# Club Minimum Standards audio resources – script for 2025/26

## Introduction -

Hello everyone. It’s Stephen from Goalball UK, together with Kathryn, we are going to talk you through our Club Minimum Standards Framework. Some clubs will already be familiar with this although there have been a few amendments from previous seasons, especially regarding safeguarding requirements & policies, qualified coaches, and First Aid.

In general, these are the minimum standards all our affiliated clubs must be adhering to or, at the very least, working towards. We appreciate there may be some exceptions, for justifiable reasons, which Goalball UK recognise and can support clubs in working to meet these minimum standards.

Most of these standards are not specific to goalball – they are relevant to any sports club - so shouldn’t seem confusing or unreasonable.

We don’t want to burden clubs with unnecessary administration tasks, but we need to ensure our clubs are safe and welcoming environments, with transparent policies and procedures, which protects the integrity and reputation of our sport and help you as clubs recruit new members and funders. Some of these minimum standards are also necessary to be compliant with the law surrounding sports clubs and National Governing Bodies.

It is important that all clubs are meeting our minimum standards to ensure eligibility for Goalball UK competition entries and cover by our insurance providers for training sessions & competition participation.

This resource is purely audio, with the only text on screen being the title of each minimum standard. You can listen to this full run through of all 15 minimum standards or use the timestamps in the description to skip to the specific minimum standard you would like to listen to.

## 1. Consistent Training Sessions

We expect clubs to have at least 10 training sessions every season at a designated venue(s).

Infrequent training sessions can result in members becoming disengaged, whereas having consistent training sessions provides familiarity for all members (i.e. players, coaches, and volunteers).

Having a consistent venue means members will not have to be continually learning new travel routes or making new travel plans and, once at the venue, they will be more independent and confident if they know the layout of the building.

From a time perspective, it is also easier for members to commit if they know when a training session is going to be.

It is also easier for Goalball UK to signpost potential new members to your club and plan club support visits.

Consistent training sessions will also help you to develop a good working relationship with the venue and local partners.

We appreciate there will be occasions when this isn’t possible because of date clashes with competitions or the venue isn’t available for some reason, for example. There may also be financial issues. However, it actually helps with budgeting and is often financially beneficial to make block bookings, with some venues offering discounts for block bookings - funders look at this more favourably too.

We hope clubs would welcome potential new members at as many training sessions as possible (and have basic equipment e.g. pads and eye shades for them to borrow). Although not enforced, we would like clubs to have at least one designated ‘open’ training session per season when the club can be showcased to the local community.

Goalball UK can provide support around the key areas of club development and sustainability – players, workforce, venue, and funding.

## 2. Qualified Coaches

We expect clubs to have at least 1 qualified coach (at every training session) who has completed the Goalball UK Club Leaders course, the relevant adult and child safeguarding courses, Goalball UK DBS check, and first aid training.

Clubs have a moral and legal duty of care to their players. A qualified coach will have the necessary technical and tactical knowledge of the sport, which when combined with good social skills, will help players progress in a safe and effective environment. If players have a positive experience, they are more likely to come again and again, and it will also enhance the reputation of the club which is then likely to result in more members.

Ensuring your club coaches have the relevant adult and child safeguarding training will help them to create a positive club environment and therefore should there be any safeguarding incidents or disclosures, manage them effectively.

Clubs should have enough members qualified to help the club develop. Having some members who have also completed the Goalball UK School Leaders course and Introduction to Officiating and/or Referees course is also good practice.

It is always important to consider ratios. The number of coaches present at a training session needs to be appropriate not just to the total number of players but also the number of players aged under 18, the number of players registered as B1 and the number of players with additional disabilities or support needs.

Goalball UK can signpost members to available open courses or specifically arrange closed courses.

## 3. DBS Checks

We expect all Club coaches, the Club Welfare Officer, and the First Aider(s) to have a Goalball UK DBS check.

As outlined in your Safeguarding policy and Risk Assessment, it is vital that members who fulfil certain roles have a valid DBS check.

Clubs have safeguarding responsibilities to all members (but especially children and vulnerable adults) and clear requirements placed upon them by legislation and guidance.

Goalball UK will provide 2 DBS checks per club per season which will be free of charge and can provide guidance on obtaining additional DBS checks.

## 4. Safeguarding

We expect clubs to have at least 1 member (at every training session) who has completed a recognised Safeguarding course (within the last 3 years).

Clubs must have their own Safeguarding Policy, for both adults and children, and have a Club Welfare Officer. Ideally, this should not be a player or a coach. Their role is to make sure the club is operating in a safe environment. They don’t need to be present at every training session or competition, but every member must know who they are and how to contact them should they have any concerns. These then need to be quickly and appropriately dealt with either internally or externally.

