



# CAF MEN'S CLUB LICENSING REGULATIONS

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CAF - Confédération Africaine de Football



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## DEFINITIONS

### Accounting policies

The specific principles, bases, conventions, rules and practices adopted by an entity in preparing and presenting its financial statements.

### Annual financial statements

A complete set of financial statements prepared as at the statutory closing date, normally including a balance sheet, profit and loss account, a statement of cash flows and those notes, other statements and explanatory material that are an integral part of the financial statements.

### Audit

The objective of an audit of financial statements is to enable the auditor to express an opinion whether the financial statements are prepared, in all material respect, in accordance with an identified financial reporting framework. The phrases used to express the auditor's opinion are "give a true and fair view" or "present fairly, in all material respects", which are equivalent terms. A similar objective applies to the audit of financial or other information prepared in accordance with appropriate criteria. In an audit engagement, the auditor provides a high but not absolute, level of assurance that the information subject to audit is free of material misstatement. This is expressed positively in the audit report as reasonable assurance.

### Budget

The schedules containing an entity's future financial information, based on management's assumptions about events that may occur in the future and possible actions by an entity.

### Cash and cash equivalents

Cash comprises cash on hand and demand deposits. Cash equivalents are short term, highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value.

### CAF

Means the "Confederation Africaine de Football".

### CAF Interclub Competitions

Means the club competitions organised by CAF.

### CAF Stadium Regulations

Regulations which stipulate the requirements for stadiums to be used by clubs for CAF club competition matches.

### CAF Club Licensing Quality Standard

A document that defines the minimum requirements with which licensors must comply in order to operate the CAF Club Licensing System.

### Consolidated financial statement

Consolidated financial statements are financial statements of an entity with multiple divisions or subsidiaries. Such statements consist of the aggregated reporting of their entire business collectively.

### Continental Licence

The licence an applicant club applies for to compete in the CAF Champions League and CAF Confederation Cup.

### Continental Criteria

Requirements divided into five categories (sporting, infrastructure, personnel and administrative, legal and financial) to be fulfilled by a licence applicant for it to be granted a licence to participate in the CAF Champions League and CAF Confederation Cup.

### Core process

Minimum requirements that the licensor must put in place for verification of compliance with the criteria described in the regulations as a basis for the issue of a licence to an applicant.

### Club Licensing Online Platform "CLOP"

The CAF Club Licensing Online Platform is an online tool for managing the club licensing process. The Clop is an IT system developed by CAF for the purpose of gathering information from Licence Applicants/Licensees and for sharing information with Licensors concerning their affiliated clubs, within the scope of the implementation, assessment, and enforcement of these Regulations.

### Deadline for submission of the application to the licensor

The date by which each licensor requires licence applicants to have submitted all relevant information for their applications for a licence.

### Domestic Criteria

Requirements divided into categories to be fulfilled by a licence applicant for it to be granted a licence to participate in the Member Association national competitions.

### FIFA

Federation Internationale de Football Association.

### Financial year

The financial reporting period as defined in the entity's founding documents, ending on the date defined as the financial year end.

### FIFA Club Licensing Programme

An effective guideline for the implementation of club licensing and is part of FIFA repositioning club licensing from a regulatory instrument to a flexible and principle-based vehicle for the professionalisation of club football.

### FIFA Connect System

An information online system designed and implemented by FIFA that provides the FIFA ID and the API that provides the technical interface between electronic domestic transfer systems, electronic player registration systems and TMS for the electronic exchange of information.

### FIFA ID

The worldwide unique identifier given by the FIFA Connect System to each football stakeholder (club, association and player...).

**Independent auditor**

An auditor who is independent of the entity, in compliance with the IFAC Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants. For additional information, visit [www.ifac.org](http://www.ifac.org). The term 'auditor' may also be used when describing related services or assurance engagements other than audits.

**Licence**

Certificate granted by the licensor confirming fulfilment of all mandatory minimum requirements by the licensee in order to participate in a CAF club competition or a National competition of the Member Association.

**Licence applicant**

A Legal entity fully and solely responsible for the football team participating in national and international club competitions which applies for a licence.

**Licensee**

Licence applicant which has been granted a licence by the licensor.

**Licensing administration**

The department or staff within the licensor that deals with club licensing matters.

**Licensing season**

The period of time during which a licence that has been granted is valid. It commences on the day following the deadline laid down by CAF for submission of licensing decisions by the licensor to CAF and terminates on the day of the same deadline in the following year.

**Licensing process**

The process which leads to a licence being granted (or denied).

**Licensor**

The Body that implements the club licensing system, grants or denies licences and undertakes certain tasks in respect of the club monitoring process.

**List of licensing decisions**

The list submitted by the licensor to CAF containing, among other things, information about the licence applicants that have undergone the licensing process and been granted or denied a licence by the national decision-making bodies. The list will be in the format established and communicated by CAF.

**League**

An organisation that is subordinate to an association.

**May**

Indicates a party's discretion to do something (i.e. optional rather than mandatory).

**Must or shall**

Indicates an obligation to do something (i.e. mandatory).

**National Licence**

The licence an applicant club applies for, to compete in the national competitions of the Member Association.

**Member Association**

An association that has been admitted into membership of CAF.

**Minimum criteria**

Criteria to be fulfilled by a licence applicant in order to be granted a licence.

**Review**

A review of submitted financial information is carried out by an auditor in order to express a conclusion whether, on the basis of the review, material facts are uncovered that cause the auditor to believe that the financial information may not have been prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with an identified financial reporting framework. A review, in contrast to an audit, is not designed to obtain reasonable assurance that the financial information is free from material misstatement. A review consists of making inquiries, primarily of the persons responsible for financial and accounting matters, and applying analytical and other review procedures. A review may bring significant matters affecting the financial information to the auditor's attention, but it does not provide the evidence that would be required for an audit.

**Significant change**

Means an event that is considered material to the documentation previously submitted to the licensor and that would require a different presentation if it had occurred prior to the submission of the licensing documentation.

**Stadium**

A venue at which a match is played, including the entire premises to the extent that a valid accreditation card or match ticket is required in order to gain access. This is typically the entire property inside the outer stadium perimeter fence.

**Statutory closing date**

This is the last day of the entity's Financial Year.

**Subsequent events**

Events or conditions occurring after the licensing decision.

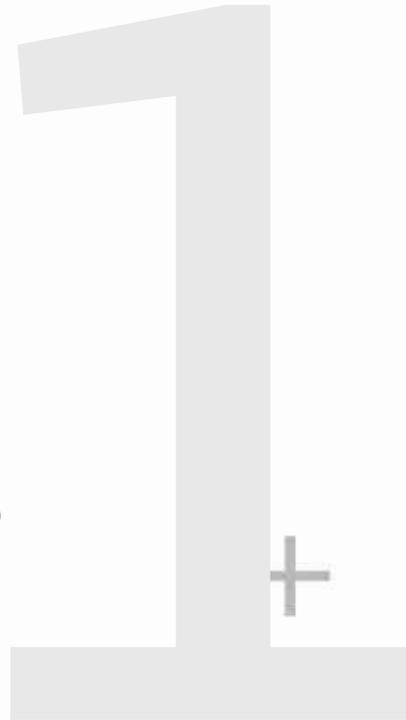
**Training facilities**

The venue(s) at which a club's registered players undertake football training and/or youth development activities on a regular basis.



## SECTION 1

# GENERAL PROVISIONS



## Article 1 Introduction

1. These regulations are divided into four main sections:
  - a. the first section addresses the member association as the "Licensor", and sets out and explains its responsibilities, as well as defining the licence applicant and the licensing bodies including the manner in which the regulations are to be applied;
  - b. the second section outlines the mandatory criteria the licence applicant must meet in order to be licensed to participate in the CAF Champions League or CAF Confederation Cup;
  - c. the third section addresses the process for the licensor to create domestic club licensing criteria for national club competitions;
  - d. the fourth section outlines the final provisions of the regulations.
2. These regulations govern the rights, duties and responsibilities of all parties involved in the CAF club licensing system and define in particular:
  - a. the minimum requirements to be fulfilled by a CAF Member Association in order to act as the licensor for its clubs;
  - b. the minimum procedures to be followed by the licensor in its assessment of the club licensing criteria
  - c. the licence applicant and the licence required to enter the CAF club competitions and top tier men's national club competition;
  - d. the minimum sporting, infrastructure, personnel and administrative, legal and financial criteria to be fulfilled by a club in order to be granted a licence by its licensor as part of the admission procedure to enter the CAF club competitions and the top tier men's national club competition.

