

A Guide to Qualifying as a Korfball Referee

1. Introduction

This document is intended to provide a comprehensive guide to the process of qualifying as a korfball referee, so helping players, clubs and area associations to increase the number of referees in korfball. It begins by outlining the benefits of becoming a qualified referee at a personal, club and area level. It then outlines the process for obtaining the theory and practical qualifications, before concluding with the following useful documents: flow charts in Appendices A and B, which show the steps towards organising a theory course and an assessment respectively on one piece of paper. Appendix C lists people who can run theory courses and Appendix D lists people who can conduct practical assessments.

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, their area and ultimately the whole of British korfball.

2.1 *Personal 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 *Wider Benefits*

A club can benefit enormously from developing more referees. Most clubs have to meet a number of local refereeing commitments each season. Typically, this means going to the same small core of referees or asking / begging / cajoling (!) them 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.

The BKA also has an increasing number of matches to which it needs to appoint referees. To help meet these needs the BKA requires clubs to have a certain number of qualified referees. The current requirements are:

- National League Premier Division clubs: 3 fully qualified referees who are actively refereeing.
- National League Senior Division clubs: 2 fully qualified referees who are actively refereeing.
- Non-NL clubs: 1 fully qualified referee who are actively refereeing.

These benefits highlight the advantages that there are to becoming a qualified referee. The next question is: 'What different grades of referee are there?'

3. The Referee Qualifications

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)

3.1 Theory Grades

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 theory grade
70-79	Level 2 theory grade
60-69	Level 3 theory grade

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

3.2 Practical Qualifications

The practical qualification is obtained by refereeing while being assessed by an approved BKA referee assessor. Unless it is a ‘high level’ assessor, you will usually require two assessments by different assessors. An assessment consists of fifty minutes worth of refereeing. The assessor will then determine the referee’s practical level.

When referees are first assessed, they are usually given a relatively basic assessment, using a simple form, and this usually results in a basic practical qualification. Provided they have already passed their theory qualification they then become a basic level fully qualified referee – termed grade Q.

When they have had the opportunity to develop their skills further, their practical skills can be assessed further, this time more comprehensively, on higher level matches using a more detailed form.

The highest practical qualification is ‘A’, followed by ‘B’, then ‘C’. Referees graded ‘A’, ‘B’, or ‘C’ are able to referee National League games provided that they have a Level 1 theory qualification. As a rough guide, ‘A’ grade referees are usually referees with some degree of international experience, ‘B’ grade referees are established National League referees who control the majority of BKA matches and ‘C’ grade referees are either new to the National League list of referees or are established National League referees whose personal circumstances make it difficult for them to accept many fixtures.

3.3 The Grading System

The theory qualification and practical qualification are combined to describe the overall level of the referee. There are four ways of describing a fully qualified referee: 1A, 1B, 1C or Q. As mentioned previously, 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?

4. How to Become a Qualified Referee

4.1 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 without attending a course¹ but the BKA strongly recommends that aspiring referees attend a BKA-organised ‘basic theory course’². Such courses 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 can be run on two separate days with a two-hour session on each day, or the course may be run on one longer day. Most of the rules are covered in the first part of the course and attendees then have the chance to ask questions of particular concern to them before spending some time considering aspects of controlling a game, followed by the exam itself. Ideally, the exam is then marked during the course duration, 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.

4.1.1 Organising a Theory 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 Signals Booklet. Section 5 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.

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.

- 3) It is these Area Refereeing Officers who liaise with the BKA referee committee and arrange for someone to run the course. In conjunction with the referee committee they will find somebody available on suitable dates for all concerned and then the local area/club is left to organise specific arrangements.
- 4) Generally the exams will have been marked during the course so that all attendees will leave knowing their own scores. If this has not been possible, the Course Leader will take them away and mark them and let the Area Refereeing Officer know the scores and the Area Refereeing Officer should then let individuals know their scores.
- 5) In either case, the Course Leader then passes all results to the BKA Database Officer, since the BKA keeps 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 Area Refereeing 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 administration, the local area organisation (or club if it is only on a club level) usually hires a suitable venue for the course and pays the standard fee of £45 to the Course Leader. The BKA covers travel costs for the Course Leader. Typically, a 'classroom-style' room with a small amount of space for demonstration of active situations is sufficient since this is predominantly an academic-style course.

