



# FA National Futsal League

Season 2015 - 16

New Club Application Guidance Resource





## The FA National Futsal League 2015-16

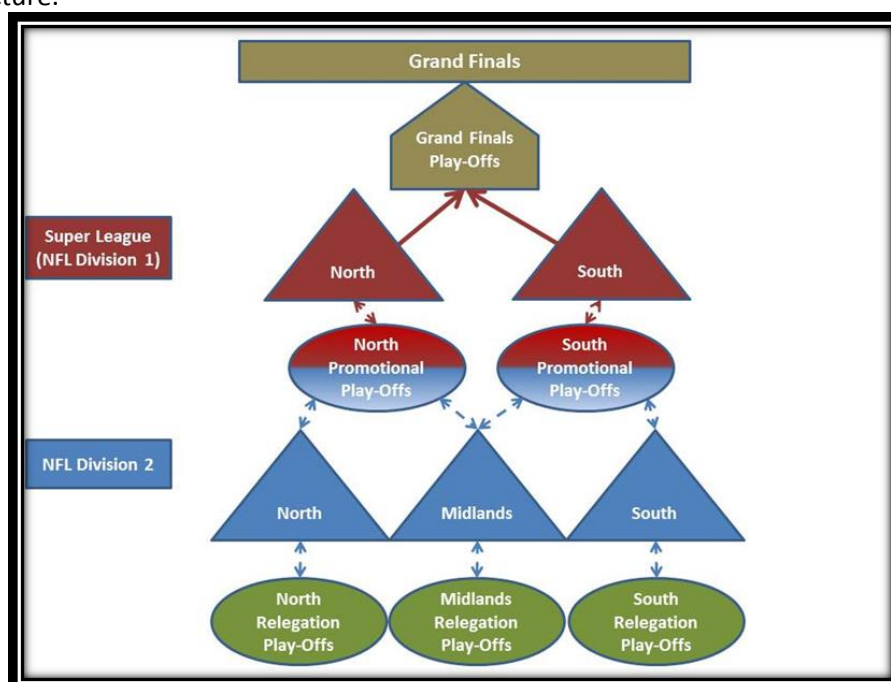
The FA National Futsal League was established in 2007/08 to provide an elite Futsal competition for the best teams in the country to regularly play against each other. The aims and intentions of creating these Futsal leagues were to:

- Increase & improve the quality of Futsal players and clubs in England
- Increase the awareness of Futsal across the country
- Provide an incentive through high level competitive games to retain players in Futsal
- To provide a pool of talented players to support the England national team

The FA National Futsal League will be undergoing a restructure for the start of the 2015-16 season to improve the quality and competition levels of the League. It is anticipated that this restructure will help to raise the standards of futsal at the elite level in this country. New clubs are still welcome to apply to join the competition for the 2015-16 season, but they will be required to meet the expected standards and criteria prior to being considered for the League. This Guidance Resource will provide additional information to new clubs to help them understand what is expected of them.

### 1. Structure of the FA National Futsal League in 2015-16

The FA National Futsal League from the start of the 2015/16 season will move to a two-league Division 1 (known as the Super League). Division 2 will continue to operate as three regional leagues (North, South and Midlands) that will feed into the Super League. The diagram below illustrates the league structure.





### 1.1. Structure of the Super League (Division 1)

The FA National Futsal League Division 1 will be rebranded ‘The FA National Futsal Super League.’ The Super League will consist of two leagues of eight teams: a North and a South League, with teams playing home and away fixtures against the other clubs in their respective league.

At the end of the season, the top four teams from each league will progress to the Grand Finals Play-Offs to play for the title of National Champion and the opportunity to enter the UEFA Futsal Cup. The bottom club from each league will play in the Promotional Play-Offs against the top clubs from Division 2 to earn the right to remain in the Super League for the following season.

### 1.2. Structure of Division Two

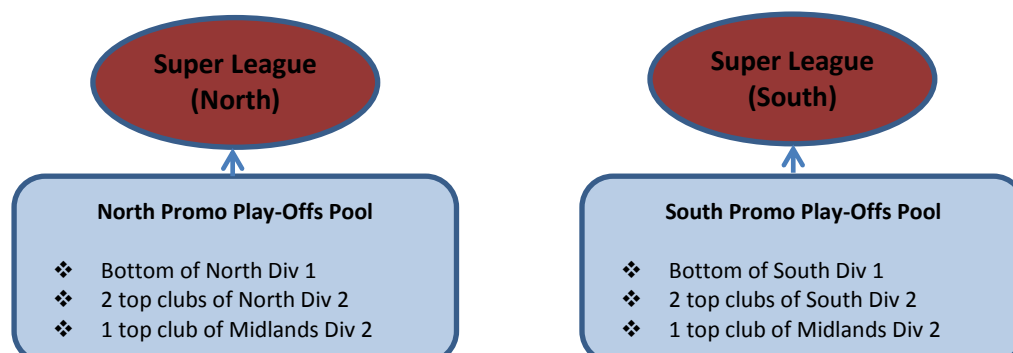
The FA National Futsal League Division 2 will remain three regional leagues (North, Midlands and South) consisting of eight teams in each league playing in a home and away format. At the end of the season, the top two clubs in each of the three Division 2 leagues will proceed to the Promotional Play-Offs to play for the opportunity of getting promoted to the Super League for the following season. The bottom two clubs in each league will play in the Relegation Play Offs against new clubs playing for the opportunity to enter the FA National Futsal League.

