

A Guide to Qualifying as a Korfball Referee

1. Introduction

This document is intended to provide a comprehensive guide on organising refereeing qualifications to help players, clubs and area associations to increase the number of referees in korfbal. It begins by outlining the benefits of becoming a qualified referee at an individual, club and area level. It then outlines the process for obtaining the theory and practical qualifications, before concluding with a description of some of the useful attached documents. Perhaps the most useful documents for those organising qualifications are the flow charts in Appendices A and B, which show how to organise a course on one simple piece of paper. Appendix C contains contact details for individuals referred to during the Guide.

2. The benefits of being a referee

There are a number of benefits to being a referee that may not be immediately apparent to those considering such a role. These benefit the individuals themselves, their club and their area.

2.1 Individual benefits

Becoming a referee is one of the best ways to develop a greater understanding of the rules of the game. This can help immeasurably when it comes to developing tactical awareness when playing and is therefore useful both for new players and for more experienced players. In addition, becoming a good referee also builds confidence and communication skills. The best referees are those that are able to talk to players.

2.2. Benefits for a club/area

A club can benefit enormously from developing more referees. We all know the situation where a club has to meet a number of refereeing commitments each season. Typically, this means going to the same small core of referees or asking / begging / cajoling (!) others into accepting the appointment. Increasing the referee base of a club means it is much easier to fulfil refereeing commitments. This also helps area associations who have to make the refereeing appointments in the first place.

In addition, the BKA also requires clubs to have a certain number of qualified referees. The current requirements are:

- National League Premier Division clubs = 3 qualified referees fully passed and active.
- Senior Division clubs = 2 qualified referees fully passed and active.
- Non-NL clubs = 1 qualified referee fully passed and active.

These benefits highlight the advantages that there are to becoming a qualified referee. The next question though is how do you actually become one?

3. How to become a qualified referee

Qualified referees in UK korfbal need to have demonstrated their competence in two distinct aspects of refereeing:

- The theory qualification (i.e. knowing the rules)
- The practical qualification (i.e. applying the rules in games)

The theory qualification is obtained via a written 'multiple-choice' style exam. The resulting mark (out of 100) determines the theory qualification for the referee:

80+	Level 1 qualification
70+	Level 2 qualification
60+	Level 3 qualification

All National League referees must have a Level 1 qualification. The exam can be retaken any number of times.

The practical qualification is obtained by being assessed by a qualified BKA assessor while you are refereeing. Unless it is a high level assessor, you will usually require two assessments by different assessors. An assessment is fifty minutes worth of refereeing. The assessor will determine the referee's practical level. The highest qualification is 'A', then 'B', then 'C', and then 'Q', which is the basic qualification. Referees graded 'A', 'B', or 'C' are able to referee National League games. As a rough guide, 'A' level referees are usually referees with some degree of international experience. Note though that you will only be given a practical grade if you have already achieved the theory qualification. Otherwise the result will be stored and only become active once you have passed the theory exam.

When referees are first assessed, they are usually given a relatively basic assessment, using a simple form, and this usually results in a 'Q' qualification (provided they have already passed their theory qualification). This means that they are a fully qualified referee. When they have had the opportunity to develop their skills further, they are again assessed, this time more comprehensively, on higher level matches using a more detailed form.

The theory qualification and practical qualification are then combined to describe the overall level of the referee. There are four ways of describing a referee: 1A, 1B, 1C or Q. As described above, all National League Referees must have a Level 1 theory qualification. Therefore, all A, B, or C referees will be Level 1. Q level referees do not have the theory qualification in their description – it is sufficient to know they have passed the theory to obtain the Q qualification. A '1A' referee is the highest qualification in UK korfbal – the referee has passed the theory exam with a mark of 80 or more and has been assessed at the highest possible 'A' rating.

So how do you get each of these qualifications?

