



 BOC LIFE
HONG KONG
PREMIER LEAGUE

2023/2024

HONG KONG PREMIER LEAGUE

**COMPETITIONS
REGULATIONS**

Competition Regulations

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SECTION A: DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATION	
Definitions	
A.1	The terms listed below (hereinafter referred to as) shall have the following meaning(s):
AFC	Asian Football Confederation.
AFC Competition	AFC Champions League, AFC Cup or any other competitions organized by AFC from time to time for participation of clubs.
Auditors	Registered auditors appointed by a Participating Club to audit its accounts.
CAS	Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne, Switzerland.
Competition	The competition called the “2023-24 Hong Kong Premier League”, which shall include all Matches including any opening, presentation and closing ceremonies, press conferences or other Official Functions connected therewith.
Competition Regulations	HKFA promulgates the Competition rules implemented by the participating clubs.
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association.
FIFA Code of Ethics	FIFA’s Code of Ethics in force from time to time.
FIFA Regulations for the Status and Transfer of Players	FIFA’s Regulations for the Status and Transfer of Players in force from time to time.
Head Coach	The Head Coach duly designated and nominated by a Participating Club to its playing team.
HKFA	The Football Association of Hong Kong, China Limited, whose registered office is situated at 55 Fat Kwong Street, Homantin, Kowloon, Hong Kong.
HKFA Constitution	The Articles of Association of the Football Association of Hong Kong, China Limited in force from time to time.
HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Committee	The committee established by HKFA to investigate, inquire and issue sanctions.
HKFA Appeal Committee	The committee established by HKFA to deal with appeal matters.
HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Code	The Disciplinary and Ethics Code of the Football Association of Hong Kong, China Limited in force from time to time.
HKFA Referees Regulations	The Referees Regulations of the Football Association of Hong Kong, China Limited in force from time to time.
Home Team	The playing team whose name first appears in respect of a Match of the Competition on the Competition’s fixture list.

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Home Venue	The stadium/sport ground allocated by HKFA to a Participating Club for staging the Matches which its playing team playing as Home Team.
Hong Kong Premier League Committee	It is composed of the participating club(s) of Hong Kong Premier League. Start from 2022-23 season, the Hong Kong Premier League Committee will operate for three seasons to enhance the commercial value of the Competition.
IFAB	The International Football Association Board (IFAB) is the body responsible for enactment and amendment of the Laws of the Games.
Match(es)	A football match forming part of the Competition.
Officials	Any individual registered as a part of the Participating Club in a technical or administrative capacity.
Official Functions	Any official event authorized in connection with the Competition including but not limited to press conferences, official dinners or lunches and banquets, and as otherwise advised by HKFA.
Participating Club(s)	A club and clubs has/have its/their first team participating in the Competition.
Person	Any natural person, legal entity, firm or unincorporated association.
Players	Any of the registered playing members of the Participating Club
Premier League Club(s)	Those sports/football clubs which have applied to and been granted by HKFA to have its first team participating into the Competition in the 2023-24 Season.
Professional Clubs	Those sports/football clubs which fulfilled the requirements of Club Licence.
These Regulations	These regulations refer to the articles of this Competition Regulations
Refereeing Officials	The referee, assistant referees and 4 th official duly appointed by HKFA to officiate at the Match (es). Video match officials (VMOs) will also be appointed for the match with the implementation of Video Assistant Referees (VAR) system.
Rules of HKFA	The “Rules of Association” of the Football Association of Hong Kong, China Limited in force from time to time.
Season	A period starting from August to June the ensuing year.
Team Manager	The Team Manager duly designated and nominated by a Participating Club to its playing team.

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Title Sponsor	The sponsor granted the right to have its agreed brand identity associated with name of the Competition.
Visiting Team	The playing team whose name last appears in respect of a Match of the Competition on the Competition's fixture list.
Team Supporter	Supporter from the participating club, who is included but not limited to the fans club member, worn, customized or behaved to support a specific team, located at the assigned fans area or recognized as team supporter by HKFA/participating club.
Interpretation	
A.2	Unless the text otherwise requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - words importing the singular number shall include the plural and vice versa; and - words importing any particular gender shall include all other genders
A.3	References to statutory provisions shall be construed as references to those provisions as they may be amended or re-enacted.
A.4	The headings in these Regulations are for convenience only and shall not affect the interpretation.
A.5	Reference to persons shall include any legal person or corporation.
A.6	Unless otherwise stated, the provision of HKFA Constitution shall prevail in the event of any conflict with these Regulations.

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SECTION B: GENERAL PROVISIONS	
Preambles	
B.1	HKFA organizes the Competition which is the top-tier football competition for participation of the first team of the Premier League Clubs.
B.2	A Participating Club must be a football club or a sports club properly constituted/ incorporated/registered as a legal entity in Hong Kong.
Official Name	
B.3	The Competition shall be officially called the “2023-24 Hong Kong Premier League”.
B.4	HKFA reserves the rights to add the name of the Title Sponsor or to change the entire competition name into the name of the Title Sponsor.
Governance	
B.5	The Competition shall be wholly governed by HKFA, which may exercise its administrative and judiciary powers, and/or delegate Hong Kong Premier League Committee to response and perform the relevant commercial and marketing work.
B.6	Unless otherwise stated in these Regulations, the current HKFA Constitution, rules, regulations, codes, guidelines, circulars or directives in force at the time of the Competition are binding for all parties participating and involving in the Competition (including but not limited to the players, team officials, referees or competition staff, etc).
Compliance with the Laws of Hong Kong	
B.7	A Participating Club shall be responsible for ensuring the compliance of its Officials and Players with the relevant laws of Hong Kong, including but not limited to those relating to immigration and employment, in order to take part in the Competition. Failure to do so shall be regarded a breach of these Regulations (Art. M.1).
Insurance	
B.8	<p>A Participating Club must conclude the necessary insurance policies , including but not limited to employees’ compensation and third-party liability, and submit to HKFA a copy of proof of insurance not later than seven (7) days prior to its team’s first match of the Competition.</p> <p>All Participating Clubs must submit the proof of payment record to HKFA before participating in the Competition.</p>
B.9	<p>Such insurance must include an appropriate guaranteed sum for injury and damage to employees/persons, objects and property, and correspond to the specific circumstances. Likewise, the policies must fully cover all risk connected with the employment of its Officials and Players, with the club’s participation in the Competition and staging of matches, and exempt HKFA from all claims and liabilities, and further name HKFA as a co-insured in all policies. The club must provide medical cover for all registered players in the first team through a medical insurance scheme for the time that the player is contracted to the club. The medical cover provided must meet the minimum standards laid down from time to time by the HKFA.</p> <p>The Club agrees to participate in a collective Hong Kong Premier League Insurance Scheme (including employees’ compensation and medical insurance). The decision will be made by HKFA and clubs by voting, the option with the highest number of votes will be chosen.</p>

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Medical Issues		
B.10	The Club shall ensure that all Players selected to take part in any Match are in all respects medically fit.	
B.11	The Club shall comply with all medical regulations set out in the Club Licence at all times. The Club shall be solely responsible for the arrangement and payment of medical treatment of Players and Officials and solely liable for the costs of such treatment.	
B.12	A player must undergo the Pre-Competition Medical Assessment before the player can participate the match. If the player fails to pass the Pre-Competition Medical Assessment, the player cannot be listed in the start list and will not able to participate in any competitions until the player passes the Pre-Competition Medical Assessment.	
B.13	The Club shall comply with the medical guideline set out for the COVID-19 pandemic situation by HKFA at all times.	
Relationship between Participating Clubs and HKFA		
B.14	<p>Participating Club shall be bound by and comply with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Laws of the Game; - HKFA Constitution, rules, regulations, codes, guidelines, circulars and directives, including the regulations of the Hong Kong Premier League Committee (upon approved by HKFA); - these Regulations; - the statutes and regulations of FIFA; - the statutes and regulations of AFC. <p>Each as amended from time to time.</p>	
B.15	The participating clubs need to establish communication based on sincerity in any matters related to the competition and in their interactions with the Football Association of Hong Kong, China or other participating clubs.	
B.16	All participating teams and their participating team persons, including but not limited to directors, officials, employees and agents, shall not in an unfair manner criticize, disparage, discredit or otherwise impugn the Football Association of Hong Kong, China, other participating teams or relevant persons, including but not limited to their directors, officials, employees and agents. Any person who fails to comply with this regulation shall be deemed to have violated the Code of Ethics of the Football Association of Hong Kong, China, and the relevant incident shall be referred to the HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Committee for disciplinary action.	
The Responsibility of Disclosure		
B.17	Upon reasonable request by the Football Association of Hong Kong, China, participating clubs must disclose detailed information about their owners and directors, as well as contracts and sources of income for officials and players. The detailed information and data must comply with the requirements of the Club Licensing Regulations.	
B.18	Participating clubs must prepare independent audited accounts and make these data public. If requested by the Football Association of Hong Kong, China, the accounts must be submitted to the Football Association of Hong Kong, China. The detailed information and data must comply with the requirements of the Club Licensing Regulations.	

