



European Billiards & Snooker Association

EBSA Referees Scheme

1. Introduction

1.1 The EBSA Referees Scheme provides a consistent standard for referee training, assessment, coaching and development. The information provided within the scheme ensures that all candidates for referee examinations are assessed and examined to the same standard. The scheme therefore maintains the highest possible standards are reached by referees throughout Europe.

1.2 EBSA stipulate that all matches played in their respective competitions are in the charge of an official Referee.

1.3 National Governing Bodies (NGBs) can, if they wish, adapt the EBSA Referees Scheme to support national referee recruitment and development arrangements within the country. Where this option is adopted, the NGB must ensure that their scheme meets the minimum criteria of the EBSA Referees Scheme.

1.4 Countries can adopt a referee scheme that recognises a “National” level, allowing individuals to become qualified to referee events at a national level within the country (e.g. Grade 4 qualification). Where this is in operation, EBSA encourages countries to continue to award this status to referees. However, any referee who follows the EBSA seminar, delivered and examined by an EBSA Examiner, should be awarded a Class 3 qualification and be entitled to participate at in EBSA and international events.

1.5 Where a country does not have any examiners, the NGB can make a request to EBSA for permission for a senior referee (usually Class 1) from within the country to conduct training and examinations to allow referees to officiate in national championships within the country. After gaining experience at national level, referees following this route should be encouraged to attend EBSA Championships, where they will receive the complete EBSA seminar and assessment to ratify a Class 3 qualification.

2. The System

2.1 The Scheme provides a structured system substantially based on ability, knowledge and experience to determine an appropriate level of competence. When first recruited a new referee will be awarded Class 3 (Qualified) with prospects of progression to Class 2 (Experienced), Class 1 (Proficient) and then Examiner.

2.2 It is also expected that potential referees should be able and willing to be actively involved and committed to refereeing.

2.3 The Scheme details minimum standards that need to be achieved in order to reach a specific level.



European Billiards & Snooker Association

EBSA Referees Scheme

3. Recruitment of New Referees

3.1 There is a two-stage process for recruiting and appointing new referees

1. Attendance and satisfactory completion of an EBSA or approved NGB seminar, that is organised and approved by the relevant NGB and conducted by an EBSA Examiner.
2. Observed refereeing either (1) a minimum of one full frame of snooker or (2) a minimum 200 up or one-hour duration for billiards at an acceptable standard.

3.2 Seminar

Before being assessed formally a new candidate for examination should attend an approved seminar. A seminar will be arranged by an approved Examiner who will give instruction and guidance to potential referee candidates. The seminar will usually cover the following areas of information and instruction. The seminar will last for a minimum of six hours duration.

- TABLE – including construction overview; distances; layout; set up, equipment; brushing and blocking; maintenance.
- RULES AND THEIR PRACTICAL IMPACT – including example situations and demonstrations.
- REFEREE POSITIONING
- OFFICIALS – including welcome; match sheet; scoreboard; end of match; dress/appearance; Code of Conduct.
- USE OF ENGLISH AND NUMERACY – as it applies to Snooker/Billiards terms and practical situations during a match.

3.3 Referee Examiner

3.3.1 The Referee Examiner role is seen as an essential and central component of the EBSA Referee Scheme. The Examiner actively and continuously support and help to develop other referees by using a range of support and assessment techniques including coaching, mentoring, performance feedback as well as offering practical advice.

3.3.2 Candidates seeking to become an Examiner will need to have demonstrated an ongoing commitment to their own personal development as well as being able to help and encourage less experienced referees.



European Billiards & Snooker Association EBSA Referees Scheme

3.3.3 This classification may be awarded to a Class 1 Referee, with no less than one (1) year experience in this class, who can demonstrate satisfactorily an ability to support referees and carry out assessments in accordance with the EBSA Referee Scheme.

3.3.4 The National Governing Body (NGB) will be required to recommend a candidate for Trainee Examiner status. EBSA will review applications prior to approval.

3.3.5 Trainee Examiners will be expected to follow an approved route to gain qualification. The process usually lasts for 1 year, although can be extended. Trainee Examiners will be expected to observe and be observed delivering seminars for new candidates, observe and be observed conducting all levels of examinations, observe and be observed conducting referee assessments. It is an expectation that all trainee examiners will officiate at an EBSA Championship as part of their training.

3.3.6 Once qualified, Examiners will be expected to take an active part in the recruitment and development of referees within their country. EBSA and NGBs reserve the right to review and revoke Examiner Status where examiners are not active within their own country.

3.3.7 Examiners will only be permitted to conduct examinations in their own country. Where an NGB requests for seminar and/or examinations, the EBSA will appoint an examiner in all cases. Countries are not permitted to nominate examiners directly as all requests in this instance must be made through EBSA.