## Article 2 Objectives

1. The CAF club licensing system is aimed at:
  - a. promoting and improving the quality and the level of all aspects of club football in Africa;
  - b. ensuring that the clubs have the appropriate management and organization;

- c. improving the clubs' sporting infrastructure;
- d. improving the economic and financial capacity of the clubs, through proper corporate governance and control, and place the necessary importance on the protection of creditors and to ensure that clubs settle their liabilities with employees, social/tax authorities and other clubs punctually;
- e. ensuring the continuity and successful completion of the national and international club competitions during the season;
- f. allowing the parallel development and comparison amongst the clubs by ensuring the necessary compliance in terms of sporting, infrastructure, personnel and administrative, legal, and financial criteria.

## Article 3

### Roles and responsibilities of FIFA

1. FIFA has developed and implemented Club Licensing globally.
2. In particular, FIFA has the following responsibilities with regards to Club Licensing:
  - a. to include a legal basis for Club Licensing in its statutes;
  - b. to establish qualified staff in its administration to assist Confederation and Member Associations in the implementation of their Club Licensing systems;
  - c. to monitor and support the Confederation to develop and implement Confederation Club Licensing systems;
  - d. in consultation with CAF, to monitor and support the Member Associations developing and implementing National Club Licensing Regulations in Africa;
  - e. to conduct compliance audits;
  - f. to perform any other rights and responsibilities stipulated in CAF's Club Licensing Regulations.
3. The FIFA Football Stakeholders Committee is the body in charge of club licensing within FIFA. Within its field of competence, it shall be authorised to issue directives, guidelines, policies, procedures, manuals and similar documents for the implementation of the FIFA Club Licensing Programme.

## Article 4

### Roles and responsibilities of CAF

1. CAF will include a legal basis for Club Licensing in its statutes.
2. CAF shall promulgate all regulations and supporting documents of the FIFA Club Licensing Program.
3. CAF will implement club licensing in its region.
4. In particular, CAF shall be responsible:
  - a. to develop and implement CAF Club Licensing Regulations, in compliance with the FIFA Club Licensing Programme;
  - b. to establish a CAF Club Licensing quality standard and a catalogue of sanctions;
  - c. to monitor and support Member Associations to develop and implement their Club Licensing Regulations;
  - d. to approve the Club Licensing Regulations of its Member Associations;
  - e. to conduct compliance audits;
  - f. to perform any other roles and responsibilities stipulated in the FIFA Club Licensing Programme or in the applicable CAF Club Licensing Regulations.

## Article 5

### Roles and responsibilities of the licensor

The implementation of the club licensing system at the national level is the responsibility of the CAF Member Association and shall include, but not be limited to, the following steps and procedures:

- a. establish a legal basis within the statutes of the Member Association;
- b. establish an appropriate club licensing administration;
- c. establish licensor club licensing regulations following article 8, and adopting criteria in line with the CAF club licensing regulations;
- d. determine which national competitions, in addition to the men's top tier league, the regulations will apply to and the relevant criteria for each competition;
- e. define the scope of application of the club licensing regulations which must apply at a minimum to the clubs participating in CAF Champions League, CAF Confederation Cup and the men's top tier national competition;

- f. publish the approved club licensing regulations on the licensor's website;
- g. establish a catalogue of sanctions for the non-compliance with the club licensing regulations;
- h. establish at least two decision-making bodies as defined in Articles 11 and 12;
- i. define the core process as detailed in Article 17;
- j. assess the documentation submitted by the licence applicants, consider whether this is appropriate and define the procedure rules in accordance with Article 13;
- k. ensure equal treatment of all licence applicants and guarantee them full confidentiality with regard to all information provided during the licensing process as defined in Article 19;
- l. determine whether each criterion has been met and what further information, if any, is needed for a licence to be granted;
- m. comply with the CAF Club Licensing Quality Standard;
- n. include as a criteria in the top tier men's national club competition, the minimum requirements, indicated in the CAF Men's Club Licensing Regulations.

## Article 6

### Scope of applicability

1. The CAF Club Licensing Regulations shall apply to the following Competitions:
  - a. CAF Champions League;
  - b. CAF Confederation Cup;
  - c. The top tier men's national club competition of each Member Association;
  - d. Any other competition(s) as determined by the Member Association.

## Article 7

### Existence of a legal basis within the statutes of the Member Association

For the implementation of the club licensing system, each Member Association must include a legal basis within its statutes, confirming the authority to manage the club licensing system and shall further contain a provision setting out the detailed regulations necessary to implement the club licensing system.

## Article 8

### Integration of these CAF regulations into the licensor's club licensing regulations

1. In its national club licensing regulations, each licensor must define the parties involved, their rights and duties, the criteria and the necessary processes in accordance with these regulations for entering the CAF club competitions and the national competitions.
2. The licensor must establish its club licensing regulations and send them translated in one of the CAF official languages to the CAF administration for review and approval by the deadline communicated by the latter.
3. The licensor is responsible for ensuring, and must demonstrate to the CAF administration, that all applicable provisions of these regulations have been integrated in its club licensing regulations. Exemptions may be granted according to Article 21 of these regulations.
4. The licensor must confirm to the CAF administration that all provisions contained in its club licensing regulations are in compliance with the applicable national law.
5. The licensor's club licensing regulations must be approved by the competent national bodies and communicated to the licence applicants before the start of the licensing process and they cannot be amended during the latter process, subject to written approval by CAF.
6. The CAF administration reviews the final version of the licensor club licensing regulations and confirms in writing to the licensor that:
  - a. the applicable provisions of these regulations for the purpose of entering the CAF club competitions are integrated in the licensor club licensing regulations;
  - b. the licence issued by the competent national bodies according to the licensor club licensing regulations is based on the minimum criteria set out in these regulations.
7. The licensor is encouraged to apply a club licensing system and monitoring requirements to govern participation in its National competitions. For this purpose, the licensor is free to increase, decrease, or introduce additional minimum criteria in its licensor club licensing regulations for the purpose of granting permission to enter its national competitions, except for the criteria defined by CAF as minimum for implementation.

## Article 9

### The Licensor

1. The licensor is the CAF Member Association and is responsible for implementing and enforcing the club licensing system, establishing a club licensing administration, appointing the appropriate licensing bodies and determining the necessary processes and procedures.
2. The licensor is obliged to use the CAF Club Licensing Online Platform for the licensing process, applying at a minimum to the clubs participating in CAF Champions League, CAF Confederation Cup and the top tier men's national club competition.
3. The licensor must guarantee the licence applicant full confidentiality with regard to all information provided by the licence applicant. Anyone involved in the licensing process or appointed by the licensor must first sign a confidentiality agreement.
4. The licensor shall establish at a minimum two (02) decision-making bodies:
  - a. the First-instance body (FIB) as defined in Article 11;
  - b. the Appeals body (AB) as defined in Article 12.
5. These decision-making bodies shall be independent of each other. They shall receive technical and administrative support from the licensor. Any member of one of these bodies must in all cases automatically recuse him/herself if there is any doubt as to his/her impartiality with respect to the licence applicant, or there is any conflict of interest.
6. Within the licensor, the First Instance Body (FIB) and the Appeals Body (AB) are the only decision-making bodies responsible to grant/reject a license for domestic and continental competitions. The decisions taken by these bodies are final and its implementation is mandatory.
7. No other body within the federation, nor an external one, may interfere in the decision-making process of the club licensing independent bodies (FIB and AB).
8. In the case the Licensor has not properly appointed the First Instance Body and/or the Appeals Body in line with the conditions set in these regulations, their licensing process could be deemed invalid, and consequently their clubs will not be allowed to take part in the CAF Interclubs competitions.

