



MENTOR AREA

STAGE 2: What to do once you qualify

PART 1: Choosing leagues to officiate on

You've completed your course, passing the test with flying colours! Now it's time to get out there and get some hands on experience of refereeing. The very first thing to do once you've gained your refereeing qualification is research local leagues in your area. You may already have some in mind or know the league well, which will stand you in good stead. Here's a guide on joining leagues.



STEP 1: Decide the type of football you wish to officiate

This is very important and most county FAs advise new referees with no experience to start off in youth leagues. This will get you used to your role as a referee without placing your straight into the pressure cooker that is adult football. Sure, your job will still be tough and you will still get some dissent from the players and stick from the spectators, but it is all good preparation for when you make the step up to open age football. Of course, this is a matter of personal choice, and if you want to go straight into adult football then there's nothing stopping you!



STEP 2: Research and decide on which league(s) to join

You'll want to make sure you do your research before joining any league. Does it have a good reputation? How are the referees treated? These are just a couple of the questions you be looking to answer before joining. If you're confident you've found a decent league, get in touch with the referees' secretary by phone or email, and he/she will talk you through the process of joining the league.

STEP 3: Register with the league(s)

You'll need your FAN number and referee registration for the season before joining any league. When joining a league, you'll be asked things such as your current level and availability – if you can't do a certain time or day this is your opportunity to let the referee secretary know, otherwise they will presume you are available. Once that's done it's just a case of waiting for your first appointment to come in!

See section 3 for advice on how to approach your first match!

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