Goalball UK has a dedicated Lead Safeguarding Officer and safeguarding email address which clubs can use for support on any safeguarding matters which may arise, this is safeguarding@goalballuk.com. Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility within the goalball community, not just Goalball UK or Club Welfare Officers, and it is good practice for all members of your club to be aware of the safeguarding support available from Goalball UK, should they ever need it.

Goalball UK can help signpost members to suitable courses and supporting resources.

## 5. First Aid

We expect clubs to have at least 1 member (at every training session) who has completed a recognised First Aid course (within the last 3 years).

Clubs should take appropriate actions to minimise the risk of accidents but, inevitably, goalball is a physical sport so injuries will sometimes happen. Clubs should therefore be in the best possible position to deal with these by having their own first aid kit available and someone who is suitably qualified to administer first aid. Best practice is for all coaches to also be first aid trained as well.

If clubs are training in an unsupervised/unstaffed venue, it is advisable that more than 1 member is qualified in case of a major incident or in case it is the First Aider themselves that requires treatment.

The 4-hour ‘Emergency First Aid’ course from any accredited provider is generally appropriate for most clubs. If you have undertaken a First Aid course as part of your job, or training, within the last three years then this is considered as appropriate cover for your club upon supplying your certificate to Goalball UK.

Goalball UK can help signpost members to suitable courses.

## 6. Risk Assessments

We expect clubs to have a risk assessment that is both venue and activity specific.

Risks must be assessed at the start of every training session and the risk assessment must be updated every season, or when necessary (for example, this is especially important when changing venues, even for a one off). Sharing the risk assessment with your members will make them aware of the risks and what measures are in place to minimise them. This will then give them confidence that the session is as safe as possible and make them aware of what is expected from them. For example, leaving belongings somewhere that will not be a trip hazard for others, dressing appropriately for training sessions, ensuring that any spillages are immediately mopped up, etc.

Goalball UK can provide risk assessment templates.

## 7. Registers

We expect clubs to take registers at every training session.

As well as general Health and Safety (i.e. in case a venue needs to be evacuated), a register is important for club administration purposes. It can be used to help with session planning and is a good monitoring and evaluating tool, as it enables reporting of participation numbers to key stakeholders, including funders, and helps with accounting. For example, if a member hasn’t attended a session for a while – why? Has there been a change to their personal situation or wellbeing that the club may be able to support with?

Goalball UK can provide register templates and advice on safe storage.

## 8. Membership

We expect all club members to be members of Goalball UK and clubs must also have their own membership forms.

Following 4 club training sessions or prior to participation in their first competition, whichever comes first, club members must complete a Goalball UK membership form.

It is important clubs also have their own membership forms that include contact details, so they can communicate effectively with their members (e.g. confirmation of training and competition dates or minutes from meetings). It is also important they include emergency contact details and information regarding any medical conditions and disabilities. Information about certain demographics (e.g. age, postcode, ethnicity, education/employment status, etc.) is sometimes required for funding bids.

It is not always appropriate to expect someone to become a full member prior to their first training session – they could just be someone joining in as a one-off. However, it is important to have their contact and emergency contact details as well as any medical conditions and disabilities. Knowing their age, ability and any previous experience can help check the session is suitable for them. A general conversation with them (and/or their parent/guardian) is therefore recommended in addition to completing a pre-membership (or guest) form.

Goalball UK can provide membership form templates and advice on safe storage.

## 9. Club Constitution

We expect clubs to have a club constitution and a committee consisting of at least a Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer that meets at least 3 times every season in addition to an Annual General Meeting (AGM). Minutes must be taken to document what was discussed and record any action points.

A constitution explains to members what your club is about and what club procedures are. It therefore protects members and helps sort out any internal issues. A constitution is needed for opening a club bank account and to apply for funding. It should state how often the committee meets and the number of committee members in attendance needed (this is known as a quorum).

The key committee members are:

• Chair – the person in charge

• Secretary – deals with administration

• Treasurer – deals with finance

Clubs may also have additional officers such as a Fundraising Officer, a Social Media Officer, a Volunteer Recruitment Officer, etc.

It is important to consider what skills and experiences your members have (which could be beneficial to your club) and refresh the committee regularly (i.e. elect new members). It is good practice to have at least 3 independent committee members (i.e. not related or living together) to prevent possible conflicts of interest.

Minutes must be taken at committee meetings. It is advisable to share these with all club members to keep them informed of what is happening and to help them take ownership of the club. Minutes are also sometimes required to support funding bids.