3.1 Obtaining the theory qualification

As described above, the theory qualification is obtained by passing a written 'multiple-choice' style exam. It is possible for players to take this exam directly¹ but the BKA strongly recommends that aspiring referees attend a BKA-organised 'basic theory course'². These involve a BKA-approved Course Leader running a course, going through the rules, explaining how they work, some of the deeper interpretations and also explaining how to apply them in some game situations.

A theory course is typically run on two separate days, with a two-hour session on each day. In some circumstances, the course may be run on one longer day, due to, for example, travelling distances for the teacher. Most of the rules are covered in the first session and attendees then have the opportunity to go away and brush up, using the rulebook. The next session then includes a brief summary of the rules, addressing any questions that had arisen between the sessions, followed by the exam itself. Ideally, the exam is then marked by each other in the course, giving the opportunity to raise and answer questions. Otherwise the Course Leader will take the exams away and mark them separately and let the local organisers know the results to pass on to those attending.

All those who pass the exam receive a certificate showing they have passed and the grade they received.

3.1.1. Organising the course

The flow chart in Appendix A outlines how to organise a course. It uses a 'cascade' process, so that the player's wishes can be communicated effectively up to the BKA without placing too great a load on any one individual. It is outlined here in (what are hopefully) easy-to-follow steps:

- 1) Any player wishing to attend a theory course should contact their Club Refereeing Officer. If you are not sure who this is or your club does not have one, then you should contact the Club Chairperson. The individual should also obtain and read a copy of the rules and the IKF Signals Booklet. Section 4 describes how to obtain these.
- 2) The Club should contact the Area Refereeing Officer, who is then able to discern demand within the area as a whole and, hence, identify any possible overlaps. Again, if you are not sure who the Area Refereeing Officer is, or the Area does not have one, then you should contact the Area Chairperson.
- 3) The Area then contacts its 'Regional Officers' on the BKA Refereeing Sub-Committee. There are currently two Regional Officers. The 'Southern Area' Regional Officer (covering London, Kent, Oxford, Cardiff and Bristol) is Richard Windram. The 'Northern Area' Regional

¹ In which case, they should still follow the same communication links identified in section 3.1.1.

² The BKA has recently started organising 'Higher Level Theory Courses' for more experienced referees. All references in this document are to the Basic Theory Course but if anybody is interested in organising a Higher Level Theory Course, it is organised in the same way as a Basic Course.

Officer (covering Scotland, Central England, Norwich, Cambridge) is Alan Lewis. Contact details for these Regional Officers are provided in Appendix C. It is these Regional Officers who organise somebody to turn up for the course. They will find somebody available on suitable dates for all concerned and then the local area/club is left to organise specific arrangements.

- 4) After the course, the Course Leader will either have marked the exams already, or will take them away and mark them and let the local representative know the scores. The local representative should then let individuals know their scores. The Course Leader then passes all results to the BKA Database Officer, since the BKA needs a list of all qualified referees. These results, along with the individuals' names, clubs, addresses, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses, should be sent by e-mail, copying in the relevant Regional Officer. If e-mail is not possible then they should be posted to the BKA Database Officer via the BKA Freepost address. The Database Officer then arranges for certificates to be sent to those who passed their qualifications.

In terms of finances, the BKA covers travel costs for the Course Leader, and the local area organisation (or club if it is only on a club level) usually pays £45 to the Course Leader and hires a suitable venue for the course. Typically, a 'classroom-style' room is sufficient since this is a theory course. Note: the BKA will usually only run courses if there are ten or more people attending due to the time taken in organising such a course – an even greater incentive to get more people along!

3.2 Obtaining the practical qualification:

The practical qualification is obtained by being observed by a BKA assessor. An assessment entails 50 minutes of refereeing. A referee will require one or two assessments depending on the level of the assessor, and the level and quality of the match. The assessor will speak to the referee before the assessment, explaining what they will be looking at. After the assessment, they will go through their comments with the referee, both positive and negative, and then say whether the referee has passed, failed or it is recommended that they are seen in another match, usually because the match seen did not include enough for a full assessment.

