.7 and 17.8.
- 17.16 The stage 2 appeal for teams affiliated to English County FAs will be dealt with by the Football Association and will be based upon the written or photographic evidence produced by the appellant.

- 17.17 An appeal taken to the FA will be final and binding, and will follow the procedure outlined in the Regulations for Football Association Appeals in The FA Handbook subject to a submission for arbitration under FA Rule K.
- 17.18 The the stage 2 appeal for teams eligible for membership of ECRFU will be dealt with by ECRFU.
- 17.19 All other appeals will be dealt with by the Director of Sport and Student Engagement who will gather an appeals committee made up of a minimum of three members of the AoC Sport Board or AoC Board.
- 17.20 It will not be necessary for the appellant to attend an appeal hearing. Written or photographic evidence will be used to determine the case.
- 17.21 The appellant will be sent a written response within 14 days which clearly states the decision appealed against, whether the appeal has been accepted or rejected and the reasons for this decision.
- 17.22 The decision of the second stage appeal committee is binding and final.
- 17.23 A detailed Competitions Appeals and Disputes Process is available in the resources section of the AoC Sport website.