

FAW | REGULATIONS FOR DISABILITY FOOTBALL IN WALES

Introduction

The FAW are committed to making football accessible, enjoyable and safe for everyone, regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, background or ability. Our vision is that football is for everyone from the park to the World stage. We are aiming to create a flexible and appealing offer, clear and effective pathways for progression, and a diverse, skilled and engaged football family.

The FAW vision for disabled players in football is as follows:

- Appropriate competition should be made available to all people whatever their level of ability.
- Players with a disability should be playing in mainstream football competition, however, we realise that some players may be better provided for in structures such as 'PAN Disability' or 'Impairment Specific' football on a temporary or permanent basis.
- The FAW also aims to provide player development pathways to elite level for various impairments such as Deaf and Learning Disability.

Classification is needed to ensure that disability football is fair, and that people compete against others with recognised impairments.

These regulations aim to outline which impairment groups are eligible to play within PAN Disability Football Leagues. It also outlines some simple forms of evidence that PAN Disability Leagues can request in order to prove an individual's eligibility. As such, PAN Disability Leagues are encouraged to adopt the guidance offered in this document.

It is acknowledged that due to the broad disability spectrum that exists, individual cases may arise that are not covered within the guidance. In these instances, PAN Disability Leagues are able to request further guidance from the FAW.

Impairment specific provision is necessary for certain impairment groups such as blind and wheelchair users; therefore, no reference is made to these impairment groups throughout the document.

In some instances, the eligibility criteria within this document differs from that required to be eligible to participate in international competition as it is intended to allow a wide participation base within grassroots Pan Disability Leagues. If a player progresses to international events or is on an elite pathway, they are likely to require further testing to determine eligibility.



Impairment	PAN Disability League Criteria	Proof of Eligibility
Amputee	<p>According to the World Amputee Football Federation an amputee is someone who is 'abbreviated' at or above (proximal) to the wrist or ankle.</p> <p>Any person with an amputation, congenital deficiency, or other limb affecting disorder will be eligible to participate. The use of aluminium, titanium or carbon fibre elbow crutches in FAW sanctioned competitions is only permitted on 3rd Generation Artificial Turf Pitches or Sand Based Artificial Turf Pitches.</p> <p>Players from this impairment group can play in any position within pan-disability football.</p>	<p>Amputee footballers who use a prosthesis must provide the PAN Disability League Secretary with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written proof that their prosthesis has been approved by a specialist consultant.
Partially Sighted	<p>An individual must be categorised as one of the following:</p> <p>B2 From the ability to recognize the shape of a hand up to a visual acuity of 2/60 and/or a field of 5 degrees or less.</p> <p>B3 From a visual acuity above 2/60 up to 6/60 and/or a visual field of more than 5 degrees and less than 20 degrees.</p> <p>B4 This class is determined purely by acuity and ranges from the top of B3 to an acuity of 6/24 Snellen. An individual with an acuity of 6/24 would be able to read the three top lines on a Snellen chart at six metres.</p>	<p>Partially sighted footballers should provide the PAN Disability League Secretary with one of the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Blind Sports Association (IBSA) B2/B3 permanent medical status documentation (IPMS) • IBSA B2/B3 review medical status (IRMS) • IBSA B2/B3 new medical status (INMS) • Written confirmation of the footballers British Blind Sport B2, B3 or B4 classification • Certificate of Visual Impairment (CVI)
Cerebral Palsy	<p>Players competing in CP Football have Ataxia, Hypertonia or Athetosis - three impairment types that are most commonly associated with individuals having neurological impairment, with a motor control impairment of a cerebral nature, causing a permanent and verifiable Activity Limitation.</p> <p>Hypertonia is a condition marked by an abnormal increase in muscle tension and a reduced ability of a muscle to stretch.</p> <p>Ataxia is a neurological sign and symptom that consists of a lack of co-ordination of muscle movements.</p>	<p>Players should provide the PAN Disability League Secretary with one of the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPISRA or IFCPF membership identification • Letter from a GP or a specialist consultant stating that the player has a neurological impairment with a motor control power impairment of a cerebral nature causing a permanent and verifiable activity limitation. • Medical Report:



