

Unit 1 - Personal Development 1 - Ethics, the Law and Your Image

Unit Outline

Nominal Time

This unit is completed as 'home study' and should be done prior to attending the course followed by a 30 minute class discussion.

Alternatively the whole unit can be completed as a longer classroom-based exercise for 60 minutes.

Aims

- To introduce the concepts of ethical officiating; and
- To develop a basic understanding of their professional responsibilities as match officials.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit you will be able to:

- outline the broad ethical and professional responsibilities of a match official;
- describe and apply the principles of honesty, integrity and ethical conduct;
- summarise how people can be treated with integrity, respect and empathy, regardless of gender, race, disability or age;
- describe the requirements and implications of FFA's *Code of Ethics*;
- define the concept of safety as it applies to the Laws of the Game.

Resource requirements and reference materials

You'll find the home study questions on the following pages.

Assessment Criteria

Completion of workbook exercises requiring research and recording of field and equipment specifications, player equipment requirements and safety factors.

Australian Sports Commission - Officiating General Principles

This is based on excerpts from the ASC Online Learning Portal - "Introductory Level Officiating General Principles" 2015.

Self-Management

Officials need to be of strong character if they are to cope with the officiating environment in a positive manner. It is important that officials know their own strengths and weaknesses in order to undertake effective self-management.

Officials should be aware that their approach to officiating can influence participants' experience and enjoyment of the sport. (e.g. junior competitions are usually designed to focus on fun and skill development, rather than winning.) Officials provide participants with leadership and guidance, facilitating and ensuring that the competition is conducted in a safe and fair manner.

Qualities such as integrity, honesty, trustworthiness and respect are integral to the role of the official. The official's actions should be linked to these qualities, including the manner in which they behave and relate to others prior to, during and following competition, how they present as an official and how they go about undertaking their role.

The role and responsibilities of the official

It is important for officials to understand the important role that they play, and the impact they have on participants and others. An official needs to display ethical behaviour at all times, and show integrity, empathy and respect to others. Officials should be aware of the needs of various groups, including juniors, athletes with a disability, indigenous athletes and other cultural groups. Most sporting organisations will have policies, such as junior sport policies, member and/or child protection policies and disability action plans that officials should become familiar with. Officials can contribute to an inclusive environment within a sport.

Professional presentation and approach to officiating

Officials can be the 'public face' of a sporting organisation, as they are often the first person that a participant comes into contact with when involved in a sport for the first time. It is important that officials demonstrate professional presentation and behaviour. Officials should be:

- well presented
- trustworthy and responsible
- punctual and prepared
- courteous and respectful.

What do you consider to be the key roles and responsibilities of the official?

How can officials adapt their approach when working with specific groups of participants, such as children or people from different cultures?

What can officials do to present a professional image?

Case Study : Integrity of officials

Officials are often placed under pressure from participants, coaches and spectators when making decisions. This pressure can be tough on the official, but it's important to always stay impartial.

Q 1. What strategies can you use to ensure that you remain impartial?

Case Study : Working with children

Jane is an experienced referee coach and knows many of the referees and their parents. The next state titles are two weeks away and 150 kilometres from Jane's home. Most of the referees can get to the tournament with their parents, however one of the referees - Greg who is 14 years of age - cannot as his parents will be overseas and he is staying with an aunty who does not have a car. Jane has been asked to drive Greg to the tournament.

Q 2. What are the issues in this situation, and how should Jane respond?

Quick Tips - Child-protection

- Officials should be familiar with child-protection policies and practices designed to keep children safe from harm. Go to www.ausport.gov.au/supporting/ethics/child_protection and the Play by the Rules web site www.playbytherules.net.au for further information.
- Although child-protection requirements vary in different states and territories, most require people who work with children, such as officials, to undergo a national criminal history check to determine their suitability for working with children.
- Officials should avoid situations in which an adult may be alone with a child; for example, dressing rooms or in a vehicle when children need to be transported.