As with the theory qualification, any referee who successfully passes the practical qualification will receive a certificate from the BKA to this effect. This process is slightly different to that for the theory qualification because of the assessment form itself. The Assessor should send the assessment form to the relevant Regional Officer, along with the result of the assessment, including full contact details (name, club, address, telephone number, e-mail address). The Regional Officer will keep the original and send a copy of the form to the referee assessed. He will then pass the information on to the BKA Database officer who will send out the certificate.

3.2.1 Organising a practical assessment

The flow chart in Appendix B outlines how to organise a practical assessment. It is similar to that for a theory qualification but is outlined again here for completeness.

- 1) Any player wishing to be practically assessed should contact their club or refereeing officer. If you are not sure who this is or your club does not have one, then you should contact the Club Chairperson. The individual should also obtain and read a copy of the rules and the IKF Signals Booklet. Section 4 describes how to obtain these.
- 2) The Club should contact the Area Refereeing Officer. Again, if you are not sure who the Area Refereeing Officer is, or the Area does not have one, then you should contact the Area Chairperson.
- 3) The Area then contacts its 'Regional Officer' on the BKA Refereeing Sub-Committee, as above. They will find somebody available to do the assessment at a suitable match.
- 4) After the assessment, the assessor will inform the referee of the outcome: 'Pass' (and at which level), 'Fail, or 'Refer to another match'. If the result is 'Refer', then the same procedure should be used to arrange another match. If it is a 'Pass' then the assessor will send the assessment form and the full details for the individual concerned to the relevant Regional Officer. The Regional Officer keeps the form and sends a copy to the newly qualified referee. He then sends the details on to the BKA Database Officer, who sends out a certificate to the referee.

As described earlier, this basic assessment is done using a relatively simple form since the referee is usually relatively inexperienced and so not as much is assessed. Therefore, it typically results in a 'Q' qualification, provided the referee has obtained the theory qualification. If, however, somebody wants to be assessed as potentially an 'A', 'B' or 'C' level referee, they should say this when arranging the assessment, and will be assessed via a more demanding form and typically at a higher level match. This is also used for assessing referees after they have qualified to see if they should move to a higher level and qualified referees can also request this. The BKA does ask people to be realistic of their ability though when requesting their level of assessment!

4. Useful documents

Section 3 should hopefully describe what everybody needs to know to become a qualified referee. What remains is the outline of some useful documents, attached as Appendices.

Appendix A shows a flow chart for organising a theory qualification and is intended as a one-stop guide for this purpose.

Appendix B shows something similar but for a practical assessment.

Appendix C provides contact details for all the individuals referred to in the document.

Aspiring referees are also asked to obtain and read the official korfbal rules and the IKF Signals Booklet before attending a theory course. The rules are available from

the BKA website (www.korfball.co.uk) in the 'Rules of the Game' section. The IKF Signals Booklet is also available on the BKA website in the 'Competitions', 'National League' section. All Clubs have been sent a copy with the BKA Handbook. Your Club Secretary should have a copy of this.

