**ECF Arbiter Assessors’ Report Form – Assessors Guide**

Candidate Candidate Grading Reference

Assessor Candidate Membership Number

Tournament Number of Players /Rounds

**General Guidance**

**Objectives of the Assessment**

The assessment process is designed to provide an objective measure of the standard of arbiters. Assessors are expected to provide candidates the opportunity to pass the test. If they are also an Arbiter at the event in question, then they should try to arrange for suitable opportunities to carry out the tasks required to earn particular marks. Assessors will nevertheless may need to use an element of judgement on these things, and it would not be unreasonable to arrange a brief interview so as to explore some of the topic areas.

**Use of Comments Box**

The Assessor should try to be very liberal in their use of comments. The comments should cover things that the candidate has done well, and ways in which they could improve in future. It is helpful for the comments to be as specific as possible. Whatever the eventual outcome, this is part of the continuing training of people who are training as arbiters.

**English Ability**

It is expected that the candidate is able to speak English to a satisfactory level. They will need to be able to speak to players and Arbiters. They need not be fluent or native English speakers.

**Pass Mark**

The pass mark is 16 out of 20.

**Report**

**1. Image & Appearance**

+1 The Arbiter has a professional appearance.

*The Arbiter should appear professional for the competition being administered. The dress of an Arbiter, for example, will vary depending on whether the Arbiter is running an inter-school rapidplay, or the World Championship match! In all cases, the arbiter should look smart. Where competitions have specific uniform requirements, the Arbiter should be expected to meet these. The Arbiter should not be using their mobile phone in the playing area during play, and act appropriately for the tournament. The Arbiter should show a keen interest in the tournament, and not be pre-occupied with non-tournament related things.*

+1 The Arbiter is visible to the players and available to make decisions when required.

*The Arbiter should be available if any decisions are being made. The Arbiter can be, for example, in the playing area, or in the Tournament Office, depending on the nature of the problem. The Arbiter should regularly patrol the playing area.*

+1 The Arbiter is seen to be observing games in progress

*The Arbiter should be seen to be interested in the progress of the event, and in the games being played. This will be especially obvious around time controls, but the Arbiter should also be watching at other times too. The regular presence of the Arbiters will deter issues erupting and then escalating, so an Arbiter should spend much of the time in the playing areas observing proceedings.*

+1 The Arbiter works as part of a team with the rest of his colleagues and communicates effectively with them.

*The Arbiter should communicate any matters of importance to his colleagues. For example, if a player makes an illegal move, a colleague may need to know in case a further illegal move is made, in which case the game ends. There may be an issue that only a more senior on-site Arbiter can deal with, and the information should be passed on effectively.*

**2. Decision Making**

*Part of the decision making process may involve changes to clock times. The below descriptions for each mark include both the decision-making process, and their ability to adjust the clock times.*

*The Arbiter should be authoritative and confident when making decisions, and should do so without favouring any players. The Arbiter should therefore take measures not to involve himself in any disputes involving players with whom he might have a connection. Additionally, the Arbiter should not come across as overly friendly to one group of people, and very strict to another. “Authoritative” means “commanding and self-confident”. There is a difference between this and appearing arrogant, or as a know-all.*

0 *Award this mark if the Arbiter doesn’t have the required knowledge to make decisions. This form will not usually be filled in for candidates who haven’t passed the test, and if they have passed a test, then this should not apply.*

1 The Arbiter appears indecisive and hesitant, requiring assistance or support to make correct decisions in accordance with the Laws of Chess or Tournament Regulations.

*Award this mark if the Arbiter looks panicked, and takes some time to make a decision not in accordance with the Laws of Chess or Tournament Regulations; or seeks confirmation of a decision from another Arbiter.*

2 The Arbiter appears indecisive and hesitant, but is able to make correct decisions in accordance with the Laws of Chess or Tournament Regulations.

*Award this mark if the Arbiter appears panicked, but does make the correct decision on his own in accordance with the Laws of Chess or Tournament Regulations.*

3 The Arbiter makes decisive, considered and correct decisions in accordance with the Laws of Chess or Tournament Regulations.

*Award this mark if the Arbiter looks calm, and makes the correct decision.*

4 The Arbiter makes decisive, considered and correct decisions in accordance with the Laws of Chess or Tournament Regulations, without favour or bias to individual players. The Arbiter is able to communicate these decisions effectively to the players.