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Disputes and Arbitration		
B.19	All disputes arising between the Football Association of Hong Kong, China, participating clubs, officials and players in relation to the competition must be resolved in the first instance through discussion.	
B.20	Subject to compliance with FIFA statutes and HKFA constitution, participating clubs and their officials and players cannot take any dispute to a court outside the jurisdiction of FIFA and HKFA, except to allow the involvement of the Labour Department and Labour Tribunal.	
B.21	If there are any disputes or disagreements between clubs and players, HKFA will refer the matter to the HKFA National Dispute Resolution Chamber (NDRC) according to FIFA's Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players. The NDRC must act promptly and handle the matter according to FIFA statutes. The National Dispute Resolution Chamber also has the power to submit the matter to the Disciplinary and Ethics Committee for handling.	
B.22	Participating clubs, officials and players acknowledge and accept that the sole remaining recourse available when all FIFA and HKFA internal channels have failed to resolve a dispute is to submit the dispute to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne. The decisions of the Court of Arbitration for Sport shall be final and binding and not subject to appeal. All matters submitted to the Court of Arbitration for Sport shall be dealt with in accordance with the Code of Sports-related Arbitration of the Court of Arbitration for Sport.	
Matters Not Provided For		
B.23	Matters not provided for in these Regulations and cases of force majeure shall be dealt with, and decided at its absolute discretion, by HKFA as it deems fit and its decisions thereupon are final.	

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SECTION C: PARTICIPATING CLUBS	
Membership with HKFA	
C.1	A Participating Club must be either a Voting Member or a Non-Voting Member of HKFA as defined in the Rules of HKFA. If a participating club delegates a third party to execute the exercise of right of its club, its participating member must perform and fulfill the commitments and responsibilities of its club or team related to Hong Kong Premier League and Hong Kong Premier League Committee. Otherwise, the related member of HKFA must fulfill such commitments and responsibilities.
Number of Participating Teams	
C.2	The number of teams in the Competition shall be determined from time to time by HKFA and the maximum number shall not exceed twelve (12) in the 2023-24 Season. The Club Licence system will be implemented in this Competition.
C.3	<p>HKFA reserves the rights to grant the participation rights to any club if there is any vacancy available, subject to meeting the Hong Kong Club Licence Regulations. If there is any vacancy available or the qualified for promotion 1st Division's Team renounce their right to promote, the priority will be given in the following order:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) The team in Premier League last season; ii) The team in 1st Division League (in accordance with the league ranking); iii) The local team invited by HKFA; iv) The overseas team invited by HKFA.
Responsibilities and Duties	
C.4	<p>Upon entering the competition, participating clubs must automatically undertake the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Abide by the statutes of sports established by FIFA and AFC; ii) Comply with and adhere to all agreements reached with the HKFA, as well as the Hong Kong Club Licensing Regulations. In addition, all policies, codes, notices, guidelines and decisions issued by the HKFA, and relevant Hong Kong laws; iii) Adhere to the Laws of the Game; iv) Accept that all administrative, disciplinary and referee matters related to the competition shall be dealt with by the HKFA or its relevant organizations in accordance with these regulations; v) Field their strongest squad in all matches; vi) Accept all arrangements made by the third parties appointed by the HKFA for competition matters; vii) Adhere to the principles of fair play; viii) Comply with the relevant codes or regulations of all match venues; ix) Be responsible for the conduct of its players, officials, members, supporters or any relevant personnel in matches; x) Accept the HKFA's use and/or the HKFA's right to grant a non-exclusive license free of charge for the permanent and royalty free right to use, any records, names, photos, emblems and images (including any static and dynamic representations) that may appear or be generated in connection with the participation of their players in the match; and only the HKFA's right to use and/or HKFA's right to grant the license, any records, names, photos, emblems and images that may belong to a third party, participating clubs and/or control and guarantee them should ensure that the third party waives, undertakes unconditionally to immediately assign and / or transfer to the HKFA, with permanent full ownership guarantees, without any restrictions, any such rights to ensure the HKFA's unrestricted use of the above; xi) In accordance with the HKFA's guidelines and/or notices, attend and participate in all official events and projects organized by the HKFA.

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Entry Form		
C.5	Participating clubs must submit the completed entry form in the designated period concluded by HKFA.	
Club Licence		
C.6	All clubs participating in the Hong Kong Premier League must follow the rules listed in the Club Licence.	
C.7	The obligations and responsibilities of the Participating Club/s are stipulated in the Club Licence Regulations.	
C.8	Any clubs who fails to follow the rules of the Club License shall be liable to disciplinary action, including but not limited to a caution, a fine, point deduction and the obligation to submit evidence or to fulfil certain conditions by a deadline.	
Hong Kong Premier League Competition Fee		
C.9	A participating club should submit a competition fee, with the amount in force shall be determined and published by HKFA from time from time. The competition fee in force for the 2023-24 Season is HK Dollars Fifty Thousand (HKD50,000).	
Name of Playing Teams		
C.10	Except in the case as described in Art. C.11, the official name of a Participating Club shall be used as the name of its playing teams.	
C.11	A Participating Club may apply for HKFA's permission to use its main sponsor's name as the name of its playing team. The participating club shall submit the application according to the application procedure concluded by HKFA.	

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Withdrawal	
C.12	<p>If a Participating Club withdraws from the Competition after entering or on course of the Competition after it has started, except in cases of force-majeure recognized by HKFA, the relevant matter will be referred to the Disciplinary and Ethics Committee for handling, including but not limited as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) all its matches cancelled and the record of the matches expunged (except all disciplinary record); ii) a maximum fine of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HK Dollars Twenty Thousand (HKD20,000) if withdraws before the commencement of the Competition; - HK Dollars Fifty Thousand (HKD50,000) if withdraws after the first match of the Competition; - HK Dollars Eighty Thousand (HKD80,000) if withdraws after its playing team's first match in the Competition; iii) return to HKFA any financial amount that have been paid to the club in relations to and throughout the Competition or forfeit the right to the same; iv) be required to pay compensation for any and all damages or losses suffered by other Participating Clubs, HKFA, HKFA's commercial and TV partners, or Hong Kong Premier League Committee. The amount of compensation will be determined by HKFA; v) be referred to appropriate HKFA bodies for additional sanctions depending on the gravity of the situation, then to HKFA for final decision.
Non-fulfillment of Fixture	
C.13	<p>If a Participating Club whose playing team absents from a match of the Competition rendering the match unplayed, except in cases of force majeure recognized by HKFA, the relevant matter will be referred to the Disciplinary and Ethics Committee for handling, including but not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) have the match forfeited and opposing team being awarded three (3) points and three (3) goals scored; ii) a maximum fine of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HK Dollars One Hundred Thousand (HKD100,000) if the club notifies its playing team's absence from the match not less than twenty-four (24) hours before the scheduled kick-off time; - HK Dollars One Hundred and Fifty Thousand (HKD150,000) if the club notifies its playing team's absence within twenty-four (24) hours before the scheduled kick-off time of the match; iii) be required to reimburse HKFA and the opposing club for any expenses incurred as a result of its playing team's absence from the match; iv) be required to pay compensation for any and all damages or losses suffered by the opposing club, HKFA, HKFA's commercial and TV partners, or Hong Kong Premier League Committee. The amount of compensation will be determined by HKFA; v) be referred to appropriate HKFA bodies for additional sanctions depending on the gravity of the situation, then to HKFA for final decision.

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Refusal to Play	
C.14	<p>If a Participating Club whose playing team refuses to continue to play a match of the Competition or leaves the ground before the end of match, rendering the match abandoned, the relevant matter will be referred to the Disciplinary and Ethics Committee for handling, including but not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i) depending on the scores at the time of abandonment<ul style="list-style-type: none">- the match will be deemed to be forfeited, the opposing team being awarded three (3) points, and the match will be penalized as the opposing team wins 3:0 or maintains the match result at the time when the match abandoned (if the result is better than 3:0);ii) a maximum fine of HK Dollars Two Hundred Thousand (HKD200,000);iii) be required to reimburse HKFA and the opposing club for any expenses incurred as a result of its playing team's refusal to continue the match;iv) be required to pay compensation for any and all damages or losses suffered by the opposing club, HKFA, HKFA's commercial and TV partners, or Hong Kong Premier League Committee. The amount of compensation will be determined by HKFA;v) be referred to appropriate HKFA bodies for additional sanctions depending on the gravity of the situation, then to HKFA for final decision.