## Article 10

### The Licensing Administration

1. The licensor must appoint a full-time employee who is responsible for the administration of the club licensing system.
2. When appointing a club licensing manager, the licensor must consider the qualifications and profile experience indicated by CAF for the role.
3. The licensor must inform CAF, in writing, of the appointment of the Club Licensing Manager, and of any changes to such appointment.

4. The tasks of the licensing administration include:
  - a. implementing the club licensing system in conformity with the regulations;
  - b. further developing the club licensing system;
  - c. providing administrative support to the decision-making bodies;
  - d. visiting the licence applicants to verify the compliance of the documentation presented in the application and/or the declarations made therein;
  - e. assisting, advising and monitoring the licensees during the season;
  - f. assisting and monitoring clubs in the use of the CAF Club Licensing Online Platform;
  - g. informing CAF of any event occurring after a licensing decision that constitutes a significant change to the information previously submitted to the licensor, including a change of legal form or legal group structure;
  - h. serving as the contact point for and sharing expertise with the club licensing administration of other Member Associations, CAF and FIFA.
5. In the case the Licensor has not properly appointed the Club Licensing Manager in line with the conditions set in these regulations, their licensing process could be deemed invalid, and consequently their clubs will not be allowed to take part in the CAF Interclubs competitions.

## Article 11

### First Instance Body (FIB)

1. The FIB is an independent decision-making body which shall decide on whether a licence shall be granted or denied to an applicant club on the basis of the submitted documentation provided it is in accordance with the provisions of the licensor's club licensing regulations as at the submission deadline set by the licensor.
2. The licensor shall decide on the composition of the FIB. The FIB shall have a minimum of five (05) members.
3. The licensor shall decide on the quorum of the FIB. The quorum must be a minimum of three (03) members.
4. A vote will be taken to decide whether each club's application is approved or rejected, with a simple majority required in order to reach a decision. In case of a tie, the Chairperson of the FIB shall have the casting vote.
5. The decision to grant or deny a license must be substantiated in writing.
6. Members of the FIB are either elected or appointed in accordance with the statutes of the Member Association and must:
  - a. fulfil the requirements of qualification, independence and confidentiality;

- b. act impartially in the discharge of their duties;
  - c. abstain if there is any doubt as to their independence from the licence applicant or if there is a conflict of interest. In this connection, the independence of a member may not be guaranteed if he/she or any member of his/her family (spouse, child, parent or sibling) is a member, shareholder, business partner, sponsor or consultant of the licence applicant;
  - d. not act simultaneously as the licensor's club licensing manager and/or general secretary;
  - e. not belong simultaneously to a judicial statutory body or committee of the licensor;
  - f. not belong simultaneously to the executive body or administration of the CAF member association and/or its affiliated league;
  - g. not belong simultaneously to the ownership or management personnel of an affiliated club.
7. As a recommendation, the FIB should include at least one (01) sporting expert, one (01) qualified infrastructure expert, and one (01) qualified financial expert holding a qualification recognised by the appropriate national professional body.
  8. The licensor may recommend a maximum of one administrative staff to serve as a member of the FIB, with the exception of the club licensing manager and the secretary general of the member association and/or its affiliated leagues, who may not be a member of the FIB.
  9. If the licensor appoints one administrative staff to serve as a member of the FIB, he/she cannot act as the chairperson of the FIB.
  10. The CAF Administration may act as the first instance body on under very exceptional and particular circumstances at a time in a Member Association (i.e. Club Licensing Decision Making bodies not appointed due to recent elections in the MA, other unforeseen and force majeure situation).
  11. The CAF Member Association must submit the request in writing, and it must be clear and well-founded, while taking into account the relevant core process timelines.
  12. Appeals can be lodged against decisions made by the CAF Administration in writing before the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in accordance with the relevant provisions laid down in the CAF Statutes.

## Article 12

### Appeals Body (AB)

1. The AB is an independent decision-making body which shall decide on submitted appeals and make a final and binding decision on whether a licence should be granted or refused.
2. Appeals may only be lodged by:
  - a. the licence applicant following a refusal or sanction by the FIB;
  - b. a licensee whose licence has been withdrawn by the FIB;
  - c. the licensing manager on behalf of the licensor.

3. The AB decides on appeals submitted in writing and makes a final decision on whether a licence should be granted or withdrawn. Its decisions are final.
4. The AB makes its decision based on the decision of the FIB and all the evidence provided by the appellant to the FIB with its written request for appeal and by the set deadline.
5. An appeal may be made on the basis that the FIB failed to apply the criteria correctly or did not understand the facts as given. An appeal may not be made on the basis of new or additional information, for instance that the club has met the criteria since the First Instance Body process.
6. A vote will be taken to decide whether each club's appeal is approved or rejected, with a simple majority required in order to reach a decision.
7. The AB shall make its decision by reviewing the decision of the FIB and all the evidence provided by the licence applicant or licensor with its written request for appeal within the deadline determined in the appeal procedure by the licensor's club licensing regulations. Any further evidence submitted to the AB at a later stage shall not be taken into account.
8. The decision to grant or reject a license must be written and reasoned.
9. The licensor shall decide on the composition of the AB. The AB shall have a minimum of three members.
10. The licensor shall decide on the quorum for the decisions of the AB. The quorum must be a minimum of three members. In case of a tie, the Chairperson of the AB shall have the casting vote.
11. Members of the AB are either elected or appointed in accordance with the statutes of the Member Association and must:
  - a. fulfil the requirements of qualification, independence and confidentiality;
  - b. act impartially in the discharge of their duties;
  - c. abstain if there is any doubt as to their independence from the licence applicant or if there is a conflict of interest. In this connection, the independence of a member may not be guaranteed if he/she or any member of his/her family (spouse, child, parent or sibling) is a member, shareholder, business partner, sponsor or consultant of the licence applicant;
  - d. not act simultaneously as licensing manager and/or general secretary;
  - e. not belong simultaneously to a judicial statutory body or committee of the licensor;
  - f. not belong simultaneously to the executive body or administration of the Member Association or its affiliated league;
  - g. not belong simultaneously to the ownership or management personnel of an affiliated club.

12. As a recommendation, the AB should include at least a minimum of two members with legal background.

13. The chairperson of the AB must have a legal background.

## Article 13

### Procedural rules

In the licensor's club licensing regulations or in a specific regulation, the licensor shall define procedural rules with respect to decision-making. The decision-making bodies must operate according to procedural rules – to be defined by the licensor – that, as a minimum, must regulate the following standards:

- a. deadlines (submission deadlines, etc.);
- b. safeguarding the principle of equal treatment and confidentiality;
- c. representation (legal representation, etc.);
- d. the right to be heard (convocation, hearing, etc.);
- e. official language;
- f. time limit to issue a request (calculation, compliance, interruption, extension, etc.);
- g. time limit to appeal;
- h. effect of the appeal;
- i. type of evidence requested;
- j. burden of proof (licence applicant has burden of proof, etc.);
- k. decision (in writing with reasoning, etc.);
- l. ground for complaints;
- m. content and form of pleading;
- n. hearings and deliberations;
- o. cost of procedure, administrative fees and deposit.

## Article 14

### Catalogue of sanctions

1. To guarantee an appropriate assessment process, the CAF Member Association must set up:
  - a. a catalogue of sanctions for the Club Licensing System for the non-respect of the criteria which may include a caution, a fine, the obligation to submit evidence, to fulfil certain conditions by a deadline, the deduction of points, a prohibition on concluding new transfer agreements or players' contracts, or the refusal of a licence;

b. the competent national bodies shall have the authority to impose these sanctions against the licence applicants/licensees;

c. refer to the National Disciplinary Regulations in respect of violations of the licensing regulations (e.g. submission of false documents, sanctions against individuals, etc).

2. CAF shall also set up a catalogue of sanctions applicable for the club licensing system, which pertains to determine necessary sanctions against the Member Associations, licence applicants and licensees.