Case Study: Working with children

Bill has been refereeing football for many years at senior grades. Because of a number of referees being unavailable Bill has been appointed to some junior matches, something he hasn't done for some years.

Q 3. How should Bill modify his approach when officiating young children?

Quick Tips - Working with children

- Officials must use positive and acceptable language when talking about or to a child.
- Officials should develop a calm and non-confrontational behaviour-management style.
- Any physical contact with children (or adults, for that matter) should be in a way that makes them feel comfortable; for example, shaking hands, or a congratulatory pat on the back.
- Officials should encourage children to be a 'good sport', to recognise that they have a right to feel safe, and know what they can do if they do not feel safe.

Quick Tips - Working with people from a range of cultures and backgrounds

- Officials should acquire a basic understanding of cultural issues.
- Officials need to be aware of cultural sensitivities and beliefs, for example:
 - direct eye contact is not regarded by some Indigenous people as an essential part of communication and shouldn't be regarded by non-Indigenous people as a lack of interest
 - physical contact is sometimes regarded by Indigenous people as an invasion of personal space, unless friendship, mutual respect and trust has been established.
- Officials should make it clear to participants that racist jokes, language and behaviour are not acceptable.
- It is important for officials to understand that people who are new arrivals to Australia may lack an awareness and understanding of the sport.
- Language can act as a barrier to approaching and becoming involved in a sport. Officials should look for alternative communication methods as necessary.

ProfessionalismOfficials need to communicate effectively with coaches

Officials should strive to work cooperatively with coaches. Respect between coaches and officials is important. Officials can contribute to a good relationship with coaches by getting to know them "off the field" and engaging in rational, fruitful discussions regarding officiating issues. Each official becomes the 'face' of officiating at competitions. People often judge all officials by how an individual official behaves, hence the need for professional and responsible approaches when dealing with coaches.

Working cooperatively with the players is important

It is important to remember that the competition in which the official is officiating is the most important competition that day to those participating in it. Officials can gain the respect and trust of the participants by speaking and behaving in a courteous and respectful manner, including the use of appropriate language. Officials should be respectful towards all participants.

Working cooperatively with other officials is vital

Working cooperatively with other officials is important for a competition to run smoothly. The way that each official undertakes their role often impacts on other officials. Aspects such as being punctual, understanding each other's roles, working cooperatively, sharing information, and completing their own duties are important for an officiating team to work effectively. Officials should support each other and provide encouragement to other officials to contribute to the officiating team.

Managing Environment

Officials need to manage the risks of officiating in competition, and abide by the legal responsibilities expected of an official. Officials have the responsibility to enforce both the rules of the particular sport and to abide by all relevant laws.

Officials have a duty to take reasonable care to avoid injury to participants, and this includes keeping up to date on the rules of the sport, particularly rules relating to safety aspects. Officials have a role in identifying potential risks and hazards in the competition environment (facilities, playing area, equipment and athletes) and taking action to ensure that there is a safe environment for all.

Officials also have a role in managing injury and emergency situations. This may be as simple as enforcing safety rules such as the blood rule, or more complex if a serious injury has occurred.

Legal responsibilities of the official

Officials have legal responsibilities that will protect participants from harm. These include:

- Duty to enforce the rules
- Duty to warn participants
- Duty to control and supervise the competition
- Duty to protect participants
- Duty to ensure that the sport can be conducted safely

There are a number of areas of law that affect officials. These include:

- negligence and duty of care
- Child-protection legislation
- Anti-Discrimination laws (including disability discrimination and sex discrimination)
- Privacy laws
- Criminal law (for example assault and battery)

Risk management for officials

Risk management is a systematic approach to managing possible exposure to liability. The process generally involves identifying and assessing risks, then designing and implementing a risk-reduction plan. Regular review and modification of the plan, as well as good record keeping are all important elements of risk management.