3.3.8 Examiners attending EBSA and international events will, when required be expected to any conduct examinations as part of the championships.

3.4 New Class 3 Candidate (Qualified)

3.4.1 Part One:

Referee candidates shall attend a training meeting/seminar – see 3.2 above which should ideally consist of two sessions, each of around 3-hours (although actual time will be determined by the knowledge and understanding of individual candidates). The Examiner will present the official rules of the games, coach trainees as to match preparation requirements and code of conduct and answer any questions that arise. These training meetings/seminars will usually take place within a face-to-face environment, close to an English Billiards table, such that various scenarios can be explained and demonstrated. However, this training can also be delivered via Zoom or other web-based meeting platforms, whereby diagrams and video clips can be utilised to explain and demonstrate in-play scenarios.



European Billiards & Snooker Association EBSA Referees Scheme

3.4.2 Part Two:

Having completed a seminar/training meeting, candidates will undertake a one-to-one rules knowledge check with a Referee Examiner, such that the Examiner can be comfortable that the candidate has gained the requisite foundation understanding of the rules, before moving on to Part Three.

3.4.3 Part Three:

This part of the process will last around 60-minutes, whereby the candidate will answer questions relating to all five sections of the rules. Candidates will be encouraged to ask questions of their own on any aspect of the rules on which they may be in doubt. Knowledge check training may be delivered face-to-face, or via web-based platforms.

To be awarded the Class 3 Referee qualification, a candidate will be observed, refereeing at least one full frame of snooker or a minimum 200 up or one-hour duration for billiards by a Referee Examiner. The Examiner will provide feedback and coaching and inform the candidate, as to whether they have achieved the required standard. This assessment can be done in person, or via video link.

3.4.4 A newly qualified Class 3 referee will be expected to gain practical experience by participating in and supporting events organised by the NGB. Class 3 referees who wish to develop towards Class 2 and Class 1 standards will need to demonstrate an ongoing commitment and involvement in events organised by their NGB.

3.4.5 The Referee Assessor will provide ongoing encouragement, support and coaching for the development of newly qualified referees.

3.5 Class 2 Candidate (Experienced)

3.5.1 Candidates recommended for upgrading to class 2 should usually have

- (i) at least two years' experience of satisfactory performance as a class 3 referee and
- (ii) proven commitment by participating in events organised by the NGB

3.5.2 Exceptionally a candidate for Class 2 assessment can be recommended for a class 3 referee who does not have two years experience as a Class 3 referee but has outstanding ability – such nominations will be made by the NGB.



European Billiards & Snooker Association

EBSA Referees Scheme

3.6 Class 1 Candidate (Proficient)

3.6.1 Candidates recommended for upgrading to class 1 should usually have

- (i) at least two years' experience of satisfactory performance as a class 2 referee and
- (ii) proven commitment by participating in events organised by the NGB

3.6.2 Exceptionally a candidate for Class 1 assessment can be recommended for a class 2 referee who does not have two years experience as a Class 2 or 3 referee but has outstanding ability – such nominations will be made by the NGB.

4. Continuing Personal Development

In order to develop and improve as a referee it will be necessary to make a commitment to continuous development and to supporting the activities of the NGB and EBSA. An important aspect of the Scheme is therefore a requirement for referees to demonstrate an active and ongoing involvement in snooker and/or billiards. NGBs may ask referees to demonstrate their level of commitment and attainment by agreeing to undertake a number of refereeing activities over the course of a fixed period of time (e.g.12 months).

5. Assessments/Examinations

Applications for Assessments

Candidates wishing to be assessed for the award of Class 3 certificate, or for upgrading from Class 3 to Class 2, must apply to their local Examiner (usually through their NGB). An NGB examination/assessment fee may be charged (pass or fail).

Candidates are encouraged to study the Official Rule Book and attend any offered refereeing seminar to ensure the best possible performance at their examination. An EBSA Referee Examiner will conduct seminars.

6. Examination/Assessment Criteria

6.1 The criteria for examination/formal assessment are: Appearance, Match Preparation, Positional Sense, Rule Application, Knowledge of Current Rules, Audibility, General Demeanour/Conduct, Confidence in Making Decisions.



European Billiards & Snooker Association EBSA Referees Scheme

6.2.1 The criteria for assessment/examination are consistent for all grades of referee. The extent of knowledge and understanding will of course differ according to the grade being assessed. A class 3 candidate will be expected to have a basic knowledge and understanding of the rules and their application with perhaps a minimum level of confidence.

6.2.2 Class 2 candidates will need to have a greater understanding of the rules and be more confident in making decisions and discussing related rules and potentially more complex situations.

6.2.3 Class 1 candidates will have a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the rules; an even greater knowledge of complex situations; be very confident and able to discuss and explain information and situations to others – particularly class 3 and 2 referees.