#### 1.2.1. Promotional Play-Offs

The top two clubs from each of the three divisions will be entered into these Play-Off matches. They will be joined by the bottom club from each of the Super Leagues. In total there will be eight clubs involved in the Promotional Play-Offs, and these eight clubs will be divided into two pools as illustrated in the diagram below. These Play-Off pools will determine which Super League the winner of the pool will feed into for the following season.

The diagram below identifies how the Promotional Play-Offs are divided. The top two Midlands clubs are split so that one club is entered into the South and the other is entered into the North; this is determined by The FA using common-sense based on the geographic locations of the two clubs.

The first stage of the Promotional Play-Offs will consist of a knock-out round of home and away matches. The winners of these two games in each pool will face each other in a one-off final match to be played at St Georges Park during the Grand Finals weekend. The winner of this game for each pool will be promoted to the relevant Super League.





### **1.2.1 Relegation Play-Offs**

The FA NFL Management Committee will interview and select new clubs that are of a suitable standard for the National Futsal League. The accepted new clubs are entered into the Relegation Play-Offs with each Division 2 league holding a separate Play-Off.

If there are more than two new clubs accepted by the NFL Management Committee per region, then these clubs must play against each other to determine the top two teams (depending on the number of clubs this could be a series of straight knock-out games or a one-day qualifying competition).

The two leading new clubs per region then proceed to the final of the Relegation Play-Offs to play against the bottom two clubs of Division 2 for that region. The two new clubs will be drawn against one of the two existing National Futsal League clubs and will play in a home and away fixture. The winning two clubs from these matches will play in Division 2 for the following season.

## **2. New Club Application Process**

New clubs interested in applying to join the FA National Futsal League for next season will need to complete and submit the 'New Club Application Form' outlining why they should be considered for the League. The application form should be returned to The FA alongside any accompanying supporting evidence by the deadline as stated on the Application Form. Application forms returned after the deadline will not be considered for the League.

The FA National Futsal League will only consider a new club if it is proactive and developmental in its approach. Of course the club needs to demonstrate that they are competitive and of a high enough playing standard to be able to compete at the highest level in England. The club should be able to demonstrate that they have been playing in a regular futsal league (such as an FA Futsal Fives league) for at least two seasons and have won this league. Ideally the club will also have played within the FA Futsal Cup. The club will also need to have an identified home venue that complies fully with the FA National Futsal League Venue Specifications.

But the club also needs to demonstrate that they are structured and organised off the court. They should have a number of identified people that play an active role in supporting the running of the club (e.g. head coach, chairman, club secretary, treasurer etc). The club should have at least 16 first team players to choose from, and at least four of these players need to be eligible to play for England (have a UK passport, UK birth certificate, or UK naturalisation certificate). The club should also be able to demonstrate that it has a development programme to produce and nurture young talented futsal players. Financially the club will also need to demonstrate that it can cover its costs of playing in the FA National Futsal League.

Upon submitting your application to join the League, The FA will review all applications and will invite the best applicants to attend a formal meeting with members from the FA National Futsal League Management Committee to present further information as to why your club should be considered for the FA National Futsal League.



The FA will then notify the club as to whether your application was successful. **The decision of The FA National Futsal League Committee is final. No appeals will be received.**

### **3. FA National Futsal League Club Licensing**

The FA will review the quality and progression of all FA National Futsal League clubs every two years under a formal 'Club Licensing' system. At the start of each two year licensing window The FA will publish the minimum requirements expected for all FA National Futsal League clubs to have achieved and implemented by the end of the two year window. Super League clubs will have additional requirements and criteria that they need to achieve during the two year licensing window.

The FA National Futsal League Licensing programme is intended to help gradually raise the standards and the quality of both the clubs and the competition, to ensure that the FA National Futsal League becomes a compelling and attractive product for commercial and broadcast partners, and most importantly fans and spectators.

At the end of the two year licensing window, The FA will formally assess each FA National Futsal League club reviewing the progress it has made against the minimum requirements. Any National Futsal League clubs that have failed to meet the stated requirements for their particular Division will face automatic relegation, regardless of their finishing place.

Clubs gaining promotion into the Super League during the Licensing window must meet the additional requirements expected of the top division. And new club's gaining promotion into Division 2 must meet the minimum requirements from the outset in order to be considered eligible to join the League.