

North West

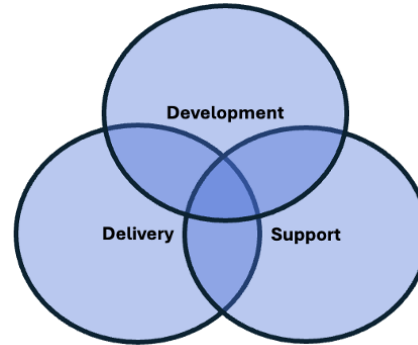
AOC

Briefing and Guidance to Umpires

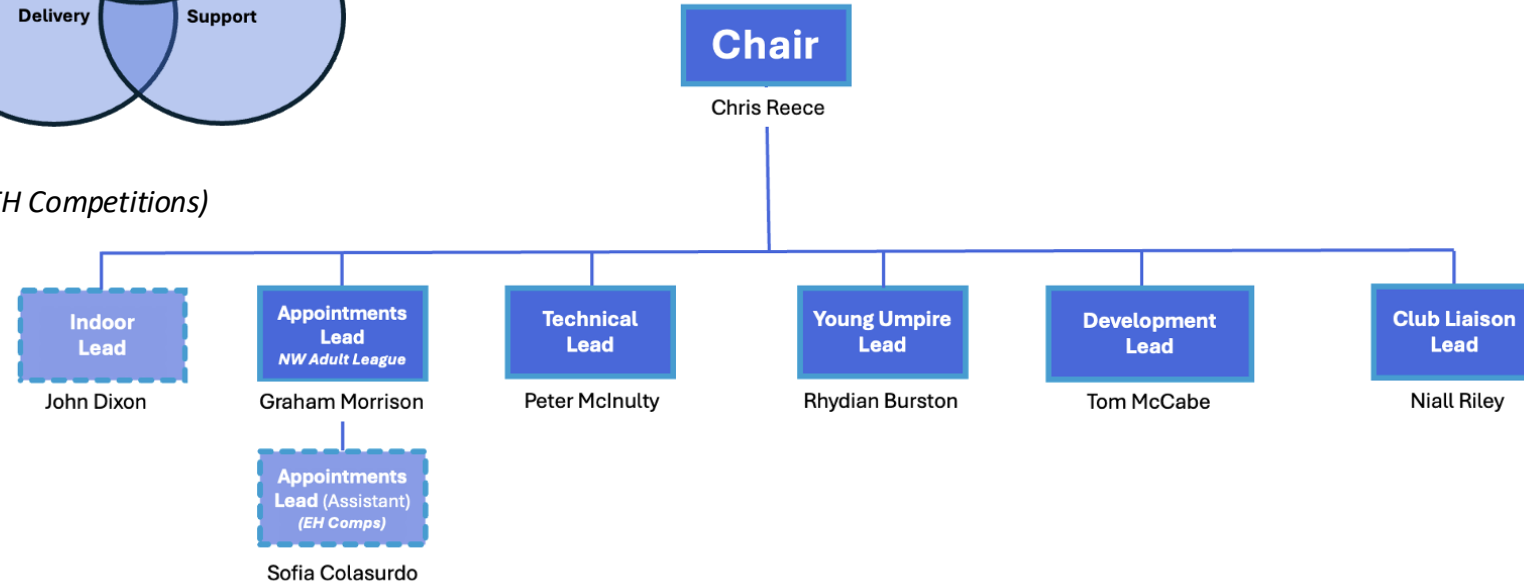
2026-27

This document sets out the key things that can aid your development as an Umpire, Coach/Assessor

- ❖ **Chair:** Chris Reece
- ❖ **Development Lead:** Tom McCabe
- ❖ **Club Liaison:** Niall Riley
- ❖ **Appointments Lead:** Graham Morrison
- ❖ **Appointments Lead Assistant:** Sofia Colasurdo (*EH Competitions*)
- ❖ **Young Umpire Lead:** Rhydian Burston
- ❖ **Technical Official Lead:** Peter McNulty
- ❖ **Indoor Lead:** John Dixon



AOC Structure 2026-27



Please see [link Here](#) for Committee Contact Details

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- **Game Management and Skills**
- **Use of Radios**
- **Keeping up to Date – Maintaining consistency, accuracy**

Pre - and Post Match

- Aim for consistency of performance.
- Look after yourself – umpiring is rewarding but also challenging mentally and physically.
- **Maintain physical fitness**
 - Ensure Regular fitness training
 - Include match warm ups and cool downs
 - Don't ignore injuries – rest and treat
 - Ensure sufficient nutrition and hydration.