	<p>Athetosis is generally characterized by unbalanced, involuntary movements due to constant changes in muscle tone and a difficulty maintaining a symmetrical posture.</p> <p>CP Football includes 3 classes, called FT1, FT2, and FT3. Further information about classification can be found at: https://www.ifcpf.com/static/upload/raw/8ce6fab2-257c-43a7-a22d-db0e74f7b089/IFCPF+Classification+Rules+2018.pdf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Modified Ashworth Scale ○ DIS (Dyskinesia Impairment Scale) ○ SARA (Scale for Assessment and Rating of Ataxia) ○ Cerebral MRI or CT scan
Deaf	<p>The term deaf covers a wide range of different levels and types of hearing loss. It can refer to people who are born deaf through to elderly people who have become deafened through old age.</p> <p>Players eligible must have as a minimum, moderate deafness.</p> <p>Definition of degrees of hearing loss eligible for the PAN Disability Leagues are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate: between 41 and 55 dB Hearing Loss • Moderately severe: between 56 and 70 dB Hearing Loss • Severe: between 71 and 90 dB Hearing Loss • Profound: 91 dB Hearing Loss or greater 	<p>Deaf players should provide the PAN Disability Leagues Secretary with one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proof of their membership of UK Deaf Sport or Welsh Deaf Sports Association • Athlete ID number issued by International Committee of Sport for the Deaf (ICSD) • Letter from an audiologist, GP or a specialist consultant stating that the athlete has a hearing loss of 41 dB or more.
Learning Disability	<p>Players must meet UK Sports Association (UKSA) National Eligibility criteria which is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant impairment in intellectual functioning - this is defined as 2 standard deviations below the mean, i.e. a Full Scale IQ score of 75 or lower • Significant limitations in adaptive behaviour as expressed in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills • Intellectual disability must be evident during the developmental period, which is from conception to 18 years of age 	<p>Players with a learning disability should provide the PAN Disability Leagues Secretary with written confirmation from one of the specialists listed below, stating that in the specialist's opinion, the player meets all UK Sports Association National Eligibility criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UKSA • GP • Specialist Consultant • Educational Psychologist <p>Please note that a letter from a teacher or teaching assistant will not meet the necessary criteria.</p>
Learning impairment which impacts	<p>The FAW uses the term 'learning impairment' as an umbrella term to cover any condition or impairment which reduces the brain's ability to obtain, process and understand information.</p>	<p>Players who have a learning impairment which impacts on their football performance should provide the PAN</p>



<p>on their football performance</p>	<p>This can result in a reduced ability to concentrate, or to read, process, learn, memorise or retain information. It includes conditions such as poor attention and concentration, ADHD, Asperger's Syndrome/Autism spectrum, dyslexia, dyspraxia and learning disabilities. Someone with a learning impairment might go to a special school or receive special education within a mainstream school. They may have a statement of education need or similar.</p> <p>A learning impairment does not always affect someone's performance in football. An example of this type of learning impairment would be Dyslexia.</p> <p>In order to be eligible a player's learning impairment <u>must affect their football performance</u>.</p>	<p>Disability Leagues Secretary with a letter from one of the following individuals stating why the player's learning impairment will disadvantage them as far as competing in mainstream (non-disability) football is concerned.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GP • Specialist Consultant • Educational Psychologist <p>Please note that a letter from a teacher or teaching assistant will not meet the necessary criteria</p>
<p>Mental Health</p>	<p>The Leagues should be open to all individuals who have experienced <u>acute or enduring</u> mental health problems and are living in the community or a hospital setting.</p>	<p>People with mental health issues must provide the PAN Disability Leagues Secretary with a letter stating that the players has substantial mental health problems which have been present over the last 12 months or more from one of the following individuals / organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GP • Community Mental Health Services • Day Hospitals • Hostels • Community Psychiatric Nurse (CPN) or self-referral as part of their Care Plan Approach (CPA) • Specialist consultant • Occupational health
<p>Dwarf (Restricted Growth Conditions)</p>	<p>The League should be open to all individuals with a recognised restricted growth condition.</p>	<p>People with a restricted growth condition must provide the PAN Disability League Secretary with one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proof of Dwarf Sports Association (DSA) membership • Letter from a GP or a specialist consultant stating that the athlete has a restricted growth condition.