NB: Due to the time and effort taken in organising such a course the BKA will usually only organise theory courses if the area can show that ten or more people are signed up to attend.

4.2 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 / nature 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 or failed or if 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. In case of a successful assessment the assessor should notify the BKA Database officer of the result of the assessment (including full contact details - name, club, address, telephone number, e-mail address) and copy this to the relevant Area Refereeing Officer. The BKA Database officer will send out the certificate to the referee. The assessor should keep the assessment form in case of further query.

4.2.1 Organising a Practical Assessment

Practical assessments can be conducted in a formal league match or during the course of several tournament matches.

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 who has already passed the theory course who wishes to be practically assessed 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 get as much practice as possible in club training or low level competitive matches.
- 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 Refereeing Officer will either find somebody available locally to do the assessment at a suitable match or contact the BKA referee committee if it is necessary to use an assessor from further afield. (This latter route is most common when several assessments are organised at a one-off tournament.)
- 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 keep the assessment form and send the full details of the assessment and the individual concerned to the BKA Database Officer, copying in the relevant Area Refereeing Officer. The BKA Database Officer sends out a certificate to the referee.

As described earlier, a basic assessment is done using a relatively simple form since the referee is usually relatively inexperienced and the assessment is aimed at establishing a basic level of competence as a referee. Therefore, it typically results in the basic level 'Q' grade qualification, provided the referee has obtained the theory qualification.

If somebody wants to be assessed as potentially an 'A', 'B' or 'C' level referee, they should say this when arranging the assessment, and they will be assessed at a higher level match using a more detailed assessment form. This is also used for assessing referees after they have qualified to see if they should move to a higher level. Qualified referees can also request this by contacting the BKA referee committee.

NB. The BKA does ask people to be realistic of their ability though when requesting their level of assessment!

The assessor is entitled to a £10 fee from the organising area association for conducting an assessment and can claim excess travel expenses in a similar way to the travel expenses paid for national league refereeing. An information pack to help assessors is available from the BKA referees committee which contains the relevant assessment forms and travel claim form.

5. Useful Documents

Section 4 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 a list of people able to run BKA Theory Courses.

Appendix D provides a list of people able to conduct practical assessments.

Aspiring referees are also asked to obtain and read the official korfball rules and signals Booklet before attending a theory course. The rules can be viewed on the BKA website (www.korfball.co.uk) in the 'Rules of the Game' section and can be downloaded from here or the 'Library' section. Alternatively, all clubs have been sent a copy with the BKA Handbook - your Club Secretary should have a copy of this.

