

VAR GUIDELINES

1. REVIEWABLE DECISIONS

The referee may receive assistance from the VAR only in relation to four (4) categories of match-changing decisions/incidents. In all these situations, the VAR is only used after the referee has made a (first/original) decision (including allowing play to continue), or if a serious incident is missed/not seen by the match officials.

The referee's original decision will not be changed unless there was a clear and obvious error (this includes any decision made by the referee based on information from another match official e.g. offside).

The categories of decision/incident which may be reviewed in the event of a potential clear and obvious error or serious missed incident are:

1.1 Goal/No goal

- attacking team offence in the build-up to or scoring of the goal (handball, foul, offside, etc.)
- ball out of play prior to the goal
- goal/no goal decisions
- offence by goalkeeper and/or kicker at the taking of a penalty kick or encroachment by an attacker or defender who becomes directly involved in play if the penalty kick rebounds from the goalpost, crossbar or goalkeeper

1.2 Penalty Kick/No Penalty Kick

- attacking team offence in the build-up to the penalty incident (handball, foul, offside, etc.)
- ball out of play prior to the incident
- location of offence (inside or outside the penalty area)
- penalty kick incorrectly awarded
- penalty kick offence not penalised

1.3 Direct Red Cards

- Denying an Obvious Goal-scoring Opportunity (DOGSO)
- serious foul play (or reckless challenge)
- violent conduct, biting or spitting at another person
- using offensive, insulting or abusive gestures

1.4 Mistaken Identity

If the referee penalises an offence and then gives the wrong player from the offending (penalised) team a yellow or red card, the identity of the offender can be reviewed; the actual offence itself cannot be reviewed unless it relates to a goal, penalty incident or direct red card.

2. PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 Video technology will only be used to correct clear and obvious errors and serious missed incidents in predefined match-changing decisions (goal/no goal, penalty/no penalty, direct red card, and if the referee cautions or sends off the wrong player).
- 2.2 The final decision will always be taken by the referee, either based on information from the VAR or after the referee has undertaken an on-field review.
- 2.3 VARs are match officials and any information they provide to the referee will be treated by the referee in the same way as information received from an assistant referee, an additional assistant referee or the fourth official.
- 2.4 The referee must always take a decision, regardless of the existence of VARs, i.e. the referee is not permitted to give “no decision” and refer the situation to the VARs.
- 2.5 The original decision taken by the referee will not be changed unless the video review clearly shows that the decision was a clear and obvious error.
- 2.6 As the VAR will automatically ‘check’ every situation/decision, there is no need for coaches or players to request a ‘review’.
- 2.7 The players and team officials must not surround the referee or attempt to influence whether a decision is reviewed, the review process itself or the final decision.
- 2.8 Only the referee is allowed to enter the referee review area (the “RRA”). A player / substitute / substituted player / team official who enters the RRA will be cautioned.
- 2.9 There is no time limit for the review process as accuracy is more important than speed.
- 2.10 The referee should, as far as possible, remain “visible” during the review process in order to ensure transparency.
- 2.11 If play continues after an incident which is then reviewed, any disciplinary action taken/required during that period is not cancelled, even if the original decision is changed (except for a caution/sending-off for stopping a promising attack or DOGSO).

- 2.12 If play has stopped and been restarted, the referee may not undertake a review except for a case of mistaken identity or for a potential sending-off offence relating to violent conduct, spitting, biting or extremely offensive, insulting and/or abusive gesture(s).
- 2.13 The period of play before and after an incident that can be reviewed is determined by the Laws of the Game (LOTG) and VAR protocol.
- 2.14 The VAR protocol shall be in line with the principles and philosophy of the LOTG.

Crucially, for every match at the Competition, the referee will continue to have full autonomy in making any final decision during the match, in line with Law 5 of the LOTG.

Participating Teams/Clubs in the Competition have no right to access the recordings of referee communications, including with the VARs.

The overriding philosophy of the VAR is “minimum interference, maximum benefit”, i.e. reviews for clear and obvious errors will be rare, but when they do occur, they will be for the clear benefit of the game.

3. Match Validity

The match continues as normal without VAR.

A match is not invalidated because of:

- malfunction(s) of the VAR technology;
- wrong decision(s) involving the VAR (as the VAR is a match official);
- decision(s) not to review an incident; and/or
- review(s) of a non-reviewable situation/decision.

4. For Further Information

This document is for informational purposes only. The full protocol applicable to the use of VAR can be found in the Laws of the Game (LOTG) published by the International Football Association Board (IFAB), available via the following link: <http://www.theifab.com> .