Specific elements of risk management for officials may include:

- Inspecting equipment
- Checking for potential risks and hazards in the competition environment
- Checking that they are covered by insurance
- Minimising risks during competition
- Enforcing safety rules and controlling the conduct of participants

Emergency management procedures

In the event of an injury or emergency situation, officials have an important role to play. Officials should ensure that they are familiar with their sport's procedures for dealing with an injury or emergency situation. Officials play an important role in stopping play, and enforcing safety rules such as the blood rule. While officials may often be the first on the scene in the event of an injury, there are limits to the official's role if they are not trained in first aid.

How can officials assist in creating a safe environment for the participants?

Which safety rules in your sport are vital for officials to implement?

What do you think the official's role should be in the event of an on-field injury or emergency?

Case Study: Safe environment

Tony is a football referee, and is about to officiate a match at a ground that he has never been to before. An important role of the referee is to ensure that the playing field, equipment and surrounds are safe.

Q 4. What should Tony be looking for in his pre-match inspection?

Quick Tips - Tips for ensuring the safety of playing areas

Ensure that:

- the playing area is level, firm and free from obstructions, for example, holes or exposed sprinkler heads.
- permanent fixtures such as goal posts are padded, flexible and highly visible.
- corner posts and other field posts cannot injure participants on contact (these should be made of cardboard or other 'non-threatening' material).
- there is adequate lighting if playing at night.
- there is adequate matting where necessary, for example, gymnastics or high jump.
- perimeter fences are well back from the playing area.
- spectators are kept well away from the playing area.

Case Study: Safe environment

Sam is a hockey umpire and is refereeing a match in an outdoor setting. Storm clouds are brewing, and there are rumbles of thunder and flashes of lightning nearby. The storm appears to be heading towards the playing venue. A couple of players have suggested to Sam that he will have to stop the match. Sam recalls that there was a recent instruction to officials about what to do in the event of a thunderstorm and lightning.

Q 5. What should Sam do in this situation?

Quick Tips - Risk management tips for officials

- Always inspect and clear the competition area of visible dangers.
- Cancel the contest or event if there is inclement or dangerous weather (for example, extreme heat or thunderstorms where lightning is likely).
- Inspect and control use of both competition and protective equipment.
- Enforce the rules of the sport and control the conduct of participants (a warning to 'tone down' behaviour before things get out of hand can be effective).
- Know how to deal appropriately with injury situations.
- Keep an officiating diary and record any incidents that occur during a competition.
- Seek regular evaluation of your performance and make sure you know about changes to the rules.
- Undertake training in conflict management.
- Have insurance to cover potential claims made against you and also to cover medical expenses or lost income if you are injured.

Spotting risks

Think about the environment you officiate in and give some thought to the types of risks you may encounter.

You may be responsible for identifying and minimising risks when you officiate. Your sport's rules will determine your responsibilities in this area

Quick Tips - Legal responsibilities of officials

An official has a duty to:

- enforce the rules/laws of the competition.
- protect participants.
- warn participants.
- ensure that the sport can be conducted in a safe manner.
- control and supervise the competition.

Case Study: Emergency situation

The match has been going along without incident until suddenly a goalkeeper dives to catch a ball and hits the goal post with his shoulder, yells out in pain and lies on the ground holding his shoulder.

Q 6. What action should the referee take?

Quick tips - For officials dealing with emergency situations

- Be aware of the emergency management plan for the venue/event
- Remain calm and composed in an emergency situation
- Ensure no additional harm is done
- Co-operate with other people or services - assist where you can
- Take mental notes of events/actions as a critical incident report may be required.

People Management

The success of an official is strongly linked to how well they manage and get on with people in the sporting community. Effective people management skills are essential for officials working at any level of sport. The official is involved in interacting with a wide range of people, including other officials, coaches, administrators, participants, parents and passionate supporters.

Officials have a vital role in managing themselves, participants and others during competition. The official sets the tone for the way in which the competition will be conducted, including the conduct of participants, and what will be accepted or tolerated in terms of participant behaviour. Communication is an important skill that the official needs to develop, as it plays a key role in many aspects of the official's role during competition.