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SECTION D: TECHNICAL REGULATIONS	
Matches Played in Accordance with the Laws of the Game	
D.1	<p>All matches of the Competition shall be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game in force at the time of the Competition and as laid down by the International Football Association Board (IFAB) and published by FIFA. The HKFA may, at its discretion, decide to use football technologies in any Match or Matches in the Competition or in the Competition as a whole (including Goal-Line Technology (GLT), a Video Assistant Referee (VAR) system or Electronic Performance and Tracking Systems (EPTS) in accordance with the Laws of the Game.</p> <p>Match validity (Laws of the Game): A match is not invalidated because of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Malfunction(s) of the VAR technology - Wrong decision(s) involving the VAR (as the VAR is a Refereeing Official) - decision(s) not to review an incident - review(s) of non-reviewable situation/decisions
D.2	In the case of any discrepancy in the interpretation of the Laws of the Game, the English version shall be authoritative.
D.3	<p>The Competition shall allow each playing team to nominate up to twelve (12) substitutes in a match.</p> <p>The substitution arrangement will be applied as follows:</p> <p>During the match, each team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - has a maximum of five substitutes - has a maximum of three substitution opportunities* - may additionally make substitutions at half-time <p>Where extra time is played, each team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - may use an additional substitute (whether or not the team has used its maximum number of substitutes) - has one additional substitution opportunity* (whether or not the team has used its maximum number of substitution opportunities) - may additionally make substitutions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in the period between full-time and the start of extra time - at half-time in extra time - If a team has not used its maximum number of substitutes or substitution opportunities, the unused substitutions and opportunities may be used in extra time. <p>*Where both teams make a substitution at the same time, this will count as a used substitution opportunity for each team. Multiple substitutions by a team during the same stoppage in play count as one used substitution opportunity.</p>
Mode of Competition	
D.4	The competition shall be played in a double round robin league format, and each participating team shall play against each opponent team once on a home and away basis.
Pointing System	
D.5	The winner of a match shall be awarded three (3) points. Each team participating in a match which ends in a draw shall be awarded one (1) point. The losing team of a match shall not get any point.

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Determination of Positions in the Competition Table	
D.6	Participating Clubs' positions in the league table shall be determined by the number of points obtained by their respective playing team in the Competition, the team obtained the highest number of points being at the top of the table and the team obtained the lowest number of points being at the bottom.
D.7	<p>If any two (2) or more participating teams have obtained the same number of points, the positions of the teams concern shall be determined as follows by order of priority:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. number of points obtained in the matches of the Competition between/among the teams concerned, higher or highest placed team shall be the team with the higher or highest number of points; 2. goal difference, which means, the difference between the total number of goal scored by and against a team in the matches of the Competition between/among the teams concerned, and higher or highest placed team shall be the team with the higher or highest goal difference; 3. number of goals scored by a team in the matches of the Competition between/among the teams concerned, and higher or highest placed team shall be the team with more or most goals scored; 4. if, after having applied Art. D.7.1 to D.7.3, playing teams still have an equal ranking, Art. D.7.1 to D.7.3 are reapplied exclusively to the matches between the participating teams in question to determine their final rankings. If this procedure does not lead to a decision, Art. D.7.5 to D.7.9 will be applied; 5. goal difference, which means, the difference between the total number of goal scored by and against a team in all its matches of the Competition, and higher or highest placed team shall be the team with the higher or highest goal difference; 6. number of goals scored by a team in all its matches of the Competition, and higher or highest placed team shall be the team with more or most goals scored; 7. the score calculated according to the number of yellow and red cards received in the competition, and higher or highest placed team shall be the team with the lower or lowest score. The point system for each yellow and red card is as follow: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Each yellow card (1 point); ii. Each red card as a consequence of two yellow cards (3 points); iii. Each direct red card (3 points); iv. Each yellow card followed by a direct red card (4 points); 8. in the case of deciding the champion, a play-off match will be arranged, If the play-off match ends in a tie after completion of the 90-minute period, the match shall go into extra time which is comprising two (2) periods of fifteen (15) minutes. If the result is still draw, a penalty shoot-out as defined in the Laws of the Game will be applied to determine the winner of the competition; 9. drawing of lots.
D.8	If any Participating Club ceases to participate in the Competition during the course of the season, the record of the matches of the Competition in which its playing team has participated shall be expunged from the league table (except all disciplinary record).

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Unplayed Matches	
D.9	Any match of the Competition which is not played due to absence of the playing team/s shall be dealt with in accordance to Art. C.13.
D.10	HKFA may order to replay a match which is unplayed due to reasons of force majeure recognized by HKFA.
Abandoned Matches	
D.11	Any match of the Competition which is abandoned due to refusal to play by the playing team(s) shall be dealt with in accordance with clause C.14.
D.12	HKFA shall decide to replay in full of a match which is abandoned due to reasons of force majeure.
The Hong Kong Premier League Winners & Trophy	
D.13	The Participating Club which is at the top of the league table at the end of the Competition shall be the Hong Kong Premier League Champion and the second top club shall be the Runners-up.
D14	<p>If the entire competition cannot be completed due to the impact of the epidemic, HKFA reserves the right to use the points of the first round of the league to determine the final ranking if the competition has completed the first round of the league. If the entire league has not been completed, even if more matches have been completed than the first round of the league, the results of the first round will be used to determine the final ranking of 2022-23 season. If any two (2) or more participating teams have obtained the same number of points, it will be dealt with in accordance with Art. D.7 (if Art. D.7.8 is required to determine the champion but the play-off cannot be arranged, the relevant matter will be referred to the HKFA Board for final decision).</p> <p>If the first round of the league cannot be completed, HKFA will try to arrange the first round of the league to complete under the venue availability. The arrangement will be discussed with the participating teams and a decision will be made based on the actual situation. The decision will be submitted to the HKFA Board for final approval.</p>
D.15	The Hong Kong Premier League trophy is the property of HKFA. The Champion shall receive the Hong Kong Premier League trophy, and the trophy shall return to HKFA in good condition two months before the final round of 2024-25 Hong Kong Premier League. HKFA reserves the right to recourse to the champion team for related repair costs if the trophy is damaged during the retention period.
D.16	The Champion shall further receive a replica of the trophy for retention, and forty-five (45) commemorative medals to be presented by the club to such of its Players and Officials as it thinks fit.
D.17	The Runners-up shall receive a commemorative trophy for retention, and forty-five (45) medals to be presented by the club to such of its Players and Officials as it thinks fit.
D.18	The player(s) who scores the most number of goals of the Hong Kong Premier League will be the Hong Kong Premier League Top Scorer and will be awarded a trophy. If any team violated the regulations and the match has adjudicated with the lost, then the goal(s) which scored by player(s) from the violation team will not be counted.

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Relegation	
D.19	The relegation system shall not be adopted in 2023-24 Hong Kong Premier League.
Protests	
D.20	For the purpose of these Regulations, protests are objections of any kind related to events or matters that have a direct effect on HKPL matches, including but not limited to the state of and markings on the pitch, accessory match equipment, eligibility of players, stadium installations and footballs.
D.21	Unless otherwise stipulated in this article, protests shall firstly be submitted in writing to the Match Delegate within two (2) hours after completion of the match in question by the club concerned and followed up immediately as for confirmation of the protest with a full written report, including a copy of the original protest, to be sent in writing to HKFA accompanied by a fee, with the amount shall be determined by HKFA, reaching HKFA not later than forty-eight (48) hours after the end of the match in question. The protest fee for the 2023-24 Season is HK Dollars Two Thousand (HK\$2,000).
D.22	Protests regarding the eligibility of players nominated for matches shall firstly be submitted in writing to the Match Delegate within one (1) hours after completion of the match in question and followed up immediately as confirmation of the protest with a full written report, including a copy of the original protest, to be sent in writing to HKFA accompanied by a fee, with the amount shall be determined by HKFA, reaching HKFA not later than forty-eight (48) hours after the end of the match in question. The protest fee for the 2023-24 Season is HK Dollars Two Thousand (HK\$2,000).
D.23	Protests regarding the states of the pitch, its surroundings, markings or accessory items (e.g. goal-posts, flag-posts or footballs) shall firstly be made in writing to the referee before the start of the match by the playing team lodging the protest. If the pitch's playing surface becomes unplayable during a match, the captain of the protesting team shall immediately lodge a protest with the referee in the presence of the captain of the opposing team. The protest shall be confirmed in writing to HKFA accompanied by a fee, with the amount shall be determined by HKFA, reaching HKFA not later than forty-eight (48) hours after the end of the match in question. The protest fee for the 2023-24 Season is HK Dollars Two Thousand (HK\$2,000).
D.24	Protests against any incidents that occur during the course of a match shall be made to the referee by the team captain immediately after the disputed incident and before play has resumed. The protest shall be confirmed in writing to HKFA accompanied by a fee, with the amount shall be determined by HKFA, reaching HKFA not later than forty-eight (48) hours after the end of the match in question. The protest fee for the 2023-24 Season is HK Dollars Two Thousand (HK\$2,000).
D.25	No protest shall be lodged relating to the Referee's decisions regarding facts connected with play. Such decisions are final and binding and not subject to appeal, unless otherwise stipulated in the HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Code. The same applies for any potential issue concerning the use and/or operation of any goal-line technology (GLT) and/or video assistant referee (VAR) system.
D.26	If an unfounded or irresponsible protest is lodged, the appeal fee will be forfeited and HKFA may impose a further fine on the club concerned.
D.27	If any of the formal conditions of a protest as set out in these Regulations is not met, such protest shall be disregarded.