6. Concluding Remarks

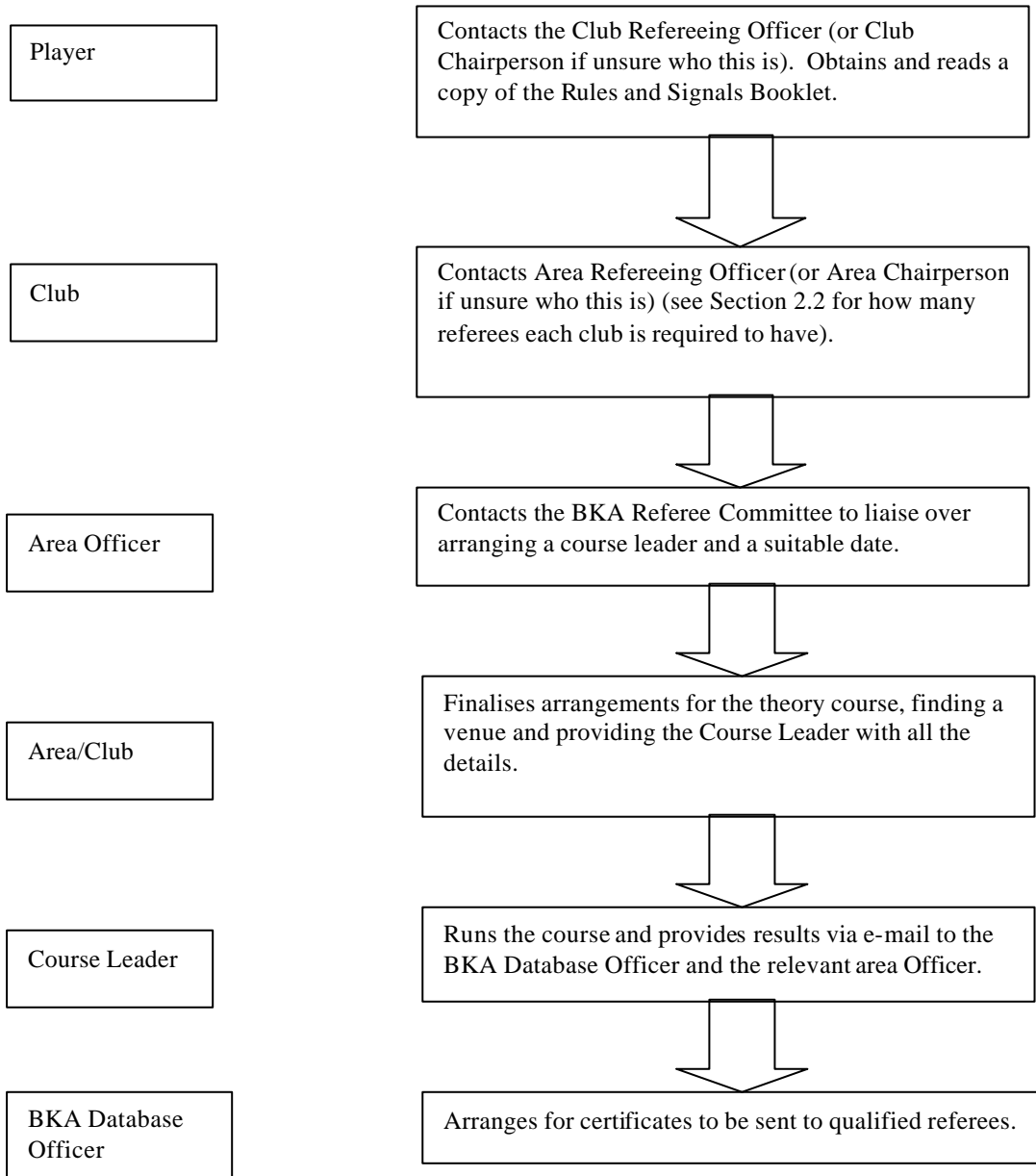
Finally, it simply remains to say good luck to anybody hoping to become a referee or to help others become referees. It can be a thoroughly rewarding endeavour.

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

Good luck!