Communication

An important ingredient in managing people is communication. Good communication is not just about speaking well and delivering clear messages. It is about the quality of the connection between the sender of the message and the receiver. Important aspects include:

- Confidence when communicating
- Listening skills
- Communication with a diverse range of groups
- Use of communication tools including voice, whistle, signals, flags, written reports and body language

Working with other officials as part of an officiating team

Officials in many sports work as part of a team with other officials. Working together as a team is imperative to the success of the event at hand.

Important aspects of working as an officiating team include:

- Cooperation
- Understanding each other's roles within the officiating team
- Communication

Minimising and dealing with on-field conflict situations

The officiating environment can be challenging, potentially hostile and competitive. In most sporting situations, the potential for conflict between players is ever-present. Good officiating relies on dealing with threatening behaviour in a professional and positive manner.

Important aspects of dealing with conflict include:

- Preventing conflict before it arises (e.g. building rapport, ensuring your approach and manner suits the level of competition)
- Dealing with conflict in a calm, professional and constructive manner.

Dealing with abuse from spectators and others

Comments from spectators at sporting competitions are part of the officiating environment. As a group, spectators usually exhibit highly emotional responses and often take delight in antagonising officials. Their behaviour can be off-putting, not only to the inexperienced official.

Important aspects of dealing with spectator abuse include:

- Displaying a positive approach and manner when officiating staying calm
- Blocking out the abuse
- Remaining focused on the job at hand, and not getting distracted
- Knowing what to do if spectator abuse escalates to a point where the environment is dangerous.

How can you work cooperatively with other officials in your sport to effectively officiate a competition / event?

How do you react when a participant, coach or parent questions you about a decision you have made during a competition / event?

Communication Tools

Body Language

Body language is an important part of communication. It can let others know information about us, and can alert us to the intentions of others. Officials can create a positive atmosphere with their own body language. Think about the following:

- Make eye contact, but don't stare or glare
- Keep your head up and smile when possible
- Nod when someone else is talking to indicate you are listening
- Use your hands confidently when talking
- Don't slouch, sit up straight and relax your shoulders
- Don't cross your arms or legs as it might make you seem defensive or guarded

Communication and listening tips

Officials need to use a range of communication styles, appropriate to each situation. There are times when the official needs to be assertive e.g. when a participant is questioning a decision in a demonstrative manner. At other times, the official will use a less-assertive and calm approach, such as when the competition is being conducted in a good spirit.

It is often said that how officials 'sell' their decision is the most important thing. This includes the official using:

- a strong clear voice
- a confident, decisive manner
- appropriately chosen words

Officials also need to listen effectively, so they can respond appropriately. Officials should ensure that they:

- Listen attentively
- Listen reflectively by restating in ordinary speech what the person said
- Do not interrupt
- Avoid emotional responses (listening stops when an exchange becomes heated).

Officials need to communicate effectively with players

Officials need to use a range of communication styles, appropriate to each situation. There are times when the official needs to be assertive and at other times, a calm quiet approach works best. The official needs to use their voice effectively, by being clear, concise and confident when they speak. They also need to listen effectively, so they can respond appropriately.

Case Study: Working with other officials

Gary is an Australian football field umpire. He is umpiring a match with two goal umpires and two boundary umpires. The match is progressing well. During the final quarter a player has a quick kick at goal. The goal umpire is not in good position to judge the score but the boundary umpires are standing in the correct position behind the behind post. Gary detects that the goal umpire is unsure of the score and appears a little flustered.

Q 7. Players are hassling the goal umpire to signal a goal. What can Gary do?

Quick Tips - Working as an officiating team

- Communicate with colleagues in a clear and concise manner.
- Co-operate with colleagues in a positive way.
- Support each other, this helps build a strong team.
- Be honest and share information with each other.
- Be aware of your roles/responsibilities in certain situations, this can reduce confusion and ultimately strengthen a team's performance.

