



## Referee Pathway

*October 2023*

### **Background**

The GAA has been rolling out a Juvenile Referee programme for the last number of years. Children starting from 14 years old can move through three levels allowing them to referee juvenile games. The LGFA also have a Referee Education Programme called “Grab Your Whistle” and a Go Games Referee Course.

One of the final aims of these programmes is to have confident, experienced young adults moving through from refereeing juvenile games into the adult referee programme. At Ranelagh Gaels we fully support this aim and actively encourage our juvenile player to set out on the refereeing pathway. We also recognise the importance of enabling our young referees to officiate over games in all codes that the club participates in.

The club organized its first official referee training course through Dublin GAA in June 2021. Prior to that there were no juvenile referees in the club. The initial training was a joint Level 1 & Level 2 course that covered both codes for boys. The course was held outdoors in St. Teresians and 9 referees completed the training over 2 evenings.

By early 2022 all 9 referees had also completed an online GYW (Grab Your Whistle) course organized by the Dublin LGFA and a number of new referees were added to the pool after they completed either or both the Level 1 or Level 2 Dublin GAA courses. However, it has proven difficult to source or organize GYW courses for these referees.

As we are a dual club we need to have juvenile referees to cover football (boys and girls), hurling and camogie for all age groups from u8 to u12. We currently make it a requirement that all of our referees commit to cover all codes so that we have enough cover for all Go Games fixtures.

## Dublin GAA

Course Name	Age Groups	Minimum Age	Course Format
Level 1 Referee	Go Games U8 - U10	14+	3 separate theory based sessions (2 hrs each) and 1 practical session (2 hrs)
Level 2 Referee	Go Games U11 - U12	16+	3 separate theory based sessions (2 hrs each) and 1 practical session (2 hrs)
Referee of Youth Games (Level 3)	U13 - U16 Youth Games	18+	3 separate theory based sessions (2 hrs each) and 1 practical session (2 hrs)

Dublin GAA tend to schedule the above courses over the course of a season as follows:

- Level 1 courses are generally run between mid-January and the end of May each year and are hosted in various clubs across Dublin.
- Level 2 courses are generally run between September and November each year and are hosted in various clubs across Dublin.
- A Level 3 course is generally run in mid-February each year and tends to be hosted in Parnell Park.

For each level, clubs are only allowed to nominate a maximum of **5 participants** and places tend to get taken very quickly so it is advisable to have a list of potential candidates available prior to publication of course dates.

### Dublin LGFA

Course Name	Age Groups	Minimum Age	Course Format
GYW (Grab Your Whistle) Referee	Go Games U8 - U12	15+	1 online or class based session (max 3 hrs)
Youth Club Referee	U13 - U16 Youth Games	17+	Max. of 7 hrs between theory and practical.

Up to the end of 2021 Dublin LGFA organized online GYW courses with a maximum of 25 places available per course. But in most cases demand exceeded the places available. From 2022, they have requested that clubs organise their own training courses via LGFA HQ in Croke Park. However, LGFA will only organize courses if a minimum of 15 participants are guaranteed. At present we do not have the capacity to train 15+ referees as we do not have enough weekly fixtures to accommodate that number. The club is on a mailing list to be notified of any upcoming online GYW courses.

### Camogie

Course Name	Age Groups	Minimum Age	Course Format
First Whistler Referee	Go Games U8 - U12	15+	Online Training (max. of 2.5 hrs)
Junior Club Referee	U13 - U16 Youth Games	18+	

For Dublin camogie, the first whistler needs only to be completed by referees who haven't any prior experience refereeing.

### Garda Vetting & Safeguarding

Regardless of code, all referees 16+ must be Garda Vetted and complete a recognised child protection (Safeguarding) course.

## Referee Pathway

The current process for selection of referees is based on following guidelines:

- The referee must be a member of the club.
- The referee must be available most Saturday mornings between 0900 and 1300 hrs and on Sundays between 0900 and 1300hrs.
- The referee should not have competing commitments e.g. soccer, rugby, hockey etc. that would reduce their availability to referee.
- For any referee 16 or over, they will need to submit a Garda vetting application and complete a safeguarding course.
- The referee must be prepared to officiate football, hurling & camogie games when required.
- All referees, as a minimum, must complete the level 1 (U8 - U10) referee course.
- Any referee that completes Level 2 (U11 & U12) referee course must be available to referee neutral U12 boys' fixtures in other clubs on a Saturday.
- All referees will be expected to complete a GYW course when available.

## Selection process

The selection process for nominating players to be enrolled in refereeing courses will be carried out by the lead coaches of any particular age group.

When a coaching course relevant to their age group becomes available the lead coaches will be given as much notice as possible by the referee coordinator and informed of the number of available places.

The lead coaches should then provide the referee coordinator with a ranked list of suitable candidates well in advance of the anticipated start date of the course.

To create a list of candidates lead coaches should initially ask for expressions of interest from players and must then ensure that all applicants **fully understand the time commitment that will be required to referee at weekends and that they do not have conflicting commitments with other sports or other activities.**

In the event that the number of suitable applicants exceed the number of available places on a particular course lead coaches should give consideration to the following when nominating players:

- The player's general suitability for the role of referee
- The player's level of participation in voluntary coaching such as the academy on Saturday mornings.
- How long the player has been a member of the club.
- The players level of commitment to training and playing for the club.
- Preference should also be given to the children of coaches.

Once they turn 18, all referees must move on to the next stage (level 3) in the referee pathway (U13 - U16 Youth games) to provide opportunities for club members coming through in younger age groups. We currently have 17 active referees with varying levels of experience with 2 over 18 and another 8 due to turn 18 before the end of 2023.

## Five Year Schedule

The schedule below is based on the current pattern of annual training courses and the required age requirements.

			2008's		2009's		2010's	
			Age		Age		Age	
2023	Jan	Level 1	14		13		12	
2023	Feb	Level 3	14		13		12	
2023	Sep	Level 2	14		13		12	
2024	Jan	Level 1	15	Level 1	14		13	
2024	Feb	Level 3	15		14		13	
2024	Sep	Level 2	15		14		13	
2025	Jan	Level 1	16		15	Level 1	14	
2025	Feb	Level 3	16		15		14	
2025	Sep	Level 2	16	Level 2	15		14	
2026	Jan	Level 1	17		16		15	Level 1
2026	Feb	Level 3	17		16		15	
2026	Sep	Level 2	17		16	Level 2	15	
2027	Jan	Level 1	18		17		16	
2027	Feb	Level 3	18	Level 3	17		16	
2027	Sep	Level 2	18		17		16	Level 2
2028	Jan	Level 1	19		18		17	
2028	Feb	Level 3	19		18	Level 3	17	
2028	Sep	Level 2	19		18		17	