Goalball UK will usually directly communicate with a nominated club lead, but it is important this information, and also the workload, is shared appropriately. Having just 1 person hold multiple roles in a club is not good for that individual or for the club as a whole.

Goalball UK can provide job role descriptions for committee members and a constitution template. Staff support, on request, is also available for committee meetings, AGMs and EGMs.

## 10. Club Bank Account

We expect clubs to have their own club bank account with a minimum of 3 signatories.

It is the responsibility of the Treasurer to deal with club finances, but this should not be via a personal bank account. To open a club bank account a copy of the club constitution is usually required together with appropriate ID for the signatories.

Having a minimum of 3 signatories helps to minimise the risk of fraudulent activity as well as generally sharing the workload. Online banking is arguably quicker and easier (than signing and sending cheques) but an account with a dual authorisation facility is recommended for when making payments.

Complex accountancy skills are not really required. A simple balance sheet, recording income (money in) and expenditure (money out), should be kept throughout the season. Annual accounts should then be shared at the AGM as well as a financial forecast that will help the club with budgeting for the next season (i.e. knowing when they need to apply for funding).

Funders will usually only pay money into a club bank account and will request a copy of a recent bank statement (prior to doing so) as evidence.

Goalball UK can signpost clubs to providers on request.

## 11. Code of Conduct

We expect clubs to have their own code of conduct. This must refer to both photography and social media.

A code of conduct sets out expected standards of behaviour from all club members to ensure there is a positive club culture. It should promote an ethos of fair play and demonstrate the club is free from discrimination and so, welcoming to all.

It is advisable to have separate codes of conduct (or at least specific sections) for players, coaches, officials, volunteers, and spectators.

All members must be aware of the code of conduct and what the implications will be if they don’t abide by it. It is good practice to request that a member signs an actual copy of the code of conduct or alternatively a statement (i.e. on a club membership form) acknowledging they have read the code of conduct and agree to abide by it

Goalball UK can provide a Club Code of Conduct template.

## 12. Club Engagement

We expect clubs to participate in Goalball UK club engagement activities (outside of competitions).

There will be a range of club engagement activities, both virtual and in person, throughout the season (for example the Goalball UK AGM, Goalball UK conference, CPD sessions, surveys, etc.) that will keep clubs up to date with developments and provide opportunities to share good practice with each other.

Clubs are encouraged to participate in these activities (i.e. identify members who are willing and able to appropriately represent their club) to help Goalball UK evaluate past and current work and therefore shape future work.

Goalball UK will always endeavour to make events as accessible and affordable as possible.

## 13. Social Media

We expect clubs to be active on at least 1 social media platform (e.g. Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), or Instagram).

Social media is a great way for a club to interact with its members and Goalball UK. It can be used to showcase your club, and raise the profile of the sport, and in doing so potentially attract new members as well as possible funders. Developing a custom website is also beneficial.

Clubs must ensure all social media complies with Goalball UK’s Social Media Policy and must also ensure permission is sought from its members to appear on social media (any member’s wish to not appear on social media must be respected).

Goalball UK can provide support to set up social media accounts and signpost to best practice.

## 14. Communication

We expect clubs to immediately inform us of any changes to their contact details or training sessions (so the Goalball UK website can be updated accordingly).

To prevent communication issues (in the event of a change in personnel or a temporary absence), clubs should have a specific club email address which can be accessed by several members of the committee.

Goalball UK will use this information to promote sessions to partners and respond to enquiries.

## 15. Partnerships

We expect clubs to build and maintain good links to local partnership organisations.

This will help with:

• The recruitment of potential players (e.g. from Local Societies, RNIB Connect groups, ECLOs and QTVIs, etc.)

• The recruitment of potential workforce (e.g. from schools, colleges, universities, local businesses and volunteering organisations)

Local partnership organisations can also support:

• The sourcing of possible venues (e.g. commercial leisure providers, or local authority providers, for both education and community facilities)

• The sourcing of possible funding pots (e.g. active partnerships, community foundations and local businesses)

All of these are crucial to the success and sustainability of a club.

Clubs should support local partner events wherever possible to help raise the profile of their club and the sport as a whole.

Goalball UK can help signpost clubs to local, regional and national organisations.

## Outro

And that’s it, these are the 15 minimum standards which all clubs must adhere to, or be working towards, to be eligible for Goalball UK Club Affiliation, competition entries, and insurance cover. Don’t forget, Goalball UK can offer support to clubs in meeting these minimum standards through document templates, guidance for (or review of) policies, and the various online resources available on our website.

Please use our enquiries email address for any questions or support you may need (this is enquiries@goalballuk.com), and thank you for taking the time to listen to this audio resource, we hope you found it useful!