## Article 15

### Licence applicant

1. The legal entity responsible for the football team applying for a licence is called the licence applicant. Once the licence applicant has been granted a licence by the licensor, it becomes a licensee.
2. The licensor defines the licence applicants according to the statutes and regulations of the Member Association, the CAF regulations and in accordance with national law.
3. The licence applicant is defined as being the legal entity fully responsible for the football team participating in National and International competitions recognized by FIFA, CAF and the Member Association.
4. The status of a football club (professional, semi-professional or amateur) or its legal form, are not relevant to the issue of a licence.
5. Only a registered member in the Member Association may apply for a licence.
6. The licence applicant is fully responsible for participation in CAF inter-clubs competitions, the men's national club competitions of the Member Association and its affiliated leagues, according to the club licensing system regulations.
7. A licence cannot be assigned or transferred.
  - a. that the licence applicant is fully responsible for the football team composed of registered players participating in national and international competitions;
  - b. that the licensor is provided with all the necessary information and/or documents relevant to proving that the licensing obligations are fulfilled, as these obligations relate to the required criteria in the regulations.
  - c. is based legally in the territory of the member association and play its home matches only in that territory. The Member Association may define exceptions, subject to the approval of CAF;
  - d. has the right to use the name and the brands of the club and not change the name of the club for advertising/promotional purposes.

## Article 16

### Licence

1. Licences must be issued according to the provisions of the accredited licensor's club licensing regulations, fulfilling the domestic or the continental criteria.
2. The licensor must issue an invitation to the licence applicants to apply for a licence in writing within the deadline.
3. The licence applicant applying for a licence must submit an application to the licensor via the CAF Club Licensing Online Platform. In this application, the applicant must, in particular, declare that it shall fulfil the obligations of the club licensing system.
4. Only licence applicants which fulfil the criteria set out in the accredited licensor's club licensing regulations by the relevant deadline may be granted a licence by the licensor to enter the CAF inter-clubs competitions, the National competitions of the Member Association and its affiliated leagues for the coming season.
5. A licence is granted for one sporting season only. It expires without prior notice at the end of the season for which it was issued.
6. The granting of provisional licenses by the licensor to any license applicant is not permitted.
7. A licence cannot be transferred.
8. A licence may be withdrawn by CAF or the licensor's decision-making bodies during a season if:
  - a. for any reason a licensee becomes insolvent and enters into liquidation during the season as determined by the applicable national law;
  - b. any of the conditions for the issue of a licence are no longer satisfied; or the licensee violates any of its obligations under the licensor's club licensing regulations.
9. The licensor will regularly monitor the licensee in order to guarantee the application of the club licensing regulations.
10. CAF must be informed as soon as a licence withdrawal is envisaged.
11. Following the granting of a license by the licensor to a club for its participation in a domestic or continental competition, the CAF administration may still conduct a verification and check process on the clubs' submitted documents and evidence for each of the criterion. In case it is verified that the documents and evidence are not in line with the set club licensing criteria and requirements, the CAF administration reserves the right to reject the participation of the club.

## Article 17

### Core Process

1. The licensor must define the core process for the verification of the club licensing criteria and thus control the issuing of licences. The core process must be certified against the CAF Club Licensing Quality Standard.
2. The core process consists of the following minimum key steps:
  - a. invitation to the licence applicants to submit their application for a licence;
  - b. submission of the licensing documentation and deadlines to the licence applicants;
  - c. return of the licensing documentation to the licensor;
  - d. assessment of the documentation by the licensing administration, including visits to the licence applicants;
  - e. submission of the written representation letter to the licensor;
  - f. assessment and decisions by the decision-making bodies;
  - g. communication of the licence decisions, in writing, to the licence applicants;
  - h. communication of any applicable sanctions, in writing, to the licence applicants;
  - i. submission of the list of licensing decisions for national and international club competitions to the CAF administration.
3. The deadlines for the above key process steps must be clearly defined and communicated in writing to the licence applicants in a timely manner by the licensor.
4. Once the list of licensing decisions is submitted by the licensor to CAF, containing among other aspects, information about the licence applicants (clubs) that have undergone the licensing process for domestic and continental competitions, the decision concerning the approval or rejection of the license cannot be modified.
5. The club licensing process, the decisions and its related documents must be submitted to CAF by the Licensors within the deadline date set by CAF. At any time, CAF may decide to change the deadline date for submission of the club licensing process, the decisions and its related documents, which in that case, the member associations must be duly communicated.
6. An approval from the CAF Administration is required for an extension period to submit the list of decisions for both continental and domestic competitions (men's top tier national competition).

## Article 18

### Assessment Procedures

The licensor defines the assessment methods based on CAF Club Licensing Regulations. Should CAF discover that any licensing decisions have been made in violation of the CAF Club Licensing Regulations, CAF may reject such licensing decisions and may refer the licensor to the CAF Disciplinary Body for its further action.

## Article 19

### Equal Treatment and Confidentiality

1. The licensor must ensure equal treatment of requests for all licence applicants during the core process.
2. The licensor must guarantee the licence applicants' full confidentiality with regard to all information submitted during the licensing process.
3. Anyone involved in the licensing process or appointed by the licensor must first sign a confidentiality agreement.

## Article 20

### Compliance Audits

1. CAF and FIFA are entitled to conduct Compliance Audits.
2. Compliance Audits are a mechanism of supervision of Clubs and Licensors. They aim to control the fulfilment of the applicable requirements and the accuracy of the licences awarded. Compliance Audits may in particular include site inspections (e.g. Stadiums, Training facilities and headquarters), interviews with everyone involved in the licensing process and a full review of documents, information or any other material of any nature held by them or to which they are entitled to obtain.
3. Compliance Audits may be carried out at random times, before and after the award of the Licence.
4. Clubs and Licensors are obliged to fully cooperate. Non-compliance with such requests and/or the provision of incomplete and/or false information may lead to sanctions by CAF and/or FIFA.
5. CAF may perform a compliance audit directly or with an external audit firm.
6. FIFA may perform a compliance audit directly or with an external audit firm.
7. FIFA may request CAF to conduct a Compliance Audit on behalf of FIFA. CAF shall send FIFA comprehensive reports about the result of the requested Compliance Audit. FIFA may ask for additional information and set reasonable time limits.
8. If a Compliance Audit reveals that the Licensor awarded a licence in breach of the national or CAF Club Licensing regulations, the relevant Member Association may be sanctioned by CAF and/or FIFA.

9. For the purpose of compliance audits, in the event of any discrepancy in the interpretation of the national club licensing regulations between a CAF official language version and the official national language version, the CAF official language version prevails.

## Article 21

### Exemptions

1. Upon request of a Member Association, CAF may exempt the Member Association from its obligation to incorporate specific minimum requirements into its Club Licensing Regulations.
2. The exemption request must be well-founded and demonstrate that the Member Association is not capable to fulfil the respective requirements despite its best efforts. The exemption request shall be submitted in writing.
3. In its deliberation, CAF shall consider the status and situation of football within the territory of the Licensor, for example:
  - size of the territory, population, geography, economic and social background;
  - size of the Member Association (number of clubs, number of registered players and teams, size and quality of the administration of the Member Association, etc.);
  - the level of football (professional, semi-professional or amateur clubs);
  - status of football as a sport within the territory and its market potential (average attendance, TV market, sponsorship, revenue potential, etc.); and
  - national laws.
4. An exemption applies only to the licence period in question. A renewal of the exemption is possible upon submission of a new request.

## Article 22

### Benchmarking

1. CAF shall act as central regional benchmarking agent, fostering close collaboration with Licensors.
2. CAF may request the Member Association to collect specific benchmarking data of Licensors and Clubs. Any benchmarking data submitted to CAF shall comply with confidentiality undertakings and the applicable data protection laws.
3. CAF may:
  - a. issue reports and make them available to the public in order to enhance transparency and show football accountability as well as commitment to improve structures and operations;
  - b. verify the effects of club licensing on elite football, in particular on the specific areas of club development and discussing possible solutions with football stakeholders to improve club football;
  - c. provide consistent and accurate data for regulatory reform, enacting flexible policy and making the link to the evaluation and monitoring of FIFA development programs;
  - d. contribute to the knowledge exchange.
4. Benchmarking data may be processed by CAF in collaboration with external research analysts, who must first sign a confidentiality agreement.

