

# **UEFA Club Licensing Quality Standard**

Edition 2022

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## Preamble

Based on Articles 7bis (4) and 50 (1bis) of the *UEFA Statutes*, Articles 1 and 9 of the *UEFA Club Licensing & Financial Sustainability Regulations* and Articles 1 and 9 of the *UEFA Club Licensing Regulations for the UEFA Women's Champions League*, the following provisions of the *UEFA Club Licensing Quality Standard* have been adopted.

## Part I – General provisions

### 1. Scope

The licensor is responsible for assessing the licence applicants. It determines whether the licence applicants meet the club licensing criteria and whether they can be granted the licence required to participate in the UEFA club competitions.

The *UEFA Club Licensing Quality Standard* defines the minimum requirements that licensors must comply with in order to operate the club licensing system in accordance with Article 5 of the *UEFA Club Licensing & Financial Sustainability Regulations* or Article 5 of the *UEFA Club Licensing Regulations for the UEFA Women's Champions League* as applicable and to perform their responsibilities and duties in respect of the club monitoring process under Article 75 of the *UEFA Club Licensing & Financial Sustainability Regulations*.

Each year, an independent certification body approved by UEFA assesses compliance with all the requirements contained in Part II of the *UEFA Club Licensing Quality Standard*. If the requirements are met, the certification body issues a certificate that is valid for one season.

### 2. Objectives

The objectives of the *UEFA Club Licensing Quality Standard* are to continuously improve the club licensing and club monitoring processes and their professional management by the licensors. The *Quality Standard* aims in particular to ensure:

- the credibility and smooth running of the club licensing system and club monitoring processes;
- the correct application of the core process, the deadlines, the catalogue of sanctions and the consequences of a licence refusal;
- compliance with the principle of independence, confidentiality and equal treatment of all licence applicants and licensees.

### 3. Definitions

#### Abbreviations

UEFA	Union des Associations Européennes de Football
CFCB	The UEFA Organ for the Administration of Justice that is competent to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- determine whether licensors have fulfilled their obligations and whether licence applicants and licensees fulfil the licensing and monitoring criteria set out in the CL&amp;FS and CLWCL;</li><li>- impose the appropriate measures in the event of non-fulfilment of the requirements set out in CL&amp;FS and CLWCL.</li></ul>
CL&FS	UEFA Club Licensing & Financial Sustainability Regulations
CLWCL	UEFA Club Licensing Regulations for the UEFA Women's Champions League
Quality Standard	UEFA Club Licensing Quality Standard

#### Terms

top management	Representative of the licensor's management responsible for all operational matters concerning club licensing and club monitoring, e.g. the general secretary, director.
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core process	Licensing process that the licensor must complete to ensure compliance with the club licensing criteria set out in its national club licensing regulations, which serve as the regulatory basis for granting a licence to an applicant
football management system	Online information system for club licensing and club monitoring processes: operations, management, decision-making, etc.

## Part II – Requirements

### Chapter 1: Licensor's structure

#### Requirement 1 – Organisational structure

1. The licensor must establish decision-making bodies and appoint a licensing administration with the tasks and responsibilities set out in Articles 6 and 7 CL&FS or CLWCL as applicable.
2. Club licensing decision-making bodies are a first instance body and an appeals body.
3. The licensing administration must consist as a minimum of the following:
  - a) A top management representative who is responsible for club licensing and club monitoring
  - b) A club licensing manager who is responsible for the licensing administration, whose working time is essentially dedicated to running the licensing and monitoring processes; this person must have the necessary competences and be able to communicate fluently, both orally and in writing, in one of the official UEFA languages
  - c) Criteria experts, including a financial expert as described in Article 6(3) CL&FS or CLWCL as applicable, either employees of the licensor or external service providers
  - d) A person responsible for communicating about club licensing and club monitoring matters.
4. The tasks of the licensing administration must be defined in accordance with Article 6(2) CL&FS or CLWCL as applicable.
5. The licensing administration must establish internal controls and perform risk assessments of its club licensing and club monitoring processes.
6. The licensing administration must have access to the licensor's information and documents relating to the club licensing and club monitoring processes, such as the registration of players and coaches, transfers, infrastructure, decisions by other judicial bodies, etc.
7. The rights and duties of the personnel mentioned in point 3 above must be set out in writing.
8. The licensor must have an organisation chart that gives the name and function of all members of the instances mentioned under points 2 and 3 above.
9. The licensor must have a chart of its whole organisation, showing the position of the club licensing and club monitoring administration within the licensor's organisational structure.

10. The above organisation charts, defined in point 8 and 9, must be approved by the licensor and submitted to UEFA in one of the official UEFA languages. In the event of changes, the UEFA administration must be promptly provided with an updated version of the charts.