*Award this mark if the Arbiter looks calm, makes a correct decision, and communicates this decision effectively with the players. A decision has been communicated effectively if it is clear that both players understand the arbiter’s decision. It may be necessary to speak to the players after a game to seek clarification on this point.*

**3. Playing Conditions**

*In general, the Arbiter should look to provide optimal playing conditions, and seek to minimise the following sources of noise:*

* *Players analysing their game at their tournament board, rather than in the analysis room*
* *Players having conversations in the playing area while away from their board*
* *Spectators who are using mobile phones, cameras with flash switched on, and having conversations with each other*
* *Arbiters themselves resolving disputes at the board distracting nearby players, or being a source of noise themselves.*

*Noise is the easiest thing to notice, and so the lower marks start there: higher marks are available only if other issues: (light, heat, refreshments, spectators crowding around, noisy air conditioning units, and so on,) are also addressed.*

0 The Arbiter is a source of noise in the playing area and unnecessarily distracts players.

*Award this mark if the Arbiter is eating, talking loudly to colleagues, or tapping away loudly at a computer, or carrying out any noisy task that need not be done in the playing area; in such a way that players or spectators in the playing area notice them. Signs of a player noticing will include them looking in the direction of the Arbiter, or worse the player actually going to talk to the Arbiter.*

1 The Arbiter takes action when a player requests that measures are taken to improve playing conditions.

*Award this mark if the Arbiter responds positively to players e.g. who ask them to take action in any of the ways listed in the bullet points above.*

2 The Arbiter proactively takes measures to minimise the amount of noise and distraction in the playing area.

*Award this mark if the Arbiter proactively takes action in any of the ways listed in the bullet points above.*

3 The Arbiter proactively takes measures to improve playing conditions for the players in the playing area. Effort is made to minimise the noise in areas immediately outside the playing area, and to ensure that conditions for play within the playing area remain near optimal.

*Award this mark if the Arbiter proactively takes action in any of the ways listed in the bullet points above, both inside the playing area and in any areas where noise will filter through into the playing area. Look also for other, non-noise adjustments to the playing conditions: sunlight, heating, etc.*

4 The Arbiter proactively takes measures to minimise actual and potential distractions in and around the playing area, and ensures the playing area remains quiet. Potential problems are being foreseen and steps are taken to minimise any potential disruption.

*The key difference here is that the Arbiter is thinking ahead and looking to head off problems that may emerge. The Arbiter should also try to minimise the problems caused by any poor lighting in the room. The Arbiter should also try to minimise the problems caused by heating in the room, including use of air conditioning where available. The Assessor should recognise that in some venues, the Arbiter may be able to do nothing at all about lighting and temperature, but the Arbiter should attempt to improve things, even if these things are ultimately unsuccessful. For example, if the Arbiter asks if fans are available (even if they aren’t), or for a key to open the windows; or attempts to draw curtains that are broken and won’t shut, or attempts to fix lights that have gone out but there are no spare bulbs – these are proactive measures that can be taken, but they might not actually be required!*

**4. Pairings & Results**

*Assessors should note the use of “and” in these criteria. So if an Arbiter is perfect at recording results, but has no knowledge of pairings, then 0 should be awarded. Conversely, if the Arbiter has excellent knowledge of pairing rules, but keeps getting numerous results wrong, a 0 should be awarded. All results requirements that refer to a number of mistakes are published mistakes – mistakes that get caught and corrected in a checking process are not counted as part of the total of mistakes when calculating them in the marking below.*

*It is acknowledged, particularly with result reporting, that an Arbiter may sometimes struggle to work out what the result of the game is. For example, result slips may be submitted to the Arbiter with opposing results, and the Arbiter has no idea what the actual result is, and the players are impossible to contact. Or, perhaps another Arbiter has said that on balance of probabilities, one of the results was more likely. The Arbiter processing the results should not be penalised in cases like this, and it should be taken into consideration when awarding a mark.*

*It is acknowledged that some Arbiters will use computer software to record results and produce the pairings. The marks can be awarded below whether or not a computer is used, because the skills requested are still in use.*

0 The Arbiter makes several errors in recording the results and producing the pairings.

*Results requirement: The Arbiter makes in total a number of result errors equal to or more than one-third of the number of rounds in the tournament. The Arbiter may make an error when using computer software of several results being wrong as a result of one error, for example, a board may be missed out for some reason and the Arbiter works down the list and gets all of the results wrong. This potentially has such a significant impact on the pairings for the next round that this mark should be awarded if that happens in any round.*

*Pairing requirement: The pairings are systematically produced in accordance with the wrong pairing rules, or it is clear that the Arbiter’s knowledge of rules is generally inadequate to produce the pairings.*

1 The Arbiter makes very few errors in recording the results and producing the pairings.

*Results requirement: The Arbiter makes in total fewer result errors than one-third of the number of rounds in the tournament. For example, a 5-round or 6-round tournament should have no more than one result error.*

*Pairing requirement: The Arbiter has a good knowledge of the pairing rules, but nevertheless makes occasional mistakes. This should be awarded if the Arbiter can explain the rules adequately, but has just made a “careless” mistake.*

2 The Arbiter makes few errors in recording the results and producing the pairings. Measures were taken to check the results and pairings in advance of publication. The Arbiter is confident in their ability to use FIDE-approved Pairing Software.