## Article 23

### Extraordinary application of the club licensing system for entering the CAF Inter-clubs competitions

1. If a club qualifies for a CAF inter-clubs competition based on its sporting results, but has not undergone a club licensing process at all or has undergone a club licensing process which is lower / not equivalent to the one applicable to top-division clubs, because it belongs to a division other than the top division, the Member Association of the club concerned may – on behalf of such a club – request an extraordinary application to CAF.
2. Based on such an extraordinary application, CAF may grant special permission to enter CAF inter-clubs competitions. This permission only applies exclusively to that specific applicant and only for the season in question.
3. The extraordinary application is granted by CAF to the concerned club under the jurisdiction of its licensor. The concerned club should fulfil at a minimum Articles 30, 34, 39, 40, 41, 42, 48, 53, 54, 55, 56, 58, 59, 60, 61 and 62 of these regulations.
4. A spot check from CAF and/or an external entity may be organized to inspect the club.

## Article 24

### Option for the MA to delegate the club licensing system to an affiliated member/league

1. The Member Association may delegate the club licensing system to an affiliated member/league, subject to the written approval of CAF.
2. The CAF Administration may only approve a delegation request if it is satisfied that the league:
  - a. is affiliated to the CAF Member Association and has accepted its statutes, regulations and the decisions of its responsible and competent bodies in writing;
  - b. is responsible for running the top domestic championship;
  - c. has submitted a written decision by the legislative body of the affiliated league attesting to comply with the following obligations towards CAF:
  - d. implements the CAF Club Licensing Criteria according to the provisions of these regulations and any future amendments thereto into Licensor's Club Licensing Regulations;
  - e. cooperates with the CAF and its nominated bodies/agencies for the purpose of club monitoring;
  - f. facilitates CAF and its nominated bodies/agencies full necessary access to verify the operation of the Club Licensing System and the decisions of the decision-making bodies at any time;
  - g. allows CAF and its nominated bodies/agencies to conduct compliance audits at any time of clubs that qualify for a CAF Club Competition;
  - h. accepts any CAF decision made with regard to exceptions and/or compliance audits;
  - i. issues the appropriate sanctions to the relevant parties according to the CAF's recommendations or decisions.
3. Vis-à-vis CAF and FIFA, the Member Association, however, remains responsible for the proper implementation of club licensing procedure.



## SECTION 2

# CONTINENTAL CLUB LICENSING CRITERIA

CAF's Continental Men's Club Licensing Criteria shall be incorporated into the Licensor's Club Licensing Regulations. The Continental Club Licensing Criteria outlined in Section 2 applies to all clubs seeking to obtain a licence to participate in the CAF Champions League and/or CAF Confederation Cup.

## SPORTING CRITERIA

### Article 25

#### S.01 Approved Youth Development Programme

1. The licence applicant must have a written youth development programme for boys and girls.
2. This youth development programme must include at least the following:
  - a. objectives and youth development philosophy;
  - b. organisation of youth sector (organisational chart, bodies involved, relation to the licence applicant, youth teams, etc.);
  - c. personnel (technical, medical and administrative, etc.) and required minimum qualifications;
  - d. infrastructure available for youth sector (training and competitions facilities, etc.);
  - e. financial resources (available budget, contribution by licence applicant, players or local community, etc.);
  - f. football education programme for the different age category groups (playing skills, technical, tactical and physical);
  - g. educational programme on the laws of the game;
  - h. medical support for young players (including medical check-ups);
  - i. The youth education programme must further show the licence applicant's commitment to and support of mandatory and complementary school education for young players.
3. This youth development programme must be approved by the Licensor.
4. The Licence Applicant must further ensure that:
  - a. every youth player involved in its youth development programme has the possibility to follow mandatory school education in accordance with national law; and
  - b. no youth player involved in its youth development programme is prevented from continuing their non-football education.

## Article 26

### S.02 Youth Teams

1. The licence applicant must have at least the following youth teams within its legal entity or affiliated to its legal entity:
  - a. at least one (01) youth boys' team within the age range of 15 to 21;
  - b. at least one (01) youth boys' team within the age range of 10 to 14.
2. Each youth team must take part in official competitions or programs played at national, regional or local level and recognised by the CAF member association.

## Article 27

### S.03 Women's Teams

1. The licence applicant must have at minimum one (01) women's first team participating in a competition sanctioned by the Licensor. To comply with this requirement, the licence applicant may:
  - a. operate the women's team(s) itself or
  - b. have a written agreement with another entity who operates the team(s).
2. The Women's first team must take part in official competitions or programs played at national, regional or local level and recognised by the CAF member association.

## Article 28

### S.04 Medical Care of Players

The Licence applicants shall provide all players registered in the club with full access to medical support services, in accordance with the relevant provisions defined by its licensor in line with its domestic legislation. These shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. yearly medical examination for all its players eligible to play for its first squad;
- b. comprehensive medical insurance coverage for contracted players.

## Article 29

### S.05 Player and Children Protection and Welfare

The licence applicant must establish and apply measures, in line with any relevant CAF guidelines, to protect, safeguard, and ensure the welfare of youth players, ensuring they are in a safe environment when participating in activities organised by the licence applicant. The Licence Applicant should work with locally based child protection expertise and have a child safeguarding officer within its administration to develop and implement such measures, including having a child safeguarding policy.

## INFRASTRUCTURE CRITERIA

## Article 30

### I.01 Stadium Availability and Requirements

1. The licence applicant must have a Stadium available to host football matches for its team participating in a competition. One of the following requirements must be met:

Alternative 1: The licence applicant legally owns the Stadium and will play its home matches in this stadium in the licence period therein; or

Alternative 2: The licence applicant concludes a written lease (or usage) agreement with the owner of a Stadium it will use. This lease agreement shall guarantee the use of the stadium for the Club's home matches in the licence Period.

2. The stadium of the licence applicant must meet the requirements expressly referred to by the:

- a. CAF Stadium Regulations;
- b. CAF Club Competition Regulations/Manual;
- c. Other official decisions by CAF (circular letters, etc).

3. The stadium must fulfil the minimum requirements defined in the CAF Stadium regulations and be classified according to the category defined for the CAF club competition the licence applicant is applying to participate in.

## Article 31

### I.02 Availability of Training facilities

1. The licence applicant must guarantee access to training facilities for its teams, taking into account its youth development programme. Such access shall be confirmed if one of the following requirements is met:

Alternative 1: The licence applicant legally owns the training facilities and may use them in the licence Period; or

Alternative 2: The licence applicant concludes a written lease (or usage) agreement with the owner(s) of the training facilities. This lease agreement shall guarantee the use of the training facilities for the licence Period.

2. The training facilities must meet the category requirements, in accordance with the ones stipulated in the relevant CAF club competition in which licence applicant is applying to participate in.
3. The training facilities must fulfil the minimum requirements defined in the CAF Stadium regulations and be classified according to the category defined for the CAF club competition the licence applicant is applying to participate in.

## Article 32

### I.03 Availability of Office Space

The licence applicant must have office space for its administration and personnel. This availability shall be confirmed if one of the following requirements is met:

Alternative 1: The licence applicant legally owns the office space and may use the space in the licence Period; or

Alternative 2: The licence applicant concludes a written lease (or usage) agreement with the owner(s) of the office space. This lease agreement shall guarantee the use of the office space for the licence period.

## PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CRITERIA

## Article 33

### P.01 Club Secretariat

The licence applicant must have appointed an adequate number of skilled secretarial staff according to its needs to run its daily business.

## Article 34

### P.02 General Manager/CEO

The licence applicant must appoint one (01) General Manager/CEO that is responsible for running its daily business (operative matters) who is employed full-time by the club.

## Article 35

### P.03 Finance Officer

1. The licence applicant must appoint one (01) Finance Officer that is in charge of its financial matters, who can be either a person working in the club's administration or an external partner mandated by the club through a written contract.
2. The Finance Officer must hold as a minimum of one of the following qualifications:
  - a. a diploma of certified public accountant;
  - b. a diploma of qualified auditor; or
  - c. a diploma in finance and accounting.