### **Requirement 2 – Management commitment**

1. The licensor must ensure that a representative of its top management is responsible for the club licensing system and club monitoring process. The top management of the licensor must demonstrate its commitment by:

- a) establishing an appropriate organisation for the club licensing system and club monitoring process (see Requirement 1), with the necessary resources to implement and manage it effectively and in accordance with the requirements of the CL&FS or CLWCL as applicable;
- b) ensuring that the necessary training is made available to all those involved in the club licensing system and club monitoring process and that know-how is transferred should personnel changes occur;
- c) providing support for the club licensing and monitoring administration, so that it is able to perform its duties in accordance with the CL&FS or CLWCL as applicable and national club licensing regulations;
- d) being responsible for the annual review of the system and processes and the corresponding follow-up and for taking any corrective action.

2. The top management representative must understand the club licensing system and club monitoring process as well as current and future needs, including the expectations of all stakeholders (in particular the club licensing and club monitoring administration, decision-making bodies, licence applicants, licensees, UEFA and its nominated bodies/agencies).

### **Requirement 3 – Annual internal review meeting**

1. The efficiency and effectiveness of the club licensing system and club monitoring process must be reviewed by the licensor during at least one annual internal meeting that must cover, as a minimum:

- a) Potential improvements or amendments to the national club licensing regulations
- b) Feedback from the licensing administration, including club licensing criteria experts
- c) Feedback from the chairpersons of both decision-making bodies
- d) Feedback from the licence applicants/licensees
- e) Feedback from any UEFA assistance and compliance visits



- f) Quality Standard certification audit
  - g) Internal controls, risk assessment and any corrective actions.
2. As a minimum, the member of the top management responsible for the club licensing system and club monitoring process and the licensing manager must attend the annual internal review meeting, along with following persons unless they provide written feedback in advance:
- a) Chairpersons of both decision-making bodies
  - b) Licensing criteria experts
3. The annual internal review meeting may be held at the end of the club licensing core process.
4. The outcome of the annual internal review meeting, including any corrective actions, must be documented in writing.
5. The outcome of the internal review meeting must be communicated to the top management representatives and the licensor's organs.

## Chapter 2: Decision-making

### **Requirement 4 – Decision-making bodies**

1. The licensor must appoint at least two decision-making bodies in compliance with the composition, qualification and independence requirements set out in Article 7 CL&FS or CLWCL as applicable, the licensor's statutes and the national club licensing regulations.
2. In addition to the provisions set out in Article 7 CL&FS or CLWCL as applicable, the following principles must be complied with:
- a) The election or appointment of the members of each decision-making body must comply with the licensor's statutes and the national club licensing regulations.
  - b) The quorum of both decision-making bodies must comply with the licensor's statutes and the CL&FS or CLWCL as applicable.
  - c) The terms of office of the decision-making bodies' members must be defined.

### **Requirement 5 – Decision-making procedures**

1. All those involved in decision-making must understand and comply with the procedural rules set out by the licensor in the national club licensing regulations and Article 7(9) CL&FS or CLWCL as applicable.
2. The following documents must be produced for the decision-making procedure:
- a) Reports by the licensing criteria experts for the licensing manager

b) Detailed licensing manager's report for the club licensing first instance body, including documents reviewed, issues identified, follow-up information received, the conclusion on the fulfilment of each licensing criterion and a recommendation for the licensing decisions to be taken

c) In case of appeals before the club licensing appeals body, the first instance body and the licensing manager (if the licensing manager is not the appellant) may submit observations regarding the appeal

3. The meetings of the decision-making bodies must be documented to indicate, as a minimum:

a) the name of the chairperson and the members present or absent, along with the names of any other people at the meeting, such as the licensing manager or club representatives;

b) that all the members present declared their independence at the start of the meeting;

c) date and place;

d) cases discussed and grounds for any decisions regarding each licence applicant;

e) signature of the chairperson and the meeting's secretary.

4. Decisions shared with the licence applicants or licensees must contain, as a minimum:

a) the name of the chairperson and the members of the decision-making body in question;

b) the name of the licence applicant/licensee concerned;

c) the decision;

d) a statement of the grounds for the decision;

e) the appeal channel, if applicable;

f) the date and place;

g) the chairperson's signature.

#### Requirement 6 – Independence

1. The licensor must set out a procedure to ensure that all those involved in the club licensing system and club monitoring process respect the principle of independence in accordance with Article 7(7) CL&FS or CLWCL as applicable. The written procedure must:

- a) state that all those involved in the club licensing system and club monitoring process must declare their independence in writing upon their appointment and at the start of each licence season;
  - b) require that the members of the decision-making bodies also declare their independence at the start of each meeting;
  - c) describe the method by which independence is guaranteed;
  - d) stipulate the consequences should there be any doubt about the independence of anyone involved in the club licensing system and club monitoring process.
2. Should any conflicts of interest arise, the member concerned should notify the licensing manager without a delay and sign a written declaration stipulating them.
  3. All those involved in the club licensing system and club monitoring process must be aware of their duty of independence and must abstain if there is any doubt or if there is any conflict of interest.
  4. The members of the decision-making bodies are bound exclusively by the applicable rules and regulations and must be independent from each other.
  5. The representatives of top management and other relevant organs of the licensor must comply with the rules and regulations on the separation of powers.