6.3 It is the aim of the EBSA Referee Scheme that examinations are carried out in a fair and consistent manner and it will be the first task of the Referee Examiner to endeavour to put the aspiring Referee at ease. Class 3 and Class 2 candidates will be examined one at a time and will be alone with the Referee Examiner, although there may be a "Trainee Examiner" present as an observer or being observed conducting the examination under supervision. If more than one examination is to be held on the same day, candidates will be advised of the approximate time they may be expected to be called to avoid unnecessary waiting.

6.4 Class 3 Billiards and/or Snooker – Qualified

6.4.1 Candidates will attend classes for a minimum of six (6) hours; divided into two or more sessions and then they may be assessed.

6.4.2 The assessment/examination will be oral and will be conducted on a Billiards table so that actual situations can be demonstrated. Questions will be on straightforward situations and will cover the whole range of the rulebook. If the Referee Examiner suspects that a candidate has made a guess at any answer, they will probe further to establish the true depth of understanding. There will be no trick questions. The candidate will be encouraged to ask questions of their own on any aspect of the rules on which they may have a doubt. After being awarded his/her certificate, the new referee will receive ongoing support from the Referee Examiner who will monitor the progress and development of the new referee.

6.5 Class 2 - Experienced

6.5.1 The candidate will be expected to be fully conversant with all changes to the rules, which have been issued since the initial examination and their implications. He/she will be asked to explain how to deal with some of the more intricate situations,



European Billiards & Snooker Association

EBSA Referees Scheme

which can and do arise and the reasons for their decisions. It will be an essential part of the examination process that the candidate is observed in action and arrangements will be made for the Referee Examiner to be present at a match where the candidate is officiating. Particular attention will be paid to pre-match preparation, dress, general demeanour and conduct, positional sense and confidence in making decisions.

6.5.2 For this purpose, matches must be official fixtures not less than the best of five (5) frames or in the case of billiards, a minimum 200 up or one-hour duration.

6.6 Class 1- Proficient

6.6.1 The designation of Class 1 Referee will be awarded to Class 2 Referees who have satisfied an Assessment Board of their competence and experience at the highest level. They will be expected to have made a positive contribution to the games of Snooker and/or Billiards in general and to the practice of refereeing.

6.6.2 The Assessment Board will consist of two EBSA Referee Examiners. One Referee Examiner will act as the chairperson of the Assessment Board. In order to satisfy the Referee Examiners, the candidate will demonstrate a full and comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the rules. Referee Examiners will need to be unanimous in their decision to award a Class 1 upgrade.

6.6.3 A Class 2 Referee must be observed by two Referee Examiners refereeing a best of five frames or longer match.

6.6.4 The candidate at a Billiards (snooker) table shall explain how he or she would deal with more intricate situations and should be able to justify his or her explanation. The explanation should be comprehensive and show an understanding and appreciation of the more intricate and interrelated issues of snooker or billiards.

6.6.5 The candidate must be fully conversant with the current rules and recent amendments.

6.6.6 The Referee Examiners shall inform the candidate of the result of the examination/assessment and send all completed examination forms to the Chair of the EBSA Referee Subcommittee and retain one copy for her/his own records.

7. Monitoring of the Scheme

7.1 Each NGB will be responsible for monitoring the Scheme within their own country. If any country develops a system that does not replicate the EBSA system, then the NGB will need to demonstrate how their system matches the minimum requirements of the EBSA Referee Scheme.



European Billiards & Snooker Association EBSA Referees Scheme

7.2 Referees who have successfully achieved at least a Class 3 qualification under the EBSA Referee Scheme will automatically become members of the EBSA.

7.3 The EBSA Referee Subcommittee will maintain a database that includes referee details and will periodically issue membership certificates for all referees. All individual certificates will be valid for a period of four (4) years.

7.4 The Authority for the issue of Certificates will be as follows:
European Billiards and Snooker Association after each NGB has confirmed the referees who are recognised as being active in their country.

7.5 Requests for referee seminars and examinations in countries that do not have examiners should be directed to the EBSA General Secretary and Referee Subcommittee. The Subcommittee chair will liaise with the EBSA Board to consider what support may be offered – for example by neighbouring countries or by arrangement at future Championship events. NGBs should not deal directly with individual Referee Examiners to organise seminars/examinations. Where this situation arises, any seminar/examination that has not been sanctioned and approved by EBSA will be classed as null and void. Where NGBs request Referee Examiner(s) to undertake seminars and/or examinations, the NGB will be required to pay travel, accommodation and meals costs for the examiner(s) travel to conduct seminar/examinations.

8. Fees/expenses

Each NGB, in conjunction with the EBSA, may set examination fees and expenses at their own discretion. There will be no charge for seminars/

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