

## 1. Scope

The Championships and associated events will be played subject to the ECF online fair play and anti-cheating guidelines as Tier 1 events:

[https://www.englishchess.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/ECF-Online-Fair-Play-and-ACv2\\_2\\_final.pdf](https://www.englishchess.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/ECF-Online-Fair-Play-and-ACv2_2_final.pdf)

The following are specific to those events and additional to the above guidance. Where there is a conflict the specific rules of these Counties Online Regulations take precedence.

The rules and guidelines apply to all players playing in the Championships and associated events. By competing in an event, participants accept and agree to their application.

## 2. Complying with Provider and Counties Online Fair Play Rules (All Events)

Participants are asked to review the chess.com fair play rules as relevant, and make sure they comply with these for their games on the platform at all times. Further details can be found here: <https://support.chess.com/article/648-what-do-i-need-to-know-about-fair-play-on-chess-com>.

Please note that the following are specifically not allowed during play:

- Help from any other person, player, or coach
- Impersonation/ use of other people's account
- Use of chess engines, bots, plugins, analysis tools, tablebases, blunder checks or other best move tools
- Artificially inflating or deflating your rating. (This is where a user purposefully loses or has arranged with an opponent to win. As a result, the user's rating will artificially increase or decrease).
- Interference with other members' games.

## 3. Disconnections (All Events)

Please make sure you are ready to start playing when your game is started and be sure to make your first move within the allowed time which varies by time control. Moves should also be made within the maximum inactivity period for the initial set of moves during play. The chess.com rules for abandonment are documented here and will be in force during the events: <https://support.chess.com/article/338-how-does-game-abandonment-work>.

If you are disconnected for any reason before or during a game you should try to reconnect and log back in as quickly as possible. Failure to make a move within the allowed first move time, or to reconnect following a disconnect within the time allowed by the chess.com platform, or generally abandoning a game based on the chess.com rules, will result in the game being recorded as a loss by the provider.

For a game lost by disconnection, the opponents score will be determined by the match arbiter or the Controller based on the chess.com game results and the specific circumstances of the disconnection.

Restarts will be handled at that official's sole discretion and by either:

- a restart from the starting position with the same colours or
- a replay to the last active position with the game restarting from that point.

#### **4. General Anti-cheating Measures (All Events)**

It is a condition of entry that participants must agree to their real names being disclosed so that players know whom they are playing.

Chess.com's anti-cheating software will be in place to detect instances of cheating in all games.

Participants must not stream their games while playing.

In addition, all games will be subject to screening using independent analysis software or other analysis tools at the organiser's discretion.

Participants may not change their chess.com username or account during the event unless permitted by the Fair Play Controller.

In the event that a participant has their account closed by chess.com during the event, they will be excluded from the event. The results may be set at losses depending on the information from the independent screen.

#### **5. Further Anti-Cheating Measures (Finals where a Zoom connection is required)**

In the event that the Controller gives notice at the conclusion of the qualifying stage of the Championships that enhanced fair play measures are to be applied for the finals stage it is mandatory to join a Zoom call with both the screen shared and a webcam with the player facing the camera. The following conditions will apply:

- Players should join the match from a laptop or desktop and not an iPad, tablet or mobile phone. They should be using a mouse, trackpad, other pointing device or the computer keyboard rather than a touch screen given touch screen operation tends to obscure a built-in camera.
- Players with special accessibility requirements should contact the Controller in advance to agree suitable arrangements where these can be accommodated.
- Headsets and earphones must not be worn during the zoom call.
- The arbiter may ask players to share their screen via Zoom screen sharing and to open task manager or equivalent to show there are no chess engines or analysis software running.
- Players should aim to remain silent during play as with an over-the-board match, and with minimal or no background noise in the room.

- In the event of a disconnection from screenshare or webcam, in the first instance for a game, a warning will be issued. For a second offence, the game is considered lost unless the arbiter at their sole discretion determines that:
  - a) one or both disconnects arose from a chess.com server issue
  - b) the players are in agreement that the game should be restarted.
- If there is a disconnection from webcam, the player is not allowed to move until they have reconnected.

## **6. Playing Area (Finals where a Zoom Connection is required under section 5 above)**

The playing area for the finals is defined as the room that the player is playing in.

The playing area should have no portable electronic devices other than the computer system the player is using to play.

Mobile phones are not allowed in the playing area.

No other person apart from the player should be in the playing area during play. If this is not appropriate or practical then please let the fair play controller know in advance of the event, and please note the need to maintain silence during play.

All social media and email notifications must be turned off during play.

Games should take place on a single screen. Do not use any multi-screen setups during play.

The computer system must not be facing a window or a door.

The match arbiter may ask the player to use the webcam to scan the room.

All Software Applications <sup>1</sup> with the exception of Zoom, the browser running chess.com and any Anti-Virus software must be closed and not running and may not be opened during play.

In the event a player needs to leave the room for any reason, the match arbiter must first be informed.

## **7. Appeals (All Events)**

The process for any appeal for a fair play infringement is as follows:

- Player is removed from the event due to an account closure or other infringement.
- Prior results are not amended at this stage.
- Player takes up appeal with chess.com and lodges a parallel appeal with the fair play controller/ appeals committee.

---

<sup>1</sup> A software application is a software program that can be run under user control in a foreground window. Software applications are generally listed on a Windows PC under task manager where they appear as applications rather than processes.

- Depending on the outcome of the two appeals processes the tournament appeals committee makes a determination as to whether a player can continue or not and whether any results should be amended.
- Where an infringement is confirmed, the details are passed to the ECF for any further action under their procedures.
- Players should note that they may miss rounds while an appeal is in process. An entry fee refund will be offered in the event of a successful appeal where they player has missed part of the tournament as a result of the appeal process.

#### **8. Sanctions (All Events)**

Any player found to be cheating during an event will be banned from the Online Counties Championships events and from the next season of the Online Counties Championships.

#### **9. Other (All Events)**

Neither the ECF nor any of its officials shall have any liability to any player in tort (whether for defamation or any other tort), in contract or otherwise howsoever in relation to or arising from its anti-cheating/fair play arrangements, including the operation of these Fair Play Regulations and the ECF online fair play and anti-cheating guidelines. The foregoing shall not limit liability for personal physical injury or death.