## Chapter 3: Regulatory framework

### Requirement 7 – National club licensing regulations

1. The licensor must establish national club licensing regulations for participation in UEFA club competitions, which must be approved by its competent body and must:
  - a) contain all the applicable requirements in accordance with Article 5(3) CL&FS or CLWCL as applicable;
  - b) comply with domestic law;
  - c) comply with the licensor's statutes;
  - d) be forwarded in writing to the licence applicants before the start of the club licensing core process;
  - e) be forwarded to the UEFA administration for review, in accordance with the procedure set out in Annex C CL&FS or CLWCL as applicable;
  - f) be uploaded to the licensor's official website before the start of the club licensing core process.
2. By the deadline communicated by the UEFA administration, the licensor must inform the UEFA administration in writing whether there have been any amendments to the previous set of national club licensing regulations. If a new version has been approved

by the licensor's competent body, it must be submitted to the UEFA administration for review by that deadline.

#### **Requirement 8 – Club licensing and club monitoring policy**

1. The licensor must establish a written policy for managing the club licensing system and club monitoring process, which must be approved by the licensor's top management and include, as a minimum:

- a) Objectives of the club licensing system and club monitoring process
- b) Commitment to continually improve the effectiveness of the club licensing system and club monitoring process
- c) Commitment to support the licence applicants/licensees in the club licensing and club monitoring processes
- d) Commitment to inform all stakeholders of the various rules and regulations in a timely manner

2. The policy must be reviewed annually, and updated if necessary, and then forwarded to all those involved in the club licensing system and club monitoring process, including all licence applicants/ licensees.

### **Chapter 4: Club licensing and club monitoring processes**

#### **Requirement 9 – Club licensing core process**

1. The licensor must define a club licensing core process in order to assess the club licensing documentation and manage the decision-making process.

2. The core process must be defined in the national club licensing regulations and documented separately as a procedure in accordance with Article 10 CL&FS or CLWCL as applicable.

3. The core process must include the following minimum key steps:

- a) Communication of the club licensing core process timetable
- b) Submission of the licensing documentation to the licence applicants
- c) Return of the licensing documentation to the licensor
- d) Assessment of the documentation by the licensing administration
- e) Submission of the written representation to the licensor
- f) Assessment and decision by the decision-making bodies
- g) Communication of decisions to the licence applicants

h) Submission of each licensing decision to UEFA within 7 days of each decision being final.

4. The licensor must verify whether eligibility for the licence continues throughout the licence season. The licensor's decision-making bodies may withdraw the licence under any of the conditions cited in Article 16(4) CL&FS or CLWCL as applicable.

#### Requirement 10 – Other club licensing processes

1. The licensor must ensure the implementation and correct application of other club licensing-related processes in accordance with the CL&FS or CLWCL as applicable, in particular:
  - a) Exception on non-applicability of the requirements in accordance with the Article 13 and Annex A CL&FS or CLWCL as applicable
  - b) Extraordinary application of the UEFA club licensing system for entering UEFA club competitions under Article 17 CL&FS or CLWCL as applicable
  - c) Exception on non-applicability of the three-year rule under Article 14 and Annex A CL&FS or CLWCL as applicable
  - d) Benchmarking data collection and related processes
2. For each of these processes, the licensor must ensure that:
  - a) the necessary information about each process is duly shared within the licensor's administration;
  - b) all relevant information and documentation are duly shared with the clubs concerned;
  - c) the information received from the clubs is duly assessed by the licensor;
  - d) the processes are completed and the outcome is communicated to the UEFA administration by the deadline and in the form communicated by UEFA.

#### Requirement 11 – Club monitoring process

1. The licensor must define a club monitoring process in order to assess the club monitoring documentation in accordance with Article 75 CL&FS.
2. The monitoring process must include the following key steps as a minimum:
  - a) Communication of a club monitoring process, including a timetable, to the relevant licensees
  - b) Licensor's assessment in accordance with Annex I CL&FS and licensee's confirmation of the completeness of monitoring documentation under Article 77 CL&FS

c) Submission of the validated documentation submitted to the UEFA administration and/or the CFCB

d) Additional information provided to the UEFA administration and/or the CFCB upon request

3. The licensor must set the licensees a deadline so that the documentation can be assessed by the licensor before submission to the UEFA administration and/or the CFCB.

#### **Requirement 12 – Submission of club monitoring documentation**

The licensor must submit the monitoring documentation provided by the relevant licensees to the UEFA administration and/or the CFCB within the deadlines and in the form required by the UEFA administration.