5. Concluding Remarks

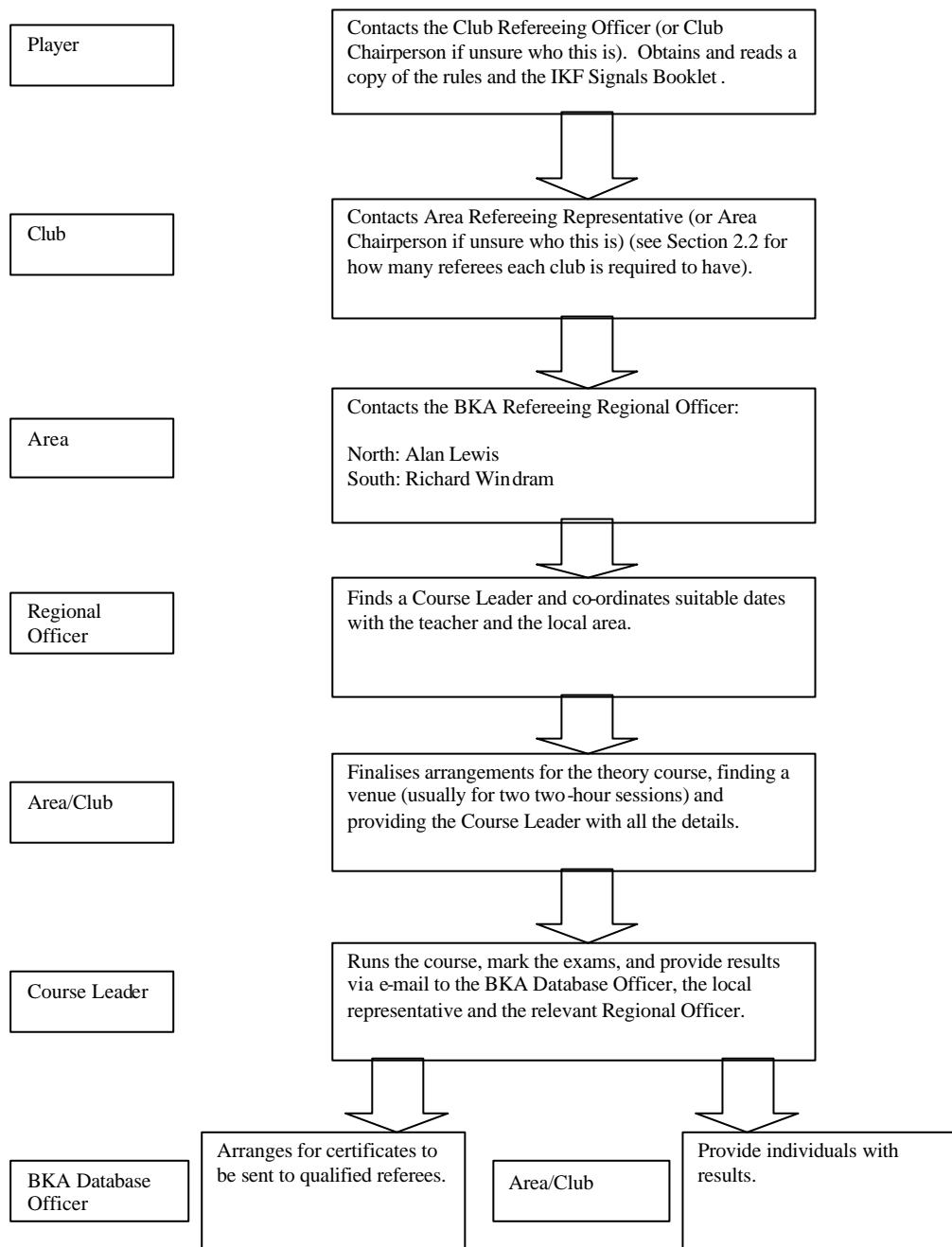
Finally, it simply remains to say good luck to anybody hoping to become a referee or to help others become referees. It can be a thoroughly rewarding endeavour.

Inevitably, this is a working document. Any comments/suggestions are gratefully received and should be sent to Richard Windram.

Good luck!

