



Brief: To redesign the Volleyball England referee development pathway.

Context: As per the recent Refereeing Review, we know that we have several issues about the provision of volleyball officials in England. An insufficient volume of officials to resource all our competitions (across all three disciplines) is the most obvious and pressing. However, we are also aware of issues connected with our entry level qualification, how officials progress (and are supported) through the pathway and how observations are conducted.

As a result of the Review, some changes were implemented. These included improved payment rates and a consolidated Grade 4 observation schedule. However, we now want – and need – to go further still, putting the architecture of the entire refereeing pathway up for a potential overhaul.

The request: We ask you to consider redesigning the entire refereeing pathway (beach, indoor and sitting). The critical points to consider are:

Pathway Design

- How do we design and deliver a refereeing pathway that is ambitious and aspirational, attractive to all members of our volleyball community and allowing all participants to get whatever it is they want and need from it?
- How do we design and deliver training 'products' that can be tailored to the two very different Grade 4 audiences; those who are committed to progressing as far along the pathway as they can (and engaging with VE competitions) and those who are doing it for simpler reasons to benefit either themselves or their club (at a local level)?
- What proactive programme of support (e.g. coaching and mentoring) can be provided to those in the former group, allowing them to progress at the rate that they want to?
- And what more light touch development activities can be provided to those in the latter group, allowing us to maintain a meaningful and worthwhile level of engagement with them?
- How can we revisit the system of assigning officials to competitions to proactively support the development programme outlined above?
- How can we redesign the system of observing and promoting officials to make it accessible, transparent, and equitable?

Reward and Recognition

- How can we ensure that everyone associated with the pathway (i.e. both the officials and the volunteer workforce) is suitably recognised and rewarded for their efforts?

Workforce

- How can we ensure we have an appropriately skilled, equipped, and motivated workforce of tutors, observers, coaches and mentors to make the new-look pathway operate effectively?

Quality Assurance/Feedback

- How can we make sure that these products are constantly reviewed, both to keep them relevant and up to date but also to accommodate ongoing learner feedback?
- How do we maintain a high-quality threshold (in terms of product and service) throughout the pathway?

Finance and Administration

- How do we ensure that the work needed to maintain the pathway is correctly and appropriately divided between the volunteer and paid-for (Hub) workforce?
- And how do we do all the above in a way that is customer-focused, inclusive, innovative, and commercially sustainable.

We have established a set of guiding principles to steer the redesign:

- A commitment to the use of digital technologies
- A diverse referee workforce
- Removing some of the key barriers to progress
- Motivating, supporting, and incentivising referees
- A consistent service offer, irrespective of postcode
- Engaging regions and counties