### **Chapter 5: Communication**

#### **Requirement 13 – Internal and external communication**

1. The licensor must regularly communicate both internally and externally on matters related to the club licensing system and club monitoring process, for example in relation to:

a) Licensing decisions

b) Developments to the club licensing system and club monitoring process

c) News about appointments and the responsibilities of those involved in the club licensing system and club monitoring process

d) Changes to the scope of application of the club licensing system and club monitoring process and the licensing criteria and monitoring requirements

e) Annual certification

f) Analysis of financial and non-financial data collected for benchmarking purposes

g) Publication of financial information as defined in Article 67 CL&FS

2. Such communication shall take place through the licensor's official communication platforms.

#### **Requirement 14 – Meetings with licence applicants**

1. The licensor must hold at least one documented meeting with all licence applicants, either individually or as a group, during the club licensing and club monitoring procedures under review. The agenda may include such topics as:

a) Results achieved and existing challenges and trends

- b) Developments in the club licensing system and club monitoring process
  - c) Changes to the scope of application and the club licensing criteria and club monitoring requirements
  - d) Assessment of the licensing and monitoring documentation
  - e) Analysis of financial and non-financial data collected for benchmarking purposes
2. The licensor must obtain written feedback from the licence applicants/licensees to be discussed and acted upon at the annual internal review meeting. This feedback shall include:
- a) The licence applicants'/licensees' satisfaction with the club licensing system and club monitoring process
  - b) The licence applicants'/licensees' proposals for possible amendments to the national club licensing regulations and related processes.

## Chapter 6: Information management

### Requirement 15 – Documents and other records

1. The licensor must establish a procedure for filing and archiving written and electronic documents and other records related to the club licensing system.
2. The procedure must define the following, as a minimum:
  - a) Duration for which documents and other records must be kept and when they must be deleted in accordance with domestic law; in the absence of a minimum legal duration, documents and records for a licence application must be kept for at least five years and the licensing decisions for ten years
  - b) Method for identifying and tracing documents and records and, if applicable, for identifying, protecting and returning original documents
3. The licensor must use an electronic club licensing management system as part of the football management system for the club licensing procedure and documentation management.

### Requirement 16 – Data protection

1. The licensor must establish and implement a policy and procedures to ensure club licensing and club monitoring processes comply with national general data protection regulations.
2. The licensor must establish and implement a policy and adequate data protection and security systems to prevent any unauthorised access to its electronic data.

## Requirement 17 – Data analysis

1. The licensor must compile and analyse data in relation to the club licensing system for men's and women's football to allow for benchmarking and trend identification can be established over different licence seasons. An analysis may be performed in relation to:

- a) Licensing results
- b) Youth development
- c) Coaching matters
- d) Stadiums and other infrastructure
- e) Attendances
- f) Clubs' financial information

2. The analysis must be communicated internally to all those involved in the club licensing system and club monitoring process. A report may also be produced and communicated externally.

3. For the purposes of benchmarking for clubs' financial, sporting, football social responsibility, legal, personnel, administrative and infrastructure-related criteria, licensors must collaborate with UEFA and exchange relevant data.

## Requirement 18 – Confidentiality

1. The licensor must establish a written procedure which guarantees confidentiality towards the licence applicants/licensees to ensure that all those involved in the club licensing system and club monitoring process maintain the confidentiality of information under Article 12(2) CL&FS or CLWCL as applicable. The written procedure must:

- a) require that all those involved in the club licensing system and club monitoring process sign agreements upon their appointment that guarantee the licence applicants/licensees full confidentiality with regard to all information submitted during the club licensing process and the club monitoring process;
- b) describe how the confidentiality is guaranteed (e.g., an employment contract with a confidentiality clause or a separate confidentiality agreement, etc.);
- c) describe how confidential information provided by the licence applicants/licensees is handled;
- d) stipulate the consequences in the event of any breaches of confidentiality.



2. If a licence applicant/licensee is a public-listed entity, the licensor must pay particular attention to the handling of confidential information and communicating any significant decisions.

3. All those involved in the club licensing system and club monitoring process must be aware of their responsibilities for ensuring confidentiality.

### Part III – Final provisions

1. This Quality Standard was adopted by the UEFA Executive Committee at its meeting on 10 May 2022.

2. This Quality Standard (Edition 2022) replaces the Quality Standard (Edition 2012) and comes into force on 1 June 2022.

3. Notwithstanding point 2. above, the annual certification audit in the season 2022/23 will be conducted in accordance with the Quality Standard (Edition 2012).

4. Requirements 11 (Club monitoring process) and 12 (Submission of club monitoring documentation) do not apply to club licensing processes under the *UEFA Club Licensing Regulations for the UEFA Women's Champions League*.