Competition Regulations

D.28	Once the Competition has ended in a season, any protests described in this article lodged within the season shall be disregarded.	
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Competition Regulations

SECTION E: FIXTURES		
Arrangement of Fixtures		
E.1	<p>HKFA shall be responsible for drawing up the fixtures of the Competition and the Participating Clubs shall play in all their matches so arranged. The fixture list containing match information including but not limited to: the dates, kick-off times, venues, Home Teams (first-named) and Visiting Teams (last-named) shall be disseminated by HKFA to participating clubs before the commencement of a season as soon as it is fixed.</p> <p>The fixture may change at the discretion of the HKFA.</p>	
E.2	<p>Fixture list shall be disseminated to participating clubs through the contact information (address, facsimile or e-mail) submitted by the clubs. It is deemed to have been served once the fixture list is sent out via post, fax or e-mail.</p>	
Home Grounds		
E.3	<p>HKFA shall negotiate with the relevant authorities in each season to reserve stadiums or sports grounds for allocation to Participating Clubs of the Competition as their Home Venues to stage the clubs' home matches. HKFA shall in consultation with the Participating Clubs in the assignments of home grounds and HKFA has the discretion to make decision on the final allocation. Saved for special circumstances, the Participating Clubs shall stage their home matches at the home ground assigned.</p> <p>According to the HKFA Strategic Plan 2020-2025, Hong Kong Premier League clubs will get a home ground for three seasons starting from 2022-2023 season. The allocation of home ground will be based on the league ranking of the previous full season, which means the final ranking of Hong Kong Premier League in 2021-22 will be used for the selection of the three-season home ground for 2022-25. In view of the cancellation of the 2021-22 Hong Kong Premier League, the HKFA will use the 2020-21 Hong Kong Premier League ranking as an indicator for the club to select the three-season home ground for 2022-25. For this season Rangers will use the Tsing Yi Sports Ground as their home ground, and Hong Kong U23 will use Hammer Hill Road Sports Ground as their home ground, according to the decisions of the Football Association of Hong Kong, China, the Hong Kong Premier League Committee and each participating club.</p>	

Competition Regulations

E.4	<p>In case a stadium or sports ground has more than one (1) club interested to use as home venue, priority shall be given as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the District Team at which the venue is situated (if the district stadium or sports ground is not available for the district team to use (including but not limited to venue maintenance), the District team shall follow the priority order of Art. E.4.2 to E.4.5); 2. the clubs participating in the 2020-21 and 2021-22 Hong Kong Premier League, the priority will be given based on the ranking of the 2020-21 Hong Kong Premier League, that is, the club with a higher ranking in the 2020-21 Hong Kong Premier League has a higher priority; 3. the clubs participating in the 2021-22 Hong Kong Premier League but did not participate in the 2020-21 Hong Kong Premier League, the priority will be given based on its league and ranking of the 2020-21 season (The priority order would be 2020-21 First Division Club > 2020-21 Second Division Club > 2020-21 Third Division Club > 2020-21 Other Club. If more than one (1) club participated in the same division, the priority order will be given based on the ranking of that division); 4. the club did not participate in the 2021-22 Hong Kong Premier League, the priority will be given based on its league and ranking of the 2020-21 season (The priority order would be 2020-21 Hong Kong Premier League Club > 2020-21 First Division Club > 2020-21 Second Division Club > 2020-21 Third Division Club > 2020-21 Other Club. If more than one (1) club participated in the same division, the priority order will be given based on the ranking of that division); 5. Drawing of lots. 	
E.5	<p>If a new club participates in the 2023-24 or 2024-25 Hong Kong Premier League, the home ground which is selected by the club in 2022-23 season is required to change under the following circumstances:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. if a District Team joins Hong Kong Premier League in 2023-24 or 2024-25 season, while the district team's stadium or sports ground has been chosen as home venue by other club in 2022-23 season. Based on the principle that District Team can use the venue which is situated at its district, and therefore, the club originally chosen that district venue in 2022-23 season shall change the home venue. The priority will be given based on its league and ranking of the previous season; or 2. if the selected home venue is not available to use and require to change in 2023-24 or 2024-25 season (including but not limited to venue maintenance), the priority will be given based on its league and ranking of the previous season. 	
E.6	<p>Subject to the agreement of HKFA and relevant authorities and availability of the concerned facility, any of the venues can be shared by no more than one (1) participating clubs.</p>	
Match Days		
E.7	<p>The HKFA can schedule a Match on any day of the week.</p>	

Competition Regulations

Kick-off Times	
E.8	For Matches held on weekdays (Monday to Friday), the kick-off times should be no earlier than 1800 Hours (Hong Kong Time) and not later than 2100 Hours (Hong Kong Time). Except when HKFA seeks the approval of both teams upon club request, in special circumstances, the kick-off times can be set at no earlier than 1500 Hours (Hong Kong Time). For Matches held on weekends (Saturday and Sunday) or public holidays the kick-off times should be no earlier than 1400 Hours (Hong Kong Time) and not later than 2100 Hours (Hong Kong Time).
E9	Subject to conditions (such as venue arrangements and TV broadcast), the home team may submit a recommendation about the match kick-off time. The HKFA will consider and make the final decision.
No Clashes with Hong Kong, China Representative Team Matches	
E.10	HKFA will arrange the fixtures in accordance with FIFA's international match calendar and/or by consensus with Participating Clubs.
E.11	The Club agrees to respect the wishes of HKFA to increase the international standing of the representative teams and to assist, where possible, in facilitating improvements in the performance of the representative teams including the release of players for representative team training, where possible.
Rearranging Fixtures	
E.12	The Club agrees to comply with the FIFA Regulations on the 'release of players to association teams' including releasing players 48 hours (from scheduled kick off time) for friendly matches and four days in the case of qualifying matches (five days in the case of competitive matches in a different confederation).
E.13	HKFA shall have power at any time to change the date upon which a Match is to be played. By exercising such power, HKFA will consult with and take into account any representations made by the Participating Clubs concerned and any other club/s which may be affected thereby.
E.14	<p>A Participating Club may request re-arrangement of a match to another date, due to engage in any match played in the FIFA or AFC Competition. The application request of re-arrangement of a match shall be submitted to HKFA in written notice by the participating club 30 days before the Hong Kong Premier League match played (included but not limited to Hong Kong Premier League match and related cup match) or after the fixtures released within 5 days (whichever is earlier). HKFA shall accept the application which has fulfilled the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) For the participating club needs to travel to participate the away match of FIFA or AFC Competition, the flight travelling time (starting from the flight departure to the arrival) for not more than 8 hours, the match of FIFA or AFC Competition is being held within 72 hours before (calculated by the scheduled kick off time) or 72 hours after (calculated by the final whistle) the Hong Kong Premier League match (included but not limited to Hong Kong Premier League match and related cup match); or ii) For the participating club needs to travel to participate the away match of FIFA or AFC Competition, the flight travelling time (starting from the flight departure to the arrival) for more than 8 hours, the match of FIFA or AFC Competition is being held within 84 hours before (calculated by the scheduled kick off time) or 84 hours after (calculated by the final whistle) the Hong Kong Premier League match (included but not limited to Hong Kong Premier League match and related cup match).

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E.15	<p>Subject to Art. E14 above, HKFA will have exceptional arrangement for special circumstances as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) If there is no flight schedule available for the Participating Club to meet the official arrival or departure date which the Participating Club has no other choice but to either arrive or depart earlier, HKFA has the right to approve the fixture re-arrangement request for the match being held within 48 hours before the departure and 48 hours after the arrival. However, the application request of re-arrangement of a match shall be submitted to HKFA in written notice by the participating club 30 days before the Hong Kong Premier League match played (included but not limited to Hong Kong Premier League match and related cup match) or after the fixtures released within 5 days (whichever is earlier) for approval; ii) If there is any delay in arrival due to flight or Force Majeure, HKFA reserve the right to approve the fixture re-arrangement request. And the match will be rescheduled at least 48 hours after the actual arrival of the Participating Club. However, all the related expenses incurred by this change will need to be borne by the Participating Club which requests the reschedule. 	
E.16	<p>Subject to Art. E.14 above, the new date for the Match shall fulfill all the conditions as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) the new date for the Match will not result in the opposing club have to play another official match within 72 hours (scheduled kick off time) before and after of this re-arranged Match; ii) the new date for the Match will not be later than the final week of the Competition in that season; iii) if there is no suitable date can be found or Home venue is not available, HKFA has the right to re-schedule the match from their Home venue to other venues in order to facilitate the league fixture. 	
E.17	<p>A Participating Club may request re-arrangement of a match to another date due to any reasons, provided that the club shall fulfill all the conditions as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) The application request of re-arrangement of a match shall be submitted to HKFA in written notice by the participating club 30 days before the Hong Kong Premier League match played (included but not limited to Hong Kong Premier League match and related cup match) or after the fixtures released within 5 days (whichever is earlier) for approval; ii) there is no objections from relevant authorities, including but not limited to HKFA, the teams related, venue management or police, etc. 	