Quick Tips - Dealing with spectator abuse

- Remain composed.
- Don't respond in any way to the abuse, either verbally or non-verbally.
- Block out the abuse by focussing on the matter at hand.
- Develop a simple strategy to regain concentration if you have been distracted by spectator abuse - this could be a couple of questions to yourself about some aspects of officiating e.g. technical or procedural "where is the ball/players, where should I be positioned at the moment?"
- Be aware of actions you can take, or are expected to take in response to abuse.

Quick Tips - Dealing with conflict with a participant

- Prevention is always better than cure! If action is taken early in the match, conflict is less likely to occur.
- Make participants aware of your presence by reacting immediately to rule/law infringements (when appropriate).
- Be approachable and be prepared to listen to what a participant has to say.
- Remain objective, no matter what prior knowledge of participants/teams you have.
- Be definite and firm with decisions and communication.
- Look sharp and act sharp - this will gain respect for you as an official.
- Speak clearly and firmly in heated situations. This will indicate confidence in managing the situation.
- Stay cool and calm if things starts to get heated.

Quick Tips - Dealing with conflict with a coach

- Don't take criticisms personally.
- Remember that coaches see the competition from a different perspective to the officials.
- Be prepared to listen to a coach (only if you are treated respectfully).
- Allow the coach to have their say (don't interrupt).
- Focus only on the issue/s and don't be distracted.
- Reinforce - "I can only call it as I see it"

Model Answers

Q 1. What strategies can you use to ensure that you remain impartial?

The official could use some of the following strategies:

- Blocking out the comments from players, coaches and others and ensuring that they focus on what is happening in the competition.
- Ensuring that they always behave professionally, and make decisions based on what they see, rather than responding to pressure from others.
- Avoiding any situation that may lead to a conflict of interest.

Q 2. What are the issues in this situation, and how should Jane respond?

- The main issue is Greg potentially being alone in a car with an adult, which is not advisable.
- Jane should speak with Greg and his aunty to see if they are happy for Greg travel with her.
- Jane should ensure that there is another person travelling in the car along with Greg. This would minimise a potential risk of harm occurring to Greg and any innuendo directed at Jane.

Q 3. How should Bill modify his approach when officiating young children?

- Bill should check if any modified rules are in place for the age group he is umpiring.
- He should remember that junior players will not have the same physical strength or skill as senior players, so this may affect his positioning.
- Bill can assist players by offering encouragement and taking a 'teaching' role and try to ensure that the young players have an enjoyable experience.

Q 4. What should Tony be looking for in his pre-match inspection?

- Inspect the playing surface - check for dangers such as broken glass, exposed sprinkler heads, or holes in the ground. He should also check whether the ground is too wet or dry.
- Check the equipment and surrounds - including goal post padding and signage not too close to the playing area
- Check player's personal equipment - this includes boots, pads, clothing, jewellery, nails and other equipment.

Q 5. What should Sam do in this situation?

- Sam should keep an eye on the approaching storm, and be in contact with the ground officials who may make the decision to stop all matches.
- Sam may need to use his own judgement about stopping the match if the weather changes rapidly.
- Sam should liaise with the team captains and explain that the match may be stopped. He should ask them to cooperate with him and assist in getting the players to leave the ground and seek shelter if needed.

Q 6. What action should the referee take?

This should include:

- stopping the match immediately and request medical assistance.
- remain calm and show leadership to others.
- ensure that the goalkeeper is safely removed by qualified medical personnel before re-commencing the match.

Q 7. Players are hassling the goal umpire to signal a goal. What can Gary do?

- Gary should ask the players to move away from the area and calling the goal umpire and boundary umpires together to discuss the situation.
- The discussion should be carried out quickly and calmly, seeking input from everyone to reach the correct decision.
- Once the decision is made and communicated, Gary needs to be alert for any player who tries to dispute the decision or argue with the goal umpire, as he may need to take further action.