## Article 36

### P.04 Marketing Officer

The licence applicant must appoint one (01) Marketing Officer that is in charge of its marketing matters, who can be either a person working in the club's administration, or an external partner mandated by the club through a written contract.

## Article 37

### P.05 Media and Digital Officer

1. The licence applicant must appoint one (01) Media and Digital Officer that is in charge of its media matters, who can be either a person working in the club's administration or an external partner mandated by the club through a written contract.
2. The Media Officer must hold as a minimum one of the following qualifications:
  - a. diploma in journalism;
  - b. proven experience and expertise in journalism and/or digital media.

## Article 38

### P.06 Safety & Security Officer

1. The licence applicant must appoint one (01) Safety & Security officer that is in charge of its safety and security matters with the following responsibilities:
  - a. developing, implementing and reviewing safety and security policy and procedures, including risk management and planning;
  - b. being the main point of contact between the public authorities and the licence applicant on all safety and security matters;
  - c. managing match-related safety and security operations.
2. The safety & security officer must hold as a minimum of one of the following qualifications:
  - a. a certificate as policeman or security person according to national law, or;
  - b. a safety and security diploma based on a specific course issued by the Member Association or by a state recognized organisation

## Article 39

### P.07 Medical doctor

1. The licence applicant must appoint at least one (01) medical doctor responsible for providing medical support and advice to the first team as well as implementing a doping prevention policy. The doctor must ensure medical support during matches and training.
2. The doctor must be recognized and certified by the appropriate national health authorities and be duly registered with the Member Association or league.

## Article 40

### P.08 Physiotherapist

1. The licence applicant must appoint at least one (01) physiotherapist responsible for providing medical support and advice to the first team. The physiotherapist must ensure support during matches and training.
2. The physiotherapist must be recognized and certified by the appropriate national health authorities and be duly registered with the Member Association or league.

## Article 41

### P.09 Head Coach of First Team

1. The Licence Applicant must appoint only one (01) Head coach at a time who is confirmed as the Head Coach of the team by the CAF Member Association and will be registered as a team official in the CAF interclubs competitions.
2. The Head Coach is responsible for the following matters:
  - a. players' selection;
  - b. tactics and training;
  - c. management of the players and technical staff in the dressing room and the technical area before, during and after matches;
  - d. duties regarding media matters (press conferences, interviews, etc.);
  - e. all football technical matters of the men's first team; and
  - f. additionally, the Head Coach may be involved with the reserve/developmental teams in the club.
3. The Head Coach must:
  - a. meet the Coaching Requirements as stipulated by CAF for the relevant CAF club competition the licence applicant is applying to participate in;
  - b. be duly registered with the Member Association and undertaken by the appropriate body of the licence applicant.

## Article 42

### P.10 Assistant Coach of First Team

1. The Licence Applicant must appoint at least one (01) Assistant Coach assisting the Head Coach in all football technical matters of the first team who will be registered as a Team official in the CAF club competition. Additionally, the assistant may coach the reserve/developmental teams in the club.
2. The Assistant Coach must:
  - a. meet the Coaching Requirements as stipulated by CAF for the relevant CAF club competition the licence applicant is applying to participate in;
  - b. be duly registered with the Member Association and undertaken by the appropriate body of the licence applicant.

## Article 43

### P.11 Fitness Coach of First Team

1. The licence applicant must appoint one (01) Fitness Coach to the first team.
2. The Fitness Coach must:
  - a. meet the Coaching Requirements as stipulated by CAF for the relevant CAF club competition the licence applicant is applying to participate in;
  - b. be duly registered with the Member Association and undertaken by the appropriate body of the licence applicant.

## Article 44

### P.12 Goalkeeper Coach of First Team

1. The licence applicant must appoint one (01) Goalkeeper Coach to the first team.
2. The Goalkeeper Coach must:
  - a. meet the Coaching Requirements as stipulated by CAF for the relevant CAF club competition the licence applicant is applying to participate in;
  - b. be duly registered with the Member Association and undertaken by the appropriate body of the licence applicant.

## Article 45

### P.13 Women's First Team Head Coach

1. The Licence Applicant must appoint one (01) Head coach responsible for all football technical matters of the women's first team.
2. The Women's First Team Head Coach must:
  - a. meet the Coaching Requirements as stipulated by CAF for the relevant CAF club competition the licence applicant is applying to participate in;
  - b. be duly registered with the Member Association and undertaken by the appropriate body of the licence applicant.

## Article 46

### P.14 Head of youth development

1. The licence applicant must appoint one (01) head of youth development responsible for running the daily business and the technical aspects of the youth sector, including the youth development programme.
2. The Head of the Youth Development must:
  - a. hold a valid Coaching certificate or its equivalence defined, recognised and approved by the Member Association in which the club is registered;
  - b. have specific youth coaching experience and/or supplementary certification/qualification related to coaching and managing young players;
  - c. have strong management and administration skills to ensure the efficient implementation of the programme, activities, roles and duties in collaboration with other relevant personnel;
  - d. be duly registered with the Member Association and undertaken by the appropriate body of the licence applicant.

## Article 47

### P.15 Youth Coaches

1. The licence applicant must appoint, at a minimum, one (01) coach for each of the youth teams as required in Article 26.
2. At least one (1) Youth Coach must:
  - a. hold a valid Coaching certificate or its equivalence defined, recognised and approved by MA in which the club is registered;
  - b. have specific youth coaching experience and/or supplementary certification/qualification related to coaching and managing young players;

- c. have strong technical competencies to ensure the efficient implementation of the technical programme to develop elite youth players in collaboration with other relevant personnel;
- d. be duly registered with the Member Association and undertaken by the appropriate body of the licence applicant.

## Article 48

### P.16 CAF Club Licensing Online Platform (CLOP) officer

1. The licence applicant must appoint an individual within the club to be responsible for operating the CAF Club Licensing Online Platform.
2. The Club Licensing Online Platform officer will be responsible for:
  - a. collecting and uploading the required documents from the club to the CAF CLOP;
  - b. answering messages and alerts created by the CAF CLOP;
  - c. acting as the point of contact between club, the licensor and CAF.

## Article 49

### P.17 Stewards

The Licence Applicant must have engaged qualified stewards to ensure safety and security at home matches. For this purpose, it must:

- a. employ the stewards; or
- b. conclude a written contract with the stadium owner providing the stewards; or an external security company providing stewards.

## Article 50

### P.18 Rights and duties of staff members

The rights and duties of the licence applicant's staff members must be defined in writing.

## Article 51

### P.19 Duty of replacement during the licensing season

1. If a function defined in Articles 34 to 48 becomes vacant during the licensing season, the licensee must ensure that, within a period of a maximum of sixty (60) days, the function is taken over by someone who holds the required qualification.
2. In the event that a function becomes vacant due to illness or accident, the licensor may grant an extension to the sixty (60) day period only if reasonably satisfied that the person concerned is still medically unfit to resume duties.
3. The licensee must promptly notify the licensor of any such replacement.

## Article 52

### P.20 Duty to notify significant changes

Any event occurring after the submission of the licensing documentation to the licensor representing a significant change compared to the information previously submitted and related to Articles 33 to 50, must be notified to the licensor within fifteen (15) working days of the event.

## LEGAL CRITERIA

## Article 53

### L.01 Declaration in Respect of Participation in CAF Inter-Club Competitions

1. The licence applicant must submit a legally valid declaration confirming the following:
  - a. it recognises as legally binding the statutes, rules and regulations and decisions of FIFA, CAF, the member association and where such exists the national league;
  - b. it recognises the exclusive jurisdiction of the CAS (Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne) for any dispute of international dimension and in particular involving FIFA and/or CAF;
  - c. it recognises the prohibition to recourse to ordinary courts under the Statutes of FIFA and CAF;
  - d. at National level, it will play in competitions that are recognised and endorsed by the member association (national championship, national cup, etc.);
  - e. at continental level, it will play in competitions that are recognised by CAF and FIFA. For the avoidance of doubt, this provision does not relate to friendly matches;
  - f. it undertakes to abide by and respect the provisions and conditions of the licensor's regulations;
  - g. all submitted documents as part of the club licensing application are complete and correct;
  - h. it authorises the competent club licensing authority to examine documents and seek information and in the event of any appeal procedure – to seek information from any relevant public authority or private body according to national law;
  - i. it acknowledges that CAF and/or FIFA reserves the right to execute compliance audits at continental and national level reviewing the assessment procedures and the decision-making of the licensor. This declaration must be validated by an authorised signatory.
2. This declaration must be executed by an authorised signatory prior to the corresponding deadline for its submission to the Licensor.