<p>Other impairments or a medical condition which impact on someone's sporting performance temporarily or permanently e.g. cancer, arthritis</p>	<p>The League should be open to players with an impairment or a medical condition which <u>impacts on their football performance</u> temporarily or permanently e.g. cancer or arthritis</p>	<p>People with an impairment or a medical condition which impacts on their sporting performance temporarily or permanently e.g. cancer or arthritis must provide the PAN Disability Leagues Secretary with a letter from one of the following individuals, stating why the player's impairment will disadvantage them as far as competing in mainstream (non-disability) football is concerned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GP • Specialist Consultant
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Data Protection

PAN Disability Leagues must ensure they comply with all applicable Data Protection and Health & Safety legislation in England and Wales.

PAN Disability Leagues Structure

1. Age Grouping

1.1. Players must be over the age of 8 years on the 1st September in any playing season in order to be eligible to participate within PAN Disability Leagues in Wales.

1.2. PAN Disability Leagues can operate the following age groupings:

- Under 12 (school years 4, 5, 6 & 7)
- Under 16 (school years 8, 9, 10 & 11)
- Post 16

1.3. A player must be within the relevant age grouping as of the 1st September, this being the beginning of the playing season, in order to qualify for that age grouping.

1.4. Under 12 and under 16 age groups will be considered as Junior Football.

1.5. Post 16 age grouping will be considered as Senior Football.

2. Mixed Gender

2.1. Mixed gender matches are permitted at all ages in accordance with FAW Rule 137.

3. Football Ability Bands

3.1. Leagues must adopt the principle of 'ability banding' competition leagues, divisions, and cups where there are enough participating teams and clear differences in the ability level of players.



3.2. Leagues have the authority to move teams into different ability bands if they feel they have wrongly been placed.

3.3 Ability bands:

Ability Band	Criteria
Championship	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Players participating at this level have limited mobility, spatial awareness, and fitness
Premier League	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Players participating at this level are mobile, have spatial and tactical awareness, knowledge of the Laws of the Game and have a good level of fitness.
Champions League	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Players participating at this level are able to cope physically, have good levels of spatial awareness, excellent ability to understand tactics and good levels of physical strength and fitness.

4. Clubs

4.1. All clubs must participate in the FAW Club Accreditation Scheme and its requirements and as a minimum meet the Standard level.

5. Player Registration

5.1. All players must complete the FAW player registration process detailing their impairment, to ensure they meet the minimum eligibility criteria.

5.2. Upon completion of the registration form, the player must submit this to the relevant PAN Disability League Secretary. The league will process the registration form in line with the FAW registration requirements.

5.3 The registration of players shall be dealt with in accordance with Section H of FAW Rules.

6. Organisation

6.1. Season Structure

6.1.1. Leagues can organise a calendar of matches that may commence in August and should conclude no later than June 30th.

6.1.2. Leagues can introduce a winter break or an alternative football offer such as Futsal

6.2. Playing Surface

6.2.1 Pitches must be specifically laid out on any suitable open spaces or conventional grass or synthetic surface.

6.2.2. There must be no debris or dangerous hazards either on the field of play or in the immediate surrounding area.

6.2.3. Markings must be laid out with the use of conventional lines, marker discs or small cones.



6.3. Playing Equipment

6.3.1 All players must wear footwear suitable to the surface being played on.

6.3.2. All players must wear suitable shin guards.

6.3.3. All jewellery must be removed.

6.3.4. Adaptive equipment used, such as a prosthesis, must be approved for use within football by a specialist consultant.