*Results requirement: The Arbiter makes in total fewer result errors than one-third of the number of rounds in the tournament. For example, a 5-round or 6-round tournament should have no more than one result error. Additionally, the Arbiter has checked the results with another Arbiter.*

*Pairing requirement: The Arbiter has a good knowledge of the pairing rules, but nevertheless makes occasional mistakes. This should be awarded if the Arbiter can explain the rules adequately, but has just made a “careless” mistake. Additionally, the Arbiter has checked the pairings with another Arbiter.*

3 The Arbiter made no mistakes in recording the results and producing the pairings. Measures were taken to check the results and pairings in advance of publication. If asked, the Arbiter is able to explain to players the reason for a particular pairing, in accordance with the pairing rules being used at that competition.

*Results requirement: The Arbiter makes no mistakes in recording results. Additionally, the Arbiter has checked the results with another Arbiter.*

*Pairing requirement: The Arbiter makes no mistakes. Additionally, the Arbiter has checked the pairings with another Arbiter if done manually, and have been reviewed if done using computer software.*

4 The Arbiter made no mistakes in recording the results and producing the pairings. Measures were taken to check the results and pairings in advance of publication. If asked, the Arbiter is able to explain to players the reason for a particular pairing, in accordance with the pairing rules being used at that competition. The arbiter, using software, is able to produce FIDE and/or ECF grading files at the conclusion of the event.

*Results requirement: The Arbiter makes no mistakes in recording results. Additionally, the Arbiter has checked the results with another Arbiter.*

*Pairing requirement: The Arbiter makes no mistakes. Additionally, the Arbiter has checked the pairings with another Arbiter. If questioned by players, the Arbiter should be able to explain a particular pairing. The Arbiter is allowed recourse to the pairing rules, and should be allowed some time to come up with an answer. For the purposes of this mark, if a player does not ask the Arbiter, the Assessor should ask the Arbiter a question about the pairings, in order to award this mark.*

**5. Anti-Cheating measures**

0 The Arbiter appears to take no steps to ensure that the players will not be able to cheat.

*Players are able to access areas where they might mingle, unimpeded, with spectators. Phones, for example, are in the playing area, discussions are taking place about games in progress, etc.*

1 Anti-cheating protocols are in place, but are not consistently enforced by the Arbiter.

*Protocols are required to be consistently applied in order that players are fairly treated. Inconsistent application of any Law will cause problems for the entire Arbiting team. The Arbiter is expected to apply Laws objectively and fairly, generally regardless of the individuals involved.*

2 The Arbiter is able to insist that players conform to basic anti-cheating protocols e.g. regarding mobile telephones and wristwatches.

*Using phones and watches as a basic example, the arbiter must apply the Laws in a consistent manner, and do so throughout the rounds, and this does require a firmness and a people-management skill on the part of the Arbiter.*

*What should not happen is that the Arbiter applies the Law in a hap-hazard manner, or that the Law is disregarded because too many players choose to ignore it. If that is so, the Arbiter cannt be awarded more than 1 mark in this section.*

3 The Arbiter is able to insist that the players and spectators conform to basic anti-cheating protocols. The Arbiter can demonstrate the use of a hand-held scanner at the start of a round in an effective, undisruptive, manner.

*The arbiter is able to insist that spectators also abide by the requirements regarding phones, etc., and can move spectators away without this in itself becoming a distraction to the players.*

4 The Arbiter is able to insist that the players and spectators conform to anti-cheating protocols. The Arbiter makes appropriate use of a hand-held scanner. The arbiter is aware of, and enforces, appropriate anti-cheating measures.

*The Arbiter is seen to be enforcing the Laws regarding anti-cheating, and the players and spectators are being made aware of them by the Arbiter. Pre-round scans are conducted in an efficient manner, with minimal distractions to other players.*

**Comments on 1-5 above**

**I recommend that the arbiter is awarded a Level 2 norm.**

**Signed** **Total Mark / 20** **Date** / /

*The comment box should be used, both for good points and for points of improvement.*

*Remember that this is a learning exercise for people who may be just starting out on the Arbiter path.*

*Please make your points clear, and if your remarks relate to a particular section, make that clear too.*

*Note that not all situations obviously arise, and it may be helpful to discuss the requirements and to explore a few possible scenarios with the candidate, if only to give yourself a clearer picture of the candidate’s abilities.*

*If you do not feel that the Arbiter has made the required standard, then you should not sign off the form, and you must explain why.*

*Thank-you for taking the time to assess, and thus to help, other arbiters, it is appreciated.*

*Alan Atkinson*

*E.C.F. Manager of Arbiters*

*May 2021*