Competition Regulations

Postponement of Matches	
E.18	<p>Subject to Art. E.17, the new date for the Match shall fulfill all the conditions as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) the new date for the Match will not result in the opposing club have to play another official match within 72 hours (scheduled kick off time) before and after of this re-arranged Match; ii) the new date for the Match will not be later than the final week of the Competition in that season; iii) the new date for the Match shall be played at the Home venue of the club without any changes.
E.19	<p>No Matches shall be postponed or abandoned except:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - when on the date fixed for it to be played either the Home Team or the Visiting Team is competing in an FIFA/AFC Competition (Art. E.14); or - with the approval of or on the instructions of the officiating referee; or - by order of the police; or - by order of any other authority exercising its statutory powers to that effect; or - on the instructions of or with the prior written consent of HKFA.
E.20	<p>In the case of Art. E.19, if a match is postponed or abandoned, the HKFA will arrange the match in question to be held on another date.</p>
Failure to Play a Match	
E.21	<p>Except in the case of a Match which, without either of the Participating Clubs being at fault, is postponed or abandoned under the provision of Art. E.19, any Participating Club which causes the postponement or abandonment of a Match on the date fixed under Art. E.1, or to which it is re-arranged in accordance with Art. E.14 or E.17 shall be in breach of these Regulations and may be dealt with under the provisions of Section I of these Regulations (Disciplinary Matters).</p>
Replaying a Match	
E.22	<p>HKFA shall have to the power to order that a postponed or abandoned match be replayed upon recommendation to that effect made by an appropriate body or authority.</p>

Competition Regulations

SECTION F: MATCHES ORGANISATION AND OPERATIONS		
Match Rundown		
F.1	All Matches will be staged as according to the Match Rundown (Appendix I) adopted by HKFA. Failure to comply with the provisions may deem as misconduct and rendering the defaulting club/s being sanctioned as according to the provisions of Section I of these Regulations (Disciplinary Matters).	
Equipment Regulations		
F.2	All Participating Clubs in the Competition shall comply strictly with the HKFA Equipment Regulations in force at the time of the Competition.	
F.3	HKFA takes final decisions regarding the approval of kits and other items mentioned in the HKFA Equipment Regulations. HKFA declines all responsibility and authority in the event of conflicts arising from contract between a Participating Club and its sponsor(s) on account of the advertising provisions of the HKFA Equipment Regulations. The Participating Clubs agree to hold HKFA harmless from any and all damages which may arise from decisions regarding kits.	
Use of Competition Emblem		
F.4	The club acknowledges and agrees to fully comply with the guidelines issued by HKFA regarding the use of the competition emblem, and must ensure that the competition emblem is not used by any entity in any commercial events, promotions and/or advertisements without approval.	
Official Match Balls		
F.5	HKFA reserves right of ball deals and provide the official balls for matches.	
F.6	The footballs used in the Competition shall conform with the provisions of the Laws of the Game and bear one of the following three (3) designations: i) the official “FIFA Quality PRO” logo; or ii) the official “FIFA Quality” logo; or iii) the official “FIFA Basic” logo/marked as “INTERNATIONAL MATCH STANDARD”	
Multi-balls System and Ball Persons		
F.7	Multi-balls system shall be adopted in all Matches and ball persons shall be appointed for implementation of the system.	
Changing Rooms		
F.8	Each playing team shall be allocated a changing room at the match venue at a Match. The allocation shall be decided by the HKFA and it shall be determined as a final decision.	
Submission of Start List		
F.9	Each playing team shall submit the start list containing the following particulars to the Match Delegate or the HKFA designated official not later than one (1) hour thirty (30) minutes before the time fixed for the kick-off of a match: - the shirt numbers and names of its players (including substitute players) who are to take part in that match; - the colour of strip to be worn by its players, including goalkeeper; - the names and job titles of the team officials who will occupy the team bench (Art. F.30) during that match.	

Competition Regulations

	<p>When the team submits the start list to the Match Delegate or the HKFA designated official, the start list shall be confirmed as the final list for the match. If any team would like to make any changes of the start list, the procedures shall be based on the provisions of Art. F.18 to F.22.</p>	
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Competition Regulations

Checking of Players' Identity and Equipment	
F.10	After submission of start list and before warming up, the identity and equipment check for participating players shall be conducted by the Refereeing Officials. Any player who does not show up for identity and equipment check shall not be permitted to take part in the match.
Use of Electronic Performance and Tracking System (EPTS) devices	
F.11	<p>If any team would like to apply for the use of the EPTS devices, the application should be sent to the HKFA for approval. The approval is subject to the following principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All devices will be inspected by the HKFA; - The data to be collected by an approved EPTS devices, or any interpretation of it, may only be used by the respective team and/or the individual player for performance monitoring purposes (including physical, technical and tactical data) and by no means for any commercial purpose and/or in association with any third party; - In order to protect the integrity of, and HKFA's rights in, the competition, HKFA may impose further restrictions on the use of the data collected by an approved EPTS device; - Players (including substitutes/substituted and sent off players) are not permitted to wear or use any form of electronic or communication equipment (except where EPTS is allowed).
Warming Up	
F.12	The HKFA will decide if the playing teams shall be entitled to warm up on the field of player before the match if the weather permits. Only the named starting and substitute players shall be allowed to use the pitch area for warming up.
F.13	Pre-match warming up by either playing team shall not commence until fifty (50) minutes before the kick-off time at the earliest, shall not last for more than thirty (30) minutes and shall end no later than twenty (20) minutes before the kick-off time.
F.14	The goalmouth area shall be used by goalkeepers only.
F.15	All speed and stamina work shall be undertaken off the pitch. Only in the absence of sufficient space that only part of the pitch between the edge of penalty area and the half way line, or as otherwise directed by the HKFA and its designated match official, can be used.
F.16	Players using the pitch at half time shall give due consideration to any other activity or entertainment taking place on the pitch at the same time.
F.17	During actual play, a maximum six (6) named substitutes from each team may warm up at the same time but without ball (except for the goalkeeper), behind the goal closest to their team bench or in a space determined by the HKFA or its designated match official. The players may be accompanied by a maximum of two (2) officials from the bench.

Competition Regulations

Change of Match Starting List		
F.18	If any of the eleven (11) Participating Players selected to start the Match are unable to start for any reason, they may be replaced by any of the substitutes listed on the Match Starting List.	
F.19	The Team Manager for the Participating Club shall immediately notify the Referees and the Duty Officer of the change to the Match Starting List.	
F.20	There is no limit to the number of Participating Players that may be replaced pursuant to Art. F.18.	
F.21	The replaced Participating Player(s) shall no longer be eligible to participate in the Match. The Participating Club may still undertake five (5) substitutions during the Match in accordance with Art. D.3.	
F.22	No Participating Players listed as substitutes on the Match Starting List may be replaced. Should such a Participating Player be unable to be fielded for any reason, the number of listed substitutes shall be reduced accordingly.	
Teams March-in		
F.23	Playing teams in a Match will process together onto the field of play as according to the Match Rundown (Art. F.1), led by the Refereeing Officials.	
F.24	Subject to the prior written consent of HKFA, the Participating Club whose team playing as Home Team may arrange escort kids to join the processional entry together with the players of the playing teams.	
Pre-match Ceremony and VIP Handshake		
F.25	Playing teams in a Match shall take part in the pre-match protocol (Fairplay handshake, group photo taking, etc) as adopted and promulgated by HKFA.	
F.26	Subject to the prior written consent of HKFA, the club whose team playing as Home Team may arrange pre-match VIP Handshake with the Refereeing Officials and players of the playing teams.	
Other Activities		
F.27	No Participating Club is allowed to arrange any other activity before, at the half-time interval and after a Match without the prior written consent of HKFA.	
F.28	For any other activities, the protection of the pitch condition and crowd control must be the primary considerations. HKFA reserves the powers to stop the activity even though prior consent has been granted and the club shall hold HKFA harmless to any damage or liability for such forfeiture of consent.	

Competition Regulations

Occupation of Team Bench	
F.29	Each match venue shall provide separate team benches at the field of play for the sole use and occupation of officials, medical staff and players/team officials of the participating teams during the match. The Home Team shall occupy the left hand side as view from the fourth official's bench.
F.30	Up to a maximum of eight (8) registered team officials and twelve (12) players listed on the match starting list are allowed to sit on the team bench during a Match, provided they are in possession of and must wear the appropriate eligibility and access card at all time.
F.31	All persons on the bench must wear kits that are contrasting with the kits of the players and referees on the pitch.
F.32	The coaches, officials, medical staff, players/team officials and other occupants of the team bench must behave in a responsible manner and must remain within the confines of the team bench and the technical area as described in Art. F.33 below except in special circumstances, for examples, where the substitute players need to warm-up and medical staff have to leave with the Referee's permission to provide medical attention to an injured player.
Use of Technical Area	
F.33	The technical areas, with boundaries clearly marked, shall include the team benches as described in Art. F.29 above and shall extend one (1) metre on either side of each the team bench and shall extend forward up to a distance of one (1) metre from the touchline.
F.34	Only one (1) person, usually the named Team Manager or the Head Coach, from a playing team is authorized to convey tactical instructions in the technical area at a time.
F.35	The use of any form of electronic communication by team officials is permitted where it directly relates to player welfare or safety or for tactical/coaching reasons but only small, mobile, hand-held equipment (e.g. microphone, headphone, ear-piece, mobile phone/smartphone, smartwatch, tablet, laptop) may be used. A team official who uses unauthorized equipment or who behaves in an inappropriate manner as a result of the use of electronic or communication equipment will be dismissed from the technical area. Video shooting and photo taking is not permitted within the technical area during the match.
Post-Match Handshake	
F.36	Players of the both playing teams shall assemble with the Referee Officials at the centre circle after the completion of the match for post-match handshake. Any player who fails to do so shall be issued a mandatory fine of HK Dollars Two Thousand (HKD2,000).
Post-Match Media Conference	
F.37	As and when required, the Head Coach and/or Team Manager and/or any selected player of the playing teams are required to attend the Post-Match Media Interviews. In case of default, the infringing club shall pay a mandatory fine of HK Dollars Two Thousand (HK\$2,000).