FFA National Code of Conduct

The FFA *National Code of Conduct* is available from the FFA website by clicking [here](#) or by checking the “*Statutes and Regulations*” link at the bottom of the FFA website home page at www.ffa.com.au.

Some excerpts from the Code are duplicated below. Consult the FFA website for full wording.

1. Application and scope

- 1.1 This Code of Conduct aims to promote and strengthen the reputation of football in Australia by establishing a standard of performance, behaviour and professionalism for its participants and stakeholders. In addition, it seeks to deter conduct that could impair public confidence in the honest and professional conduct of Matches or in the integrity and good character of its participants.
- 1.2 This Code ... forms part of the FFA Statutes and applies to the conduct and behaviour of FFA, Member Federations, Competition Administrators, Clubs, Players, Officials and Agents (*Members*); applies to all forms of organised football under FFA’s jurisdiction ...;

2. Bringing the game into disrepute

- 2.1 A Member must not bring FFA or the game of football into Disrepute.
- 2.2 ... brought football into Disrepute ... (includes)...: discriminatory behaviour...; harassment, including sexual harassment or any unwelcome sexual conduct ...; offensive behaviour... offensive, obscene or insulting gestures, language, chanting; ... incitement of hatred or violence; ... spectator or crowd violence;... intimidation of Match Officials, including use of violence or threats to pressure a Match Official to take or omit to take certain action;

3. Liability for supporter and spectator conduct

- 3.1 A Club is responsible, and liable, for the conduct and behaviour of its supporters, whether at home or away Matches.
- 3.2 Each patron at a Match must comply with the *Spectator Code of Behaviour*. It is the host Club’s responsibility to ensure this *Spectator Code of Behaviour* is implemented and enforced against all spectators...
- 3.3 A guest Club is liable for improper conduct among its own group of supporters. Supporters occupying the guest sector of a stadium are regarded as the guest Club’s supporters, unless proven to the contrary.

4. Betting, match fixing and corruption

- 4.1 A Member must not engage, directly or indirectly, in... any bet, wager, gamble or any other form of financial speculation where the relevant person stands to win or gain from the win, draw or loss of any Club competing in a Match; ... the throwing or fixing of a Match; or ... any conduct or behaviour intended to unfairly affect the result of a Match ...
- 4.2 A Player, an Official and an Agent must not ... accept bribes through the offer, promise or acceptance of any Benefit in return for violating his or her duties; ... provide for a Benefit any information concerning a Club...

5. Disparaging media statements

- 5.1 A Member must not make any statement in public, including any contribution to television, radio or print media that: ... is disparaging of a Match Official, opposition team or any Player or Team Official; ...
- 5.3 A Member must not make or issue any public or media statement or release that incorporates a reference to FFA or an FFA property... without FFA’s prior written consent.

What are implications for you in the FFA Code of Conduct?

Who do you report issues to?

Be a Complete Referee

It's not just about applying the Laws! Are you serious about being the best referee you can possibly be? If so there are basic elements to develop.

Your Preparation

Physical Preparation	Pre-season build up Long term goals Tomorrow's match: • Fuel up • Hydration and rehydration Recovery techniques
Mental Preparation	Stress control Review of previous match Planning improvements

Application

Interpersonal Skills	Communicate with: • Players • Officials • Colleagues Using oral and body language
Match Skills - 3 Key Areas	Control of match Decision making: • Law application • Law interpretation Communicating (see above)

Review and Planning

Self-assessment - the **RIPA** cycle:

Review you think about the match you have just officiated.

Identify skills or techniques you believe you carried out really well. That's the good bit. Now identify skills and techniques you think you could and should improve.

Plan ways to improve no more than two of the items you have identified above in your next match.

Action! carry out your plans when you next officiate. You could also tell a mentor or an observer, if one is present, what you intend to do. These people can then focus on those elements and give you some specific feedback.



(BT: 03/2013 revision)