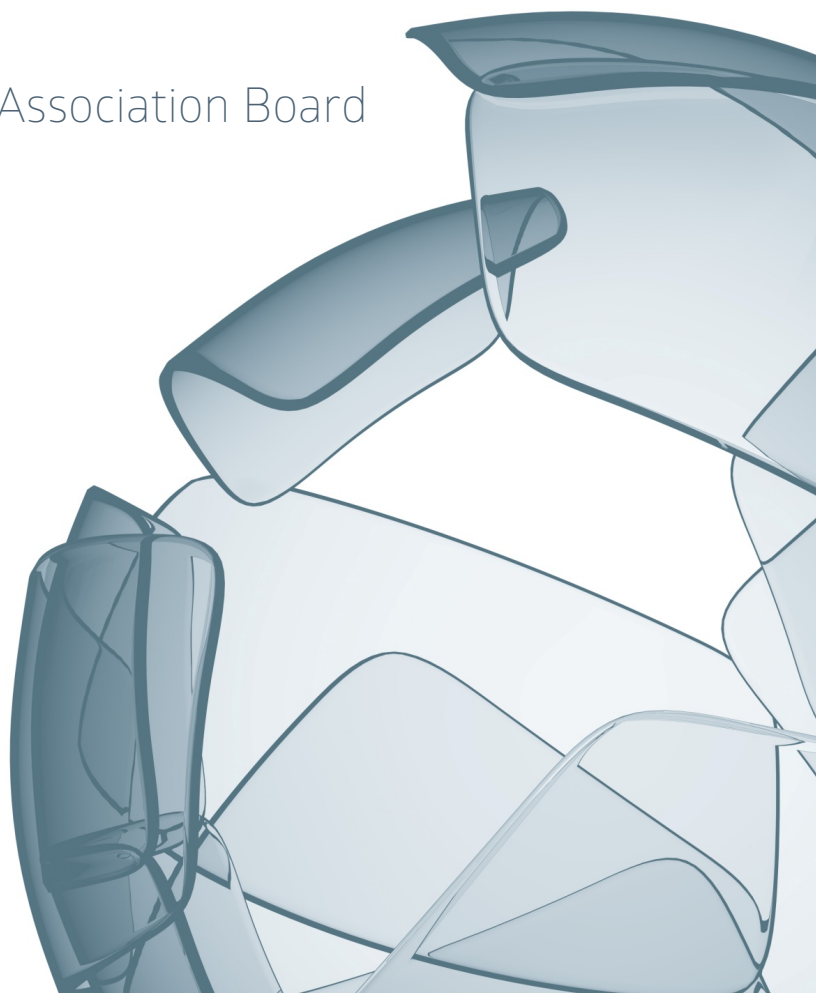


Laws of the Game 2017/18

Guidelines for Return substitutes

The International Football Association Board

April 2017



Guidelines for return substitutes

Following approval at the 131st AGM of The IFAB held in London on 3rd March 2017 The Laws of the Game now permit the use of return substitutes in youth, veterans, disability and grassroots football, subject to the approval of the competition's national FA, confederation or FIFA, whichever is appropriate.

Reference to return substitutions is found in the **Laws of the Game 2017/18**:

Law 3 – The Players (Number of substitutions):

Return substitutions

The use of return substitutions is only permitted in [youth, veterans, disability and grassroots football](#), subject to the agreement of the national football association, [confederation or FIFA](#).

A 'return substitute' is a player who has already played in the match and has been substituted (a substituted player) and later in the match returns to play by replacing another player.

Apart from the dispensation for a substituted player to return to play in the match, the provisions of Law 3 and the Laws of the Game apply to return substitutes. **In particular, the substitution procedure outlined in Law 3 must be followed.**

Frequently asked questions about return substitutes

How many times can a player be a return substitute in a match?

- There is no limit to the number of times a player can be a return substitute

Does the game need to be stopped for a return substitution to take place?

- All the requirements of the substitution procedure must be followed:
 - play must be stopped
 - the referee must give permission for the substitution to take place
 - the procedure is completed when the player being substituted has left the field and the (return) substitute has entered the field

Can a return substitution be made during kicks from the penalty mark?

- The Laws state that only players on the field of play at the end of the match (unless off injured etc.) can take part in kicks from the penalty mark (penalties) so no substitutions are permitted, except for a goalkeeper who is unable to take part

Can a player who has been sent off still be a return substitute?

- Once a player has been sent off he/she can not play in the rest of the match