Competition Regulations

Cancellation of Matches Due to Force Majeure	
F.38	<p>If a Match cannot commence on time due to force majeure or any other incidents such as, but not limited to, the field is not fit for play, weather conditions, floodlight failure, etc. the following procedures must be followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) The match must first be delayed for a minimum of thirty (30) minutes, unless the Referee decides that the match can commence earlier, before a decision to cancel the match is taken; ii) At the discretion of the Referee, another delay of a maximum of thirty (30) minutes shall be allowed if in his opinion this extra period of delay will allow the match to commence. However, if the match cannot be commenced at the end of this second thirty (30) minutes period or earlier, the Referee must declare the match to have been cancelled.
F.39	<p>In the case of a cancelled match as described in Art. F.38, HKFA shall decide whether the match can be rescheduled in accordance with Art. D.10, taking sporting and organizational considerations into account. The decision of HKFA shall be final and not subject to appeals.</p>
Abandonment of Matches Due to Force Majeure	
F.40	<p>If a Match is stopped by the Referee before the end of normal time because of force majeure or any other incidents such as, but not limited to, the field is not fit for play, weather conditions, floodlight failure, etc. the following procedures must be followed:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) The match is automatically suspended for the duration of thirty (30) minutes to allow conditions to improve sufficiently to restart the match, unless the Referee decides that the match can be resumed earlier. ii) At the discretion of the Referee, another suspension of a maximum of thirty (30) minutes shall be allowed if in his opinion this extra period of suspension will allow the match to be resumed. However, if the match cannot be resumed at the end of this second thirty (30) minutes period or earlier, the Referee must declare the match to have been abandoned.
F.41	<p>In the case of an abandoned match as described in Art. F.40, HKFA shall decide whether the match result at the time of abandonment is valid or whether a replay shall be organized in accordance with Art. D.12, taking sporting and organizational considerations into account. The decision of HKFA shall be final and not subject to appeals.</p>

Competition Regulations

SECTION G: MATCH OFFICIALS		
Appointment of Match Officials		
G.1	HKFA may appoint match officials including but not limited to Match Delegate, Refereeing Officials, General Coordinator, Referee Assessor, Media Officer, Marketing Officer, Security Officer, Medical Officer, Doping Control Officer, Anti-discrimination Officer and Hong Kong Premier League Committee Representatives for the organization and operations of the Matches.	
Match Delegate		
G.2	HKFA shall appoint to each HKPL match a Match Delegate who acts as the official representative of HKFA at the match to which he is appointed and reports thereon to HKFA.	
G.3	The powers and duties of Match Delegate are set out as Appendix II of these Regulations.	
Referees, Assistant Referees and Fourth Officials		
G.4	<p>HKFA shall, through its Referees Committee, appoint to each HKPL match in the Competition in the role of the Referee, Assistant Referees and Fourth Official. For HKPL match utilizing the VAR technology, on top of the Referee, Assistant Referees and Fourth Official, the Video Assistant Referee (VAR) and Assistant Video Assistant Referee (AVAR) (collectively as Refereeing Officials) shall be appointed which is stipulated in the Laws of the Game.</p> <p>They shall be selected from the respective lists of Referees, Assistant Referees and Video Match Officials (VMOs) eligible to appointment to officiate at HKPL matches compiled and published before the commencement of each Season.</p>	
G.5	<p>The powers and duties of the Refereeing Officials are set out respectively as according to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - referee: Law 5 of the Laws of the Game - assistant referee: Law 6 of the Laws of the Game - fourth official: Law 6 of the Laws of the Game - video assistant referee (VAR) protocol 	
G.6	The management of the Refereeing Officials shall be governed separately by the HKFA Referees Regulations drawn up and communicated by the HKFA Referees Committee and in force at the time of the Competition.	

Competition Regulations

SECTION H: PLAYERS AND TEAM OFFICIALS	
Regulations regarding Players	
H.1	Unless otherwise provided, all the relevant HKFA rules and regulations regarding the status and transfer of players in force shall be applicable to the Competition.
Eligibility of Players	
H.2	<p>A player is eligible to play in the Competition provided that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) the player is duly registered by his club with HKFA as accordance to the Rules of HKFA and those of FIFA Regulations for the Status and Transfer of Players where relevant; ii) the player enters into a valid professional player contract with his club with a copy duly filed to HKFA; iii) the player provides documentary proof for being permitted to take up employment as football player in Hong Kong with the club he registers to play for.
H.3	<p>A player is deemed ineligible if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) there is a violation of Art. H.1 and Art H.2; ii) the player is fielded despite being served a disciplinary suspension; iii) the player fails a doping test; iv) the player fails in Pre-Competition Medical Assessment; v) HKFA finds that document/s submitted during registration is/are false.
H.4	<p>Any club found guilty of fielding an ineligible player shall be dealt with by the HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Committee in accordance with the HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Code. Sanctions may include but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) a fine; ii) deduction of points; iii) the award of the match to the opposing club; iv) an order to have the match replayed.
Registration Windows	
H.5	<p>There are two registration windows for the Competition. Each registration window shall open on a date as communicated by the HKFA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Registration Window 1: 18th July 2023 to 9th October 2023 (*A professional whose contract has expired prior to the end of a registration period may be registered outside this registration period and the date will be extended to 9th December 2023); ii) Registration Window 2: 2nd January 2024 to 29th January 2024 (*A professional whose contract has expired prior to the end of a registration period may be registered outside this registration period and the date will be extended to 29th March 2024) <p>* This will be processed in accordance with the “FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players”, please refer to the relevant regulations for details.</p>

Competition Regulations

H.6	Each participating club shall submit player registrations to the HKFA via the “HK Football Connect” online system, the registration of players and the supporting documents in accordance with HKFA Rules of Association and HKFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players. Unless separately provided, all rules and regulations regarding player status and transfers will be applicable in the Competition. Please refer to HKFA Rules of Association for information regarding team official and player registrations.	
H.7	According to HKFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players Art.5(3), a player can register with three clubs during each season, but the player can only be eligible to play in official matches for two clubs during the season.	
Participating Players List		
H.8	<p>Each participating club can submit a Participating Players List up to a maximum of thirty (30) players for its first team playing in the Competition at designated time in a Season. Adding players into the list will only be accepted in accordance with the FIFA stipulations relating to Registration Windows whereas removing a player from the list can be done anytime. Furthermore, an additional pool of a maximum of ten (10) players who were born in 2002 or after can be registered to the team.</p> <p>The participating club “HK U23” can submit up to a maximum of five (5) overage local players (born in 2000 or before) on the Start List (listed as starting player or substitute), and a maximum of five (5) overage local players can be fielded at one time of a match (including the overage local player being sent-off by referee with red card).</p>	
H.9	Each participating club must submit a Participating Players List with minimum eighteen (18) participating players and maximum thirty (30) participating players, by filling in and returning the Participating Players List, each allocated a playing number between 1 and 99.	
H.10	<p>Each participating club must submit a Participating Players List with no less than 18 players to the Players Registration Department 5 working days before (i.e. on or before 14th August 2023) the start of the Hong Kong Premier League Competitions (included but not limited to Hong Kong Premier League matches and related cup matches). The participating players should be selected from the players registered at the participating club.</p> <p>Each participating club can replace or add participating players for any reason, provided that the maximum number of registered players is not exceeded, until 14 working days (i.e. on or before 30th October 2023) after the end of Registration Window 1 (18th July 2023 to 9th October 2023). After 30th October 2023, a professional whose contract has expired prior to the end of a registration period may be registered outside this registration period and the date will be extended to 9th December 2023. The Participating Players List shall not be change after the above date until mentioned date in Art. H.11.</p>	
H.11	During Registration Window 2, i.e. 2 nd January 2024 to 29 th January 2024, each participating club can replace or add participating players for any reason, provided that the maximum number of registered players is not exceeded. , until 14 working days (i.e. on or before 20 th February 2024) after the end of Registration Window 2. A professional whose contract has expired prior to the end of a registration period may be registered outside this registration period and the date will be extended to 29 th March 2024.	
H.12	If a club fails to submit a Participating Players List with the minimum requirement of eighteen (18) players for its first team participating in the Competition by the start and anytime during the Season, the club will be receive a sanction from the HKFA.	