## Article 54

### L.02 Minimum Legal Documents

The Licence Applicant must submit the following documents:

1. A copy of its constitution, statutes or any other document of similar legal nature;
2. An extract from a public register (e.g. trade register) which demonstrates that the Licence Applicant is a legal entity which contains the following information:
  - a. complete legal name;
  - b. address of headquarters;
  - c. legal form;
  - d. list of authorized signatories;
  - e. type of signature (e.g. individual, collective).

## Article 55

### L.03 Ownership and Control of Clubs

1. The licence applicant must submit a legally valid declaration confirming no physical or moral person involved in the ownership, administration, and/or sporting performance of the club, either directly or indirectly:
  - a. holds securities or shares of any other club participating in the same competition; or
  - b. holds a majority of the shareholders' voting rights of any other club participating in the same competition; or
  - c. has the right to appoint or remove a majority of the members of the administrative, management or supervisory body of any other club participating in the same competition; or
  - d. is a shareholder and alone controls a majority shareholders' voting rights of any other club participating in the same competition, pursuant to an agreement entered into with other shareholders of the club in question;
  - e. is a member of any other club participating in the same competition;
  - f. is involved in any capacity whatsoever in the management, administration and/or sporting performance of any other club participating in the same competition;
  - g. has any power whatsoever in the management, administration and/or sporting performance of any other club participating in the same competition;
2. This declaration must be validated by an authorised signatory.

## Article 56

### L.04 Written Contract with Professional Players & Online Registration

1. All of the licence applicant's professional players must have a written contract with the licence applicant in accordance with the relevant provisions of the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players and shall incorporate all key provisions required by the national law and of FIFA, CAF, and the Member Association.
2. Players of the first team must be registered on an online platform of the licensor, ideally connected with the FIFA Connect ID program in order to generate a FIFA ID for each player.

## FINANCIAL CRITERIA

## Article 57

### F.01 Annual Financial Statements - Audited

1. As part of its licence application, and regardless of the legal structure, the licence applicant must submit its annual financial statements, in respect of the statutory closing date prior to the deadline for submission of the application to the licensor.
2. Annual financial statements must be audited and certified by an independent auditor.
3. The annual financial statements must consist of:
  - a. a balance sheet;
  - b. a profit and loss account;
  - c. a cash flow statement;
  - d. notes (comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes) and
  - e. a financial review by the management.
4. The auditor must be independent in compliance with the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants.
5. In addition to the above-mentioned mandatory criteria, it is recommended that the licence applicant publish its audited financial statements on its website.

## Article 58

### F.02 Bank account and Annual Budget

1. The licence applicant must have a bank account under its name and submit its annual budget as part of the licence application.

2. The Annual Budget should state the following:

- a. projected income for the coming Financial Year;
- b. projected expenditure for the coming Financial Year;
- c. all the sources of revenues and income projected for the coming Financial Year along with the amount; and
- d. all the sources of expenditures projected for the coming Financial Year along with the amount.

## Article 59

### F.03 No Overdue Payables towards football clubs - Transfer activities

1. The Licence applicant must prove that it has no overdue payables towards football clubs as at 31 March of the year in which the CAF club competitions commence as per article 63. If a Licence applicant has overdue payables as at 31 March of the year in which the CAF club competitions commence, it shall have a grace period of two (2) months to prove that by the following 31 May, such overdue payables have been fully settled, deferred by mutual agreement with the creditor, are still pending before a competent authority and without a final and binding decision or are subject to a not obviously unfounded dispute submitted to a competent authority.
2. Payables are those amounts due to football clubs as a result of:
  - a. transfer activities, including any amount due upon fulfilment of certain conditions;
  - b. training compensation and solidarity contributions as defined in the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players; and
  - c. any joint and/or several liability decided by a competent body according to FIFA and CAF statutes and regulations, for the termination of a contract by a player.
3. By the deadline and in the form communicated by the CAF administration, the Licence applicant must submit a signed declaration confirming the absence or existence of overdue towards football clubs.

## Article 60

### F.04 No Overdue Payables towards - Employees

1. The Licence applicant must prove that it has no overdue payables towards current and former employees as at 31 March of the year in which the CAF club competitions commence as per article 63. If the Licence applicant has overdue payables as at 31 March of the year in which the CAF club competitions commence, it shall have a grace period of two (2) months to prove that by the following 31 May, such overdue payables have been fully settled, deferred by mutual agreement with the creditor, are still pending before a competent authority and without a final and binding decision or are subject to a not obviously unfounded dispute submitted to a competent authority.

2. Payables are all forms of consideration due in respect of employees as a result of contractual or legal obligations, including wages, salaries, image rights payments, bonuses and other benefits. Amounts payable to people who, for various reasons, are no longer employed by the applicant fall within the scope of this criterion and must be settled within the period stipulated in the contract and/or defined by law, regardless of how such payables are accounted for in the financial statements.
3. The term “employees” includes the following persons:
  - a. all professional players according to the applicable FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players; and
  - b. the administrative, technical, medical and security staff specified in Articles 33 to 49;
4. By the deadline and in the form communicated by the CAF administration, the licensee must submit a signed declaration confirming the absence or existence of overdue payables towards current and former employees.

## Article 61

### F.05 No Overdue Payables – Social and Tax Authorities

1. The Licence applicant must prove that it has no overdue payables towards social and tax authorities as at 31 March of the year in which the CAF club competitions commence as per article 63. If the Licence applicant has overdue payables as at 31 March of the year that the CAF club competitions commence, it shall have a grace period of two (2) months to prove that by the following 31 May, such overdue payables have been fully settled, deferred by mutual agreement with the creditor, are still pending before a competent authority and without a final and binding decision or are subject to a not obviously unfounded dispute submitted to a competent authority.
2. Payables are those amounts due to social/tax authorities as a result of contractual or legal obligations in respect of all employed individuals. Payables include, but are not limited to, personal income tax, pension fund payments, social security and similar payments.
3. By the deadline and in the form communicated by the CAF administration, the Licence applicant must submit a signed declaration confirming the absence or existence of overdue payables towards social and tax authorities.

## Article 62

### F.06 No Overdue Payables in respect of CAF and the licensor

1. The Licence applicant must prove that it has no overdue payables towards CAF or the Licensor as at 31 March of the year in which the CAF club competitions commence as per article 63. If the Licence applicant has overdue payables as at 31 March of the year in which the CAF club competitions commence, it shall have a grace period of two (2) months to prove that by the following 31 May, such overdue payables have been fully settled, deferred by mutual agreement with the creditor, are still pending before a competent authority and without a final and binding decision or are subject to a not obviously unfounded dispute submitted to a competent authority.

2. Payables in respect of CAF include, but are not limited to, financial disciplinary measures and fines imposed by the CAF Disciplinary Board.
3. By the deadline and in the form communicated by the CAF administration, the Licence applicant must submit a signed declaration confirming the absence or existence of overdue payables towards CAF or the Licensor.