Appendix A

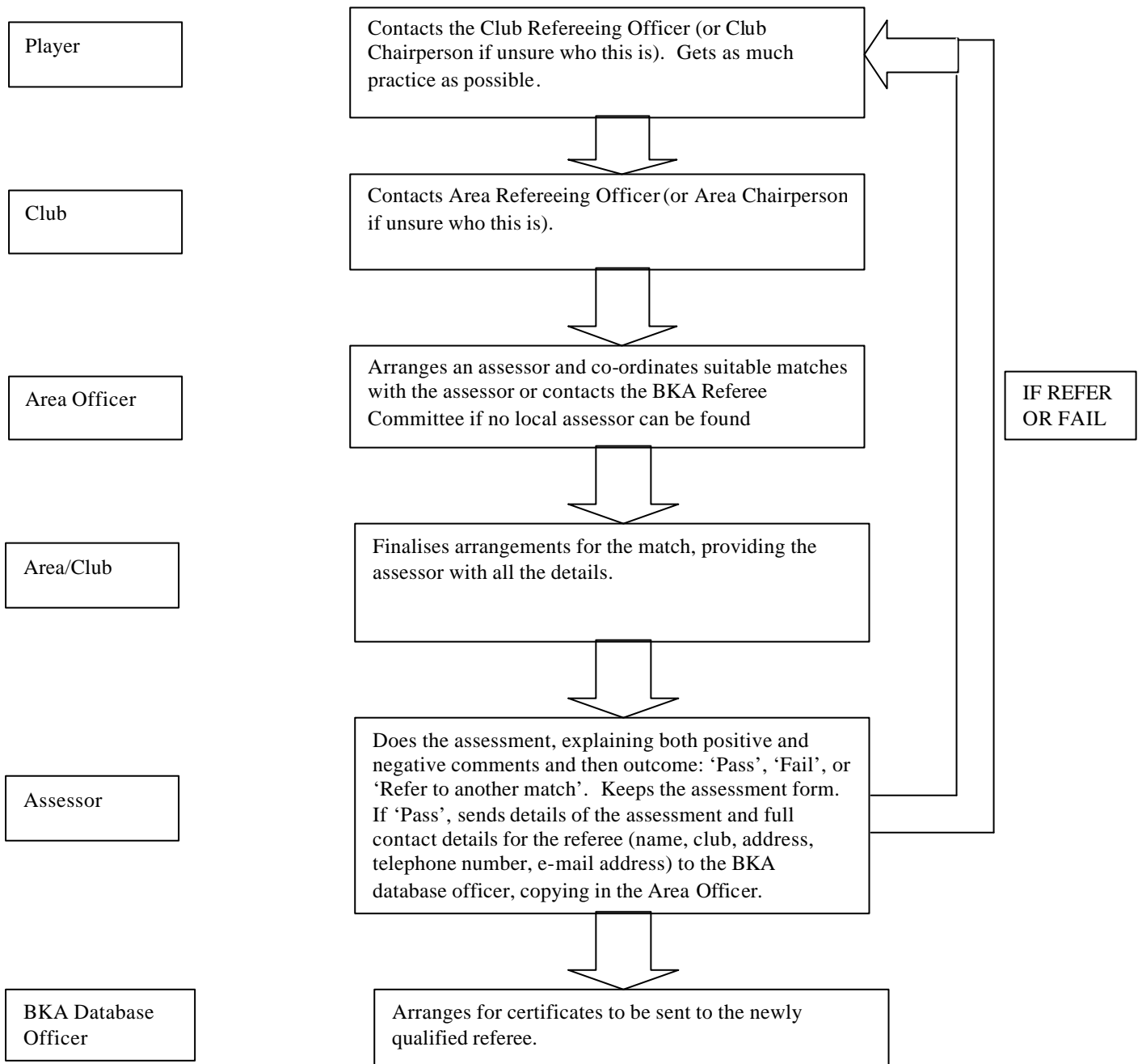
How theory courses are organised



See Section 4.1.1 for further detail on how theory courses are organised.

Appendix B

How practical assessments are organised



See Section 4.2.1 for further detail on how practical assessments are organised.

Appendix C
People Able to Run BKA Theory Courses

Peter Allan
Bobby Allen
David Bond
Colin Boys
Graham Crafter
Paul Jeanes
Alan Lewis
Mike Taylor

Appendix D

People Able to Conduct Practical Assessments

Grade A

Peter Allan
Bobby Allen
David Bond
Colin Boys
Graham Crafter
Paul Jeanes
Steve Jones
Alan Lewis
Mike Taylor

Grade B

Jane Abbey
Kevin Allen
Hugh Barker
Steve Barker
Jim Beckett
Graham Box
Tom Brady
Gary Brooks
Peter Broome
Ronald van Bunt
Allan Burrows
Phil Buttinger
Max Buttinger
Brian Carswell
Liam Clarke
Chris Crafter
Mike Coen
Barry Dibble
Andy Dowding
Nigel Etheridge
Jon Herbert
Mike Humphreys
Anna Jeanes
Paul Jones
Gavin Legg
Philip Locke
Dom MacDonald
James Magowan
Michael Medcraft
Lol More
Les Morgan
Phil Northwood
Andy Rutter
Laurie Swan
Nigel Townsend
Richard Windram
Andy Worster