Competition Regulations

Non-Resident (Foreign) Players	
H.13	<p>Subject to Art. H.8 above, a participating club can list non-resident (foreign) players on the Participating Players List.</p> <p>Participating club can submit up to a maximum of six (6) non-resident (foreign) players on the Start List (listed as starting player or substitute) and a maximum of six (6) non-resident (foreign) players can be fielded at one time of a match (including the non-resident (foreign) player being sent-off by referee with red card).</p>
H.14	<p>Art. H.13 will not apply to the participating club “Hong Kong Football Club”, but a minimum of nine (9) local players shall be listed on Participating Players List.</p> <p>The participating club “Hong Kong Football Club” must field at least five (5) local players at any one time of a match. (including the local player being sent-off by referee with red card).</p>
Players’ Identification	
H.15	At the start of each Season each participating club shall allocate a different shirt number to each player of its first team participating in the Competition. Each club shall forthwith provide to HKFA full details in writing of shirt numbers allocated by the time of registering the players.
H.16	A club shall likewise allocate a shirt number to any player joining and registering for its first team participating in the Competition during the Season.
H.17	Save with the prior written consent of HKFA shirt numbers shall be ranged from one (1) to ninety nine (99). Number one (1) must be allocated to one of the goalkeepers.
H.18	A player's shirt number should remain the same throughout the season if he plays for the same club for the whole season. That number can only be reassigned to another player when the player leaves the club mid-season.
H.19	During the competition matches, each player must wear a shirt with a clearly displayed number on the back of the shirt, the player's name or nickname must be printed on the shirt but must be positioned above the back number, and the style of name display must be approved by the Football Association of Hong Kong, China. The player's number must also be printed on the front of the shorts.
H.20	Any emblems that appear on the shirts and shorts, along with the size, style and design of the shirt numbers and letters, must all be approved by the Football Association of Hong Kong, China.
H.21	The captain of each competing team must wear the armband during matches in the competition. HKFA reserves the right to provide the armband.
H.22	Any club that violates clauses H.15 to H.21 for the first time will receive a written warning from HKFA, a second violation will incur a HK\$5,000 fine, and a third violation will incur a HK\$10,000 fine. Further violations will be dealt with in accordance with the HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Code.
Team Officials	
H.23	During anytime in the season, each participating club can submit up to a maximum of fifteen (15) team officials at the Participating List. Each team must enroll at least one up to 7 game supervisor(s) from the registered team officials at the age of 21 or above to be the team game supervisor(s). A supervisor has to be present during the entire match. If before

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	or during the match, either team has no supervisor presence, the referee will not start the match or they will terminate the match immediately. The team that has no supervisor appearance shall bear the consequence and responsibility.	
H.24	Each participating club must submit one registered head coach at the participating list; the head coach must be a coach with class A or above assessed by Asian Football Confederation and registered with the Football Association of Hong Kong, China and must meet the requirement of HKFA club license. Head coach has to be listed present on the team officials on substitution bench every match and present during the entire match. A written request must be submitted to HKFA in advance if the registered head coach needs to be absent for the match due to specific reasons.	
H.25	Each participating club must submit at least one registered medical personnel at the participating list, and this medical personnel must select from the accredited list of HKFA with the position of team doctor or physiotherapist. This accredited medical personnel has to be listed present on the team officials on substitution bench every match and present during the entire match. The club shall be liable to disciplinary action if the club did not fulfill this requirement.	

Competition Regulations

SECTION I: DISCIPLINARY MATTERS		
General Principles		
I.1	All participating clubs, its Team Officials and Players undertake to comply with the HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Code and all relevant circulars and directives in force at the time of the Competition, and agree in particular to respect the spirit of fair play, non-violence and the authority of the match officials, and behave accordingly.	
Disciplinary Incidents		
I.2	Disciplinary incidents shall be dealt with in compliance with the HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Code in force and all relevant circulars and directives.	
I.3	HKFA may initiate investigations should it suspect and/or is aware of any violation of current HKFA Constitution, HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Code, the relevant circulars and directives.	
I.4	HKFA may impose disciplinary measures for any violation of current HKFA Constitution, HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Code, the relevant circulars and directives.	
Team Officials or Players Cautioned or Dismissed from the Field of Play		
I.5	All team officials or players being cautioned or dismissed from the Field of Play shall be dealt with by the HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Committee in accordance with the HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Code in force. Each club shall bear the responsibility of monitoring the cautions and/or suspensions received by its team officials or players and to ensure that all team officials or players registered and/or fielded during the competition are eligible to play.	
Conduct of Team Officials and Players		
I.6	Any team official or player who fails to conduct oneself in a proper and responsible manner before, during or after the game, including but not limited to misconduct on the field of play, in the technical area, changing rooms and match venue premises, shall be liable to disciplinary action.	
I.7	Any team official or player reported for indiscipline or violent conduct anywhere in the match venue, including but not limited to the field of play and the changing rooms, by the match officials shall be dealt with by the HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Committee in accordance with HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Code in force.	

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Making Disparaging Remarks on and Charging at Match Officials		
I.8	No team official, player or a member of the playing teams shall make any disparaging remarks on the match officials of a match; any such remark made by an team official, player or a member of the team may render such person liable to disciplinary actions.	
I.9	Team officials, players and members of the playing teams are prohibited from charging at match officials before, during or after the game, for whatever reasons. Any such action shall render the team official, player or member concerned liable to disciplinary actions.	
Team Supporters' Conduct		
I.10	<p>Improper conduct of team supporters includes without limitation violence towards persons or objects, letting off incendiary devices, throwing missiles, displaying insulting, religious, or political slogans in any form, uttering insulting words or sounds, or invading the pitch.</p> <p>The Home club is liable for improper conduct among their supporters and the visiting club is liable for improper conduct among its own group of supporters, regardless of the question of culpable conduct or culpable oversight.</p>	

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SECTION J: CODE OF ETHICS REGULATIONS		
FIFA Code of Ethics		
J.1	All participating clubs, their officials, players and match personnel agree to comply with FIFA's Code of Ethics, relevant circulars and guidelines during the competition. And agree to take a stand against discrimination, racism and match manipulation.	
J.2	All participating clubs must ensure that their governance arrangements are transparent and open to scrutiny. All detailed information should comply with the Hong Kong Club Licensing Regulations.	

Competition Regulations

SECTION K: DOPING CONTROL		
Anti-Doping Regulations		
K.1	Doping is strictly prohibited and all participating clubs, its officials and players undertake to refrain from doping as defined by the relevant regulations, circulars and directives of FIFA, AFC, WADA (World Anti-Doping Agency), HKADC (Hong Kong Anti-Doping Committee) or HKFA as well as to accept the same.	
K.2	Any club, team official or player found guilty of breaching the relevant regulations, circulars and directives shall be deemed to have committed gross misconduct and shall be referred to the HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Committee and/or appropriate body for such action as deem fit.	
Doping Test		
K.3	The HKFA can conduct doping tests according to the standards and procedures established by FIFA, AFC or WADA (World Anti-Doping Agency), including but not limited to in-competition tests or out-of-competition test.	

Competition Regulations

SECTION L: MATCH FIXING		
Match Fixing		
L.1	All club owners, directors, administrators, coaches and players shall comply with the Code of Conduct. (See Annex I)	
L.2	The Club agrees to confirm all players and personnel to attend the events about Integrity in Sport arranged by HKFA. The club shall confirm that it has released relevant information to all its players and related personnel before the commencement of the Competition.	
L.3	If HKFA receives a report or any evidence from the FIFA, AFC or any organization authorized by AFC regarding the match fixing, HKFA has the right to refer the case to the HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Committee and/or appropriate body for such action as deem fit.	

Competition Regulations

SECTION M: FINAL PROVISIONS		
Breaches of These Regulations		
M.1	Any participating club, its official or player commits a breach of the whole or any part of any of these Regulations shall be deemed misconduct and be referred to the appropriate bodies of HKFA or other bodies for appropriate action as deem fit at their absolute discretion.	
Languages		
M.2	In the case of any discrepancy in the interpretation of the English and Chinese version of these Regulations, the Chinese version shall be authoritative.	
No Waiver		
M.3	Any waiver by HKFA of any breach of these Regulations (including of any document referred to in these Regulations) shall not operate as, or be construed to be, a waiver of any other breach of such provision or of any breach of any other provision or a waiver of any right arising out of these Regulations or any other document. Any such waiver shall only be valid if given in writing. Failure by HKFA to insist upon strict adherence to any provision of these Regulations, or any document referred to in these Regulations, on one or more occasions shall not be considered to be a waiver of, or deprive HKFA of the right to subsequently insist upon strict adherence to, that provision or any other provision of these Regulations, or any document referred to in these Regulations.	
Amendment and Interpretation of the Regulations		
M.4	HKFA Board shall have the right to make amendments, additions, deletions and to interpret any articles in these Regulations.	