Appendix A

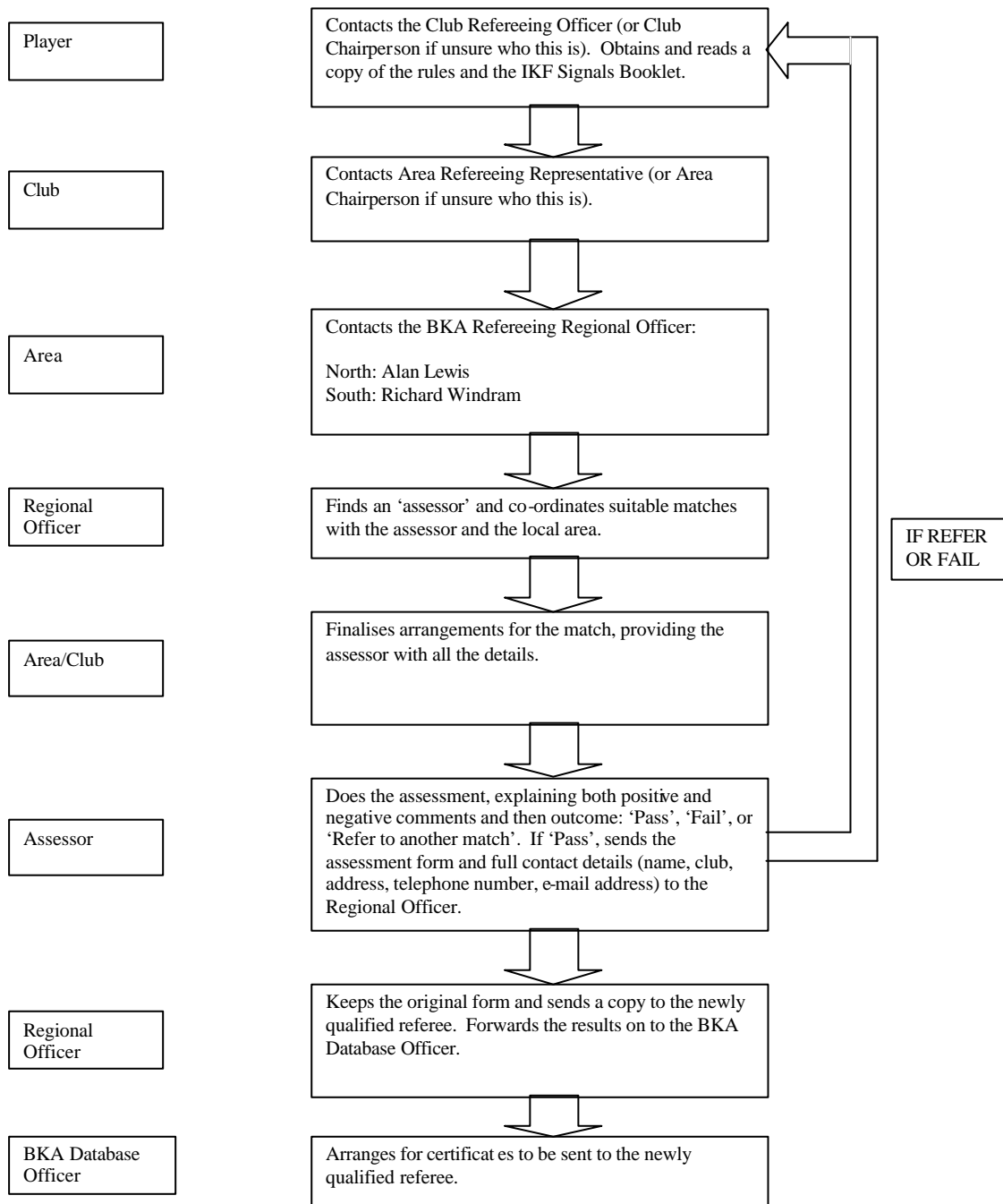
How theory courses are organised



See Section 3.1.1 for further detail on how theory courses are organised.

Appendix B

How practical assessments are organised



See Section 3.2.1 for further detail on how practical assessments are organised.

Appendix C
Useful Contact Details

Northern Area Regional Officer (Scotland, Central England, Norwich, Cambridge)	Alan Lewis Address: 38 Ella Road West Bridgford Nottingham NG2 5GW Tel: (0115) 9810484 E-mail: alan.lewis@korfball.co.uk
Southern Area Regional Officer (London, Kent, Oxford, Cardiff and Bristol)	Richard Windram Address: 283 Alexandra Park Road London N22 7BP Tel: (07801 355841) E-mail: richard.windram@korfball.co.uk
BKA Database Officer	Lol More E-mail: lol.more@korfball.co.uk