6.3.5. Opposing teams must wear colours that distinguish them from each other – either football shirts or bibs can be utilised. Each goalkeeper must wear colours that are distinguishable from the other players. There is no requirement for shirts or bibs to carry numbers for 'non-competitive' matches.

6.4. For the under 12 age group games are played in a festival/round robin format where there is ideally a minimum of four teams playing at a venue. Leagues and coaches should ensure suitable breaks are provided between games. No league or cup competitive competitions must be organised (or will be sanctioned) involving players in the under 12 age group.

6.5. For the under 16 and senior age group, competitive competition may be introduced, and games can either be played in a festival/round robin format where ideally a minimum of four teams attend or played on a home and away basis involving two teams.

6.6. All leagues and competitions must, in the first instance, be sanctioned by the relevant Area Association in accordance with FAW Rule 92.

6.7. In the case of annual leagues or competitions, the sanction must be renewed annually, and such applications shall be lodged with the Area Association in which the league or competition is situated in accordance with FAW Rule 96. The Area Association shall forward the application to the FAW for their acceptance or rejection. The FAW shall have absolute discretion to accept or reject an application for sanctioning of a league or competition. Upon being sanctioned, the league or competition must provide the relevant Area Association with the proposed dates of the fixtures. The details of the participants in the competition must be forwarded to the relevant Area Association in advance of the fixture dates.

6.8. PAN Disability Leagues may also co-ordinate 'impairment specific' divisions e.g. wheelchair football or mental health divisions. Leagues/competitions must, in the first instance, be sanctioned by the relevant Area Association in accordance with FAW Rule 92.

6.9. PAN Disability Leagues may also co-ordinate an 'Integrated games' programme that would involve senior players only. Clubs can participate in an 11v11 fixture where players with a disability and those without a disability form teams to play likeminded teams. There should be a minimum of 50% of those on the field of play with a disability. Fixtures are 'not official matches' and must be 'non-competitive'. Although not an official match, sanction must still be gained from the relevant Area Association. All participating players must be registered with the FAW and clubs must be affiliated to the relevant Area Association.

7. Competition Rules

7.1. Under 12:

7.1.1. FAW Small Sided Football Regulations must be adhered to.



7.1.2. The League can adopt any of the following Small Sided formats: 4v4, 5v5, or 7v7.

7.1.3. A size 4 football should be used.

7.1.4. Game duration should not exceed 10 minutes and there is no half time. The maximum playing duration within a 24-hour period is 50 minutes. For example, Leagues could organise 5 x 10-minute games or 4 x 12-minute games in accordance with the maximum playing duration of 50 minutes.

7.2. Under 16:

7.2.1. FAW Small Sided Football Regulations must be adhered to.

7.3.1 Leagues can adopt any of the FAW Small Sided Football formats: 4v4, 5v5 7v7 or 9v9.

7.3.2. Either a size 4 or 5 football should be used.

7.3.3. Game duration should not exceed 20 minutes. A half time interval should be taken if exceeding 15 minutes of play. The duration of half time should not exceed 5 minutes. The maximum playing duration within a 24-hour period is 60 minutes. For example, Leagues could organise 3 x 20-minute games or 4 x 15-minute games in accordance with the maximum playing duration of 60 minutes.

7.3. Senior:

7.3.1. Leagues can adopt to play any of the FAW Small Sided Football formats (4v4, 5v5 7v7, 9v9), or can play the full sided 11v11 version of the game. If playing the 11v11 format, the FIFA laws of the game must be adhered to (<https://www.theifab.com/laws>).

7.3.2. A size 5 football should be used.

7.3.3. If playing Small-sided Football formats, game duration should not exceed 20 minutes. A half time interval should be taken if exceeding 15 minutes of play. The duration of half time should not exceed 5 minutes. For example, Leagues could organise 4 x 20-minute games or 6 x 15-minute games in accordance with the maximum playing duration of 90 minutes.