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SECTION N: FORCE MAJEURE	
Force Majeure	
N.1	<p>If by any reason of any event affecting the performance by any party hereto of any provision of this Agreement arising from or attributable to acts, events, omissions or accidents (or the reasonable threat thereof) which are beyond the reasonable control of such party and which could not reasonably have been prevented by such party including, without limitation, any abnormally inclement weather, flood, lightning, storm, fire, explosion, earthquake, subsidence, structural damage, Government orders closure of competitions or training grounds due to pandemic or other natural physical disaster, failure or shortage of power supplies, war, military operations, riot, crowd disorder, strike, lock-outs or other industrial action, terrorist action, civil commotion and any legislation, regulation, ruling or omissions (including failure to grant any necessary permissions for reasons outside the control of either party) of any relevant government, court or any competent national or international authority, any party is delayed in , or prevented from, performing any of the provisions of this Agreement (otherwise than payment of any monies) then such delay or non-performance shall not be deemed to be a breach of this Agreement and no loss or damage shall be claimed by the other party by reason thereof.</p>

Competition Regulations

SECTION O: NOTICE AND SERVICE	
Notice and service	
O.1	Any notice of breach or default will be in writing and sent via registered or certified mail, by verifiable facsimile transmission, by express courier service with confirmed delivery, or e-mail to the breaching party to the contact information submitted by the participating club to HKFA (unless written notice of a change of contact information has been provided). Notices shall be deemed given at the time after the notice sent out (or if by fax, upon delivery confirmation).

Competition Regulations

ANNEX I: FURTHER INFORMATION

Disciplinary Matters

<p>All participating clubs, its Team Officials and Players undertake to comply with the HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Code and all relevant circulars and directives in force at the time of the Competition, and agree in particular to respect the spirit of fair play, non-violence and the authority of the match officials, and behave accordingly.</p>
<p>Disciplinary incidents shall be dealt with in compliance with the HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Code in force and all relevant circulars and directives.</p>
<p>HKFA may initiate investigations should it suspect and/or is aware of any violation of current HKFA Constitution, HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Code, the relevant circulars and directives.</p>
<p>HKFA may impose disciplinary measures for any violation of current HKFA Constitution, HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Code, the relevant circulars and directives.</p>
<p>All team officials or players being cautioned or dismissed from the Field of Play shall be dealt with by the HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Committee in accordance with the HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Code in force.</p>
<p>Any team official or player who fails to conduct oneself in a proper and responsible manner before, during or after the game, including but not limited to misconduct on the field of play, in the technical area, changing rooms and match venue premises, shall be liable to disciplinary action.</p>
<p>Any team official or player reported for indiscipline or violent conduct anywhere in the match venue, including but not limited to the field of play and the changing rooms, by the match officials shall be dealt with by the HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Committee in accordance with HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Code in force.</p>
<p>Any team supporter reported for misconduct before, during or after the game, including but not limited to misconduct on the field of play, in the technical area, changing rooms, spectators stand and match venue premises, the related team or person shall be liable to disciplinary action.</p>
<p>No team official, player or a member of the playing teams shall make any disparaging remarks on the match officials of a match; any such remark made by a team official, player or a member of the team may render such person liable to disciplinary actions.</p>
<p>Team Officials, players or members of the playing teams are prohibited from charging at match officials before, during or after the game, for whatever reasons. Any such action shall render the official. Player or member concerned liable to disciplinary actions.</p>
<p>HKFA may impose disciplinary measures for any match fixing by following receipt of reports or any evidence from the FIFA, AFC or any authorized organization.</p>

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Code of Ethics

All participating clubs, its Team Officials and Players, Match Officials undertake to comply with the FIFA Code of Ethics and all relevant circulars and directives in force at the time of the Competition, and agree in particular to respect the fighting against discrimination, racism and match-fixing activities.

All Officials, Players and Match Officials participating in the Competition shall comply with the HKFA Code of Ethics.

Doping Control

Doping is strictly prohibited and all participating clubs, its team officials and players undertake to refrain from doping as defined by the relevant regulations, circulars and directives of FIFA / AFC / WADA (World Anti-Doping Agency) / HKADC (Hong Kong Anti-Doping Committee) / HKFA as well as to accept the same.

Any club, team official or player found guilty of breaching the relevant regulations, circulars and directives shall be deemed to have committed gross misconduct and shall be referred to the HKFA Disciplinary and Ethics Committee and/or appropriate body for such action as deem fit.

The HKFA can conduct doping tests according to the standards and procedures established by FIFA / AFC / WADA (World Anti-Doping Agency), including but not limited to in-competition tests or out-of-competition test.

Competition Regulations

APPENDIX I: MATCH RUNDOWN

Pursuant to art. F.1 of these Regulations, a Hong Kong Premier Match shall be staged according to the rundown as below:

Countdown	Activity
- 01' 45"	Enforcement of access control
- 01' 30"	Opening of stadium
- 01' 30"	Latest arrival time for match officials
- 01' 30"	Latest arrival time for teams
- 01' 30"	Teams' submission of start list
- 01' 15"	Checking of Home Team players' identity and equipment
- 01' 10"	Checking of Away Team players' identity and equipment
- 00' 50" to - 00' 20"	Teams warm-up
- 00' 30"	Production and distribution of official start list
- 00' 10"	Substitute players and officials to be on the bench
- 00' 08"	Starting players and match officials to be in the tunnel
- 00' 07"	Referees check on starting list players list and players' equipment
- 00' 05"	Start of processional entry
- 00' 03"	Pre-match ceremony
- 00' 03"	Announcement of team list
- 00' 00"	Kick-off
The rundown starting from the gathering of starting players and match officials may need to carry out earlier if there will be other pre-match activities, e.g. VIP Handshake, added to the programme.	
Half-time break will be 15 minutes from whistle (end of 1 st half) to whistle (start of 2 nd half).	
Players gathering at the centre-circle immediately after the final whistle for post-match handshake (Art. F.36).	
Post-match media conference (if any) will be held 15 minutes after the final whistle (Art. F.37).	

Competition Regulations

APPENDIX II: POWERS & DUTIES OF THE MATCH DELEGATE

If a Match Delegate is appointed to a Hong Kong Premier League match pursuant to art. G.2, Match Delegate shall have following powers and duties:

1. Match Delegate shall act as the official representative of HKFA at the match.
2. Match Delegate shall arrive at the venue at least ninety (90) minutes before the scheduled kick-off time.
3. Ninety (90) minutes before the kick-off, Match Delegate will proceed to the changing rooms of both teams to collect the start list. Seventy-five (75) minutes before the kick-off, Match Delegate will proceed to the changing rooms of both teams to ascertain the player's eligibility to play by checking his identity and players' gears with the referees.
4. After checking, the official start list will be distributed to the referees, match officials, playing teams, media and appropriate parties.
5. Match Delegate will be seated in a prominent seat where Match Delegate can get the best overview of the stadium.
6. Match Delegate will submit a confidential report in the required format containing a summary of the match data, a brief description of his observations on, inter alia, the behavior of the teams, attitude of spectators, general organization, police service, medical service, press organization, special incidents and any other remarks.
7. If there is any violence or incident before, during and after the match, Match Delegate shall submit a separate report on the incident identifying the trouble-makers (as far as possible).
8. Match Delegate shall submit reports on all controversial incidents relating to, inter alia, disciplinary issues and goal scoring.
9. Match Delegate shall also submit reports on any misconduct or other incident that occurred out of the view of the match officials.
10. Match Delegate shall submit his report(s) to HKFA by fax or by e-mail not later than forty-eight (48) hours after the match, notwithstanding that it may be a Saturday, Sunday or a Public Holiday.
11. Match Delegate shall refrain from making statements to the media especially on decision made by the match officials.

Competition Regulations

APPENDIX III: POWERS & DUTIES OF THE FOURTH OFFICIAL

A Fourth Official will be appointed to a Hong Kong Premier League match pursuant to art. G.4 and the Fourth Official shall have following powers and duties:

1. The Fourth Official will assist with any administrative duties before, during and after the match as required by the referee.
2. The Fourth Official will be responsible for assisting with substitution procedure during the match.
3. The Fourth Official has the authority to check the equipment of substitutes before they enter the field of play. If the equipment does not comply with the Laws of the Game, he informs the referee.
4. The Fourth Official supervises the replacement footballs where required. If the match ball has to be replaced during a match, he provides another ball, on the instruction of the referee, thus keeping the delay to a minimum.
5. The Fourth Official shall assist the referee at all times to control the match in accordance with the Laws of the Game. The referee, however, retains the authority to decide on all points connected with play.
6. The Fourth Official must indicate to the referee when the wrong player is cautioned because of mistaken identity or when a player is not sent off having been seen to be given a second caution or when violent conduct occurs out of view of the referee and assistant referees.
7. After the match, the Fourth Official must submit a report to HKFA on any misconduct or other incident that occurred out of the view of the referee and assistant referees. The Fourth Official must advise the referee and assistant referees of any report being made.
8. The Fourth Official has the authority to inform the referee of irresponsible behavior by any occupants of the technical area (ref. art. F.32). The Fourth Official shall identify all occupants of the technical area before the start of the match and ensure that they display their eligibility and access card on a visible part of their body throughout the match.
9. The Fourth Official shall officiate if any of the three officials, i.e. referee and assistant referees, is unable to continue.



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