## Article 63

### F.07 No Overdue Payables - Explanation

1. Payables are not considered overdue if the debtor club is able to prove by the relevant time (as to which, see below) that:
  - a. it has paid the relevant amount due in full; or
  - b. it has concluded an agreement which has been accepted in writing by the creditor to extend the deadline for payment beyond the applicable deadline; or
  - c. it has brought a legal claim which has been deemed admissible by the competent authority or decision-making body. If the decision-making body considers that such claim has been brought or such proceedings have been opened for the sole purpose of avoiding the applicable deadlines, the relevant amount will still be considered as an overdue payable; or
  - d. it has contested to the competent authority or arbitration tribunal a claim which has been brought or proceedings which have been opened against it by a creditor in respect of overdue payables and is able to show to the reasonable satisfaction of the relevant decision-making bodies that it has established reasons for contesting the claim or proceedings. However, as above, if the decision-making body considers the reasons for contesting the claim or proceedings to be manifestly unfounded, the amount will still be considered as an overdue payable; or
  - e. it is able to demonstrate to the reasonable satisfaction of the relevant decision-making bodies that it has taken all reasonable measures to identify and pay the creditor clubs in respect of training compensation and solidarity contributions that are due under the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players.
2. Claims which are still pending before a competent authority which decision has not become final and binding cannot be acted upon by CAF.
3. An amount shall not be treated as overdue as at 31 May if by that date it has been paid or the date for payment has been extended by means of a written agreement with the creditor or it is the subject of current litigation or arbitration proceedings or has been submitted to a dispute resolution procedure of the competent body.



## SECTION 3

# DOMESTIC CLUB LICENSING CRITERIA

Domestic Club Licensing Criteria shall be incorporated into the Licensor's Club Licensing Regulations. The Domestic Club Licensing Criteria outlined in Section applies to all clubs seeking to obtain a licence to participate in the National Competitions of the Licensor (CAF Member Association).

## Article 64 Domestic Club Licensing criteria

1. The CAF Member Association is mandated to apply a Club Licensing System and monitoring requirements to govern participation, at minimum, in its men's top tier national competition. For this purpose, the CAF Member Association is free to increase, decrease, or introduce additional minimum domestic club licensing criteria in its Licensor's Club Licensing Regulations for the purpose of entering the Domestic competitions, except for the criteria defined by CAF as minimum for implementation.
2. The Domestic club licensing criteria must be applied at a minimum to all licence applicants seeking to obtain a licence to participate in their country's men's top tier national competition.
3. Licensors must require licence applicants to meet at minimum, criteria in the areas of sporting, infrastructure, administrative, legal and finance in order to be granted a licence to participate in the national men's top tier domestic competition.
4. The Licensors must include as a criterion, at a minimum in their top tier men's national club competition, articles 26, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 39, 40, 41, 42, 47, 48, 53, 54, 55, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62 and 63 from the CAF Men's Club Licensing regulations into the Licensor's Men's Club Licensing regulations, while adjusting the requirements in each criteria to the domestic competition regulations (Ex. Coaching license requirement stipulated by the Member Association or affiliated league, etc)
5. For the Overdue Payables requirement in the domestic club licensing criteria, Licensors may adapt the dates as per the national competitions calendar, while preserving the general principle established in these regulations.
6. Licensors are encouraged to implement a club licensing system in other national competitions (i.e., second division, third division and others) and define which criteria are mandatory to obtain a licence.
7. CAF is committed to contribute to the implementation of the domestic club licensing system through provision of technical assistance and support.
8. CAF is fully entitled to supervise and check the correct implementation of the domestic club licensing system at the level of the Member Associations.
9. For the Domestic Club Licensing criteria, Licensors may define and grade each criteria into "A", "B" and "C" categories.
  - a. « A » – Club Licensing Criteria Gradation – "MANDATORY": If the Licence Applicant does not fulfil any A-criteria, then it shall not be granted with a licence to enter the National Competitions.
  - b. « B » – Club Licensing Criteria Gradation – "OBLIGATORY": If the Licence Applicant does not fulfil any B-criteria, then it is sanctioned as specified by the Licensor for non-fulfilment of these criteria, however, the licence applicant may still receive a licence to enter the National Competitions.
  - c. « C » – Club Licensing Criteria Gradation – "BEST PRACTICE": C-criteria are "Best Practice" recommendations. Non fulfilment of any C-criteria does not lead to any sanction or to the refusal of the licence.



## SECTION 4

# FINAL PROVISIONS

### Article 65

#### CAF club licensing online platform (CLOP)

All parties must utilize the CAF Club Licensing Online Platform for all relevant steps of the Club Licensing System.

### Article 66

#### Annexes and force majeure cases

1. Any annexes to the CAF Club Licensing Regulations form an integral part of these regulations.
2. The CAF Executive Committee shall have the final decision on any matters not provided for in the CAF Club Licensing Regulations in cases of force majeure.

### Article 67

#### Disciplinary procedures

1. Any breach of these regulations may be penalized by CAF Disciplinary Board in accordance with the CAF Club Licensing System catalogue of sanctions and relevant CAF Disciplinary Codes.
2. The member association shall decide whether the club licensing system comes under the authority of the Court of Arbitration of Sport (CAS). In this respect, particular attention shall be paid to the relevant deadlines for entering CAF club competitions.

### Article 68

#### Matters not provided for

1. Matters not provided for in these regulations shall be decided, for non-disciplinary matters by the CAF Executive committee, upon recommendation of the Organizing Committee for the Inter-clubs competitions and management of the club licensing system, whose decisions are appealable in accordance with CAF statutes and disciplinary code.
2. All disciplinary aspects will be dealt by the CAF Disciplinary Board.

### Article 69

#### Exceptions policy

1. The CAF administration or the Organizing Committee for the Inter-Clubs competitions and management of the club licensing system may, in accordance with Article 21, grant exceptions on the following matters:
  - a. non-applicability of a minimum requirement concerning the decision-making bodies or process defined in Articles 11 and 12 due to national law or any other reason;

- b. non-applicability of a minimum requirement concerning the core process defined in Article 17 due to national law or any other reason;
  - c. non-applicability of a minimum assessment procedure defined in Article 18 due to national law or any other reason;
  - d. non-applicability of a certain criterion defined in part II, section 2 and 3 due to national law or any other reason;
  - e. extension of the introduction period for the implementation of a criterion or a category of criterion defined in section 2 and 3.
2. Exceptions related to items a), b), c), d) and e) are granted to a CAF Member Association and apply to all clubs which are registered with the CAF member association and which submit a licensing application to enter the CAF club competitions. Exceptions related to item d) are granted to the individual club that applies for a licence.
  3. In principle an exception is granted for a period of one season. Under specific circumstances, this period may be extended, and the CAF member association may be placed on an improvement plan.
  4. A renewal of the exception is possible upon a new request.
  5. The CAF Administration acts as the first instance decision making body on exception requests.
  6. The decision will be communicated to the CAF Member Association. The decision shall be in writing and state the reasoning. The CAF Member Association shall then communicate it to all Licence Applicants concerned.
  7. Appeals can be lodged against decisions made by the CAF Administration in writing before the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in accordance with the relevant provisions laid down in the CAF Statutes.

## Article 70

### Reference version

The CAF Club Licensing Regulations are available in English, French and Portuguese. In the event of discrepancy between the three linguistic versions, the French version shall be authoritative.

## Article 71

### Adoption and enforcement

1. The CAF Club Licensing Regulations has been approved by the CAF Executive Committee.
2. These regulations replace the CAF Club Licensing Regulations (Edition 2012).
3. The CAF Club Licensing Regulations were adopted by the Executive Committee on 10 December 2020 and come into force from 1 July 2022.
4. The Licensor shall issue the Licensor's Club Licensing Regulations and have them approved by CAF. The Licensor's Club Licensing Regulations shall then apply beginning with the season 2023/2024.

## Article 72

### Exceptional and transitional provisions in respect of the club licensing criteria and requirements

1. CAF reserves the right to define exceptions and transitional provisions in relation to the applicability of certain club licensing criteria and requirements set in these regulations.
2. In case of such decision, CAF will communicate to the CAF Member Associations accordingly, informing of the requirement exception and transitional provisions, the respective season in which the requirement exception and transitional provisions applies to and the period of duration.

## CONFEDERATION AFRICAINE DE FOOTBALL

Cairo, 1 July 2022

For the CAF Executive Committee:

*Patrice Motsepe*

Dr. Patrice Motsepe  
President



Véron Mosengo-Omba  
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