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Dear Colleague

### **Clarification of Offside for Season 2015/16**

At its meeting on the 16th June the Technical Sub-Committee of the International FA Board (IFAB) considered new guidance relating to the way in which players who are in an offside position will be penalised. Following additional consultation with its two technical panels, The IFAB has today issued a formal Guidance Note regarding offside interpretation.

This guidance specifically relates to the practical interpretation of 'interfering with an opponent.' It is important to note that the current interpretation of offside for Interfering with Play, Interfering with an Opponent, and Gaining Advantage from being in that position remain unchanged and assistant referees will continue to apply the same principles in these cases as in previous seasons. However, within these principles, The IFAB has identified some situations which must now be penalised because of the offside player's impact on an opponent.

The IFAB guidance consists of two additional bullet points which attempt to provide greater clarity for the interpretation of 'interfering with an opponent', to ensure that there is greater uniformity in the application of Law 11.

In addition to the situations already outlined in the Laws of the Game, a player in an **offside position** shall also be penalised if he:

- **clearly attempts to play a ball** which is **close** to him **when this action impacts on an opponent**
- or
- makes an **obvious action** which **clearly impacts on the ability of an opponent to play the ball**

This represents a clear change in the way in which assistant referees will judge 'interfering with an opponent' from last season. Previously a player would only be judged to be 'interfering with an opponent' if he either clearly obstructed the opponent's line of vision, or challenged an opponent for the ball. The new guidance introduces the concepts of attempting to play the ball, impacting on an opponent or making an obvious action which impacts an opponent's ability to play the ball.

The FA have produced a guidance note which considers a number of examples to illustrate how the new guidance will be interpreted by officials this season. I have attached a copy of this note which I would urge you to read carefully.

If you have any specific questions regarding the new guidance please contact Neale Barry at the FA ([neale.barry@thefa.com](mailto:neale.barry@thefa.com))

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'N.S. Barry'.

Neale Barry  
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