7.3.4. If playing the 11v11 format, a game must be a maximum of 90 minutes, which can be split into two halves of 45 minutes or three 30 minute periods. The duration between periods should not exceed 15 minutes. Leagues can opt to run shorter games for example 60 minutes, which can be split into two halves of 30 minutes or three 20 minute periods.

7.4. Substitutions

7.4.1. For all age groups, any number of substitutes may be used at any time (Rolling substitutes).

7.4.2. Players may re-enter the game.

7.4.3. For the under 12 age group no substitute should be waiting longer than 5 minutes before they are involved in the game.

7.4.4. For the under 16 and senior age group no substitute should be waiting longer than 10 minutes before they are involved in the game.

FAW Small Sided Regulations (4v4, 5v5, 7v7 & 9v9) can be found at:

<https://www.fawtrust.cymru/grassroots/small-sided-football/small-sided-football-regulations/>



FAW Small Sided Football Formats				
Number of Players	GK or no GK	Pitch Size (length x width)	Goal Area (length x width)	Goal Size (height x width)
4 v 4	No GK	28 x 20 yards	No Goal Area	Height: Min 3ft Max 4 ft / Width: Min 4ft Max 6ft
5 v 5	GK	35 v 25 yards	7 x 12 yards	4 x 8 ft
7 v 7	GK	44 v 40 yards	10 x 15 yards	6 x 12 ft
9 v 9	GK	18-yard box to 18-yard box x 44 yards / or 64 x 44 yards	12 x 28 yards Penalty spot 9 yards	7 x 16 ft

8. Positive Match Day Culture

8.1. The FAW want to improve the match day culture and off-pitch behaviour of parents, coaches and guardians. As part of the campaign, the following practices must be introduced:

8.1.1. Smoking banned from the side-line.

8.1.2. Supportive side-lines where spectators are encouraged to applaud and praise both teams' efforts but not shout, call out in a negative way or coach.

8.1.3. Coaches may support players through questions that prompt them to think for themselves but must not continually shout instructions during matches.

8.1.4. All players in the squad should have a minimum of 50% playing time when participating in matches.

8.1.5. To help provide adequate playing opportunities and to grow the game, clubs are encouraged to field more than one team if practically possible. Teams should not be made up of more than double the playing numbers for their respective age groups (for example, the under 8 age group that play the 5v5 format should have a maximum of 10 players per team).

8.1.6. All squad members to benefit from the experience of playing in all positions, including goalkeeper

8.1.7. In non-competitive matches, if teams are low on players and cannot field the correct number, then the other team should provide the additional player(s) or withdraw players to make the numbers even

8.1.8. 'Behind the Line, Behind the Team'. Leagues/clubs must:

- Create a 'Buffer zone' that runs parallel to the pitch, ideally 2 metres from both touchlines, a smaller buffer zone can be used where space does not allow 2 metres.
- Buffer zone should be marked by cones or additional marked line.
- Only players, designated coaches, team helpers and 1st Aiders are allowed within zone.
- All other spectators must watch from behind the buffer zone lines.
- NO spectators are allowed to stand on the goal line or behind the goal.

9. PAN Disability League Boundaries

9.1. The FAW have created two regional Leagues to cover Wales – North and South.



9.2. North - Clubs eligible for membership of the North League are domiciled within the following Welsh Local Authorities: Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Isle of Anglesey, North Powys, and Wrexham

9.3. South - Clubs eligible for membership of the South League are domiciled within the following Welsh Local Authorities: Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Cardiff, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Neath Port Talbot, Newport, Pembrokeshire, Rhondda Cynon Taf, South Powys, Swansea, Torfaen, and Vale of Glamorgan.

9.3. Leagues can operate divisions based on geography factors.

9.4. Clubs must affiliate to the Area Association where they are domiciled and if appropriate, become an associate member of the Area Association the league is a member of.