Maintain umpire performance

- Maintain knowledge of Rules and FIH Umpire Guidance.
- Work on Game Management skills – signals, communication, presentation, positioning
 - Access information and courses via the EH Hockey Hub.
- Reflect and learn from performances.
- Reflect on what went well, or less well, and what to improve on for next game.
- Discuss incidents with other Players, Captains, Coaches and Umpires after the match.
 - Use video clips and films of others and yourself.

Game Management – Pre Match Advice

- **Good pre-match preparation** & discussion with your colleague on the day
 - Arrive in good time, look the part
 - Allow time for preparation – pre match chat, physical warm up and checking the pitch,
 - Meet your colleague 1 hour pre-match for your chat and/or make contact during the week
 - Engage with teams and any Captain/Coach/Assessor.
- **Cover everything You need personally in The Pre Match Chat**
 - Areas of control
 - Own area and supporting role for colleague
 - E.g. PCs, direction of play towards centre of pitch
 - ‘What if’ scenarios, Plan A, B and C
 - Timing of the match
 - Management of suspended players – award, timing, extension of time, returning to play
 - Raised balls and danger
 - Radios – how, what to expect/hear
 - Adapting management during the game, if required
 - Reflect on previous games and team feedback post-match.

Working with the Match Official (MO)

- Timing of Cards
- Bench/Technical Area Management
- Management of suspended players – award, timing, extension of time, returning to play

Game Management–Applying Rules & Using Skills

- **Read the game**
 - Positioning and timely movement contributes to the accuracy and acceptance of decision making.
- **Employ good Game Management Skills** – aka the “Control Curve” or “Ladder of Control”. Does everything match up?
 - Recognise the phase and temperature and style of the game for appropriate management
 - Recognise player actions, intent and skill ability
 - Set tolerance levels early (tackles, 5m, dissent/challenges)
 - Vary the message from Soft/hard and to match the level of infringement
 - Use variations in Whistle Tone/length of blow
 - Demonstrate Open and Confident Body Language
 - Use the Voice – tone and loudness convey the appropriate message and help players
 - Make accurate and timely decision making and use clear signals
 - Arena umpiring
 - Don't go from nothing to personal penalties (cards) should not come as a surprise.
 - Cards:
 - Show them clearly and obviously to all
 - Award the card at an appropriate time (allow any advantage to continue and go back).

Game Management – Advantage, Flow & communication

- **Judge early** what is the 'best advantage' for game flow.
 - Possession isn't necessarily an advantage - can the player take advantage of 'the advantage'?
 - Is a quicker whistle better on occasions, to allow for the quick self-pass or even a PC?
 - Is the player having to work too hard for the advantage – e.g. often easier away from the sideline.
 - Does the game need to be stopped at that point if play can continue with benefit?
 - Is there a need to go back to address a previous infringement?
- **Communicate with Respect**
 - Use your voice (to the individual or team), along with whistle and body language skills.
 - Arena - how widely does the communication need to be conveyed?
 - Player 'Verbals' and dissent – use the voice to manage initially
 - 5 m - set this from the start. Then use of positive reaffirmation can follow e.g. "thanks, that's great, let's keep to that" "make sure – the full 5m please", "another metre, please".
 - Stick offences. Set tolerances from the start and be proactive "take care" and "let's not have that today", or "No More".
 - Judge and communicate Unintentional vs Deliberate Breakdowns and deliver the appropriate 'message'
 - Position of free hits – be more precise in the 23m. Communicate before it's taken!
 - Stationary ball for free hits.
 - Use of the voice to be proactive and to back up some decisions is welcomed by the players – even when not blowing.
 - Let them know you're looking at the same thing.

- **Whistle tone** says everything – use the full range and reflect the message being given
 - Use short peeps to set the ball or players at free hits
 - Standard blow for technical infringements
 - Louder/longer whistle for more serious/deliberate infringements.
- **Body language/demeanour** - Non Verbal Communication can be key
 - Looking relaxed through to appearing more 'assertive'
 - Use of eye contact and facial expressions – a smile, glare, or frown
 - Having an open and confident stance, avoiding aggression
 - Displaying an interest in, and respect for, the game and players.

Use of Radios

- Radio communication is a welcome tool for an umpire
 - As an addition to the game; not as a replacement for existing communication and management skills.
- Whether new to using radios, or more experienced
 - Discuss use of radios pre-match with umpire colleague
 - What to say and how to communicate potential for radio malfunction/availability during a match
 - What not to say and avoiding running commentary.

Instructions for pairing radios

Umpire guidance when using radios

