

BY-LAWS OF THE

CORPORATE SPORTS ALLIANCE (CSA)

Governing Framework for Eligibility, Team Classification, Verification and Conduct of CSA-Regulated Tournaments

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Article 1 — Name, Nature and Objective

- The name of the alliance shall be the Corporate Sports Alliance ("CSA").
- CSA is a voluntary, invite-only, non-profit, and non-commercial alliance of Corporate Entities.
- CSA functions as a corporate governance and regulatory alliance, and not as a representative body of all participating teams or categories.
- CSA shall not collect any membership fee, participation fee, or derive any monetary benefit from tournaments or related arrangements. It operates purely as a voluntary governance and regulatory body.

Article 2 — Membership, Governance and Board

- CSA shall have Permanent Members, who are Corporate Entities.
- Governance of CSA shall vest exclusively with Permanent Members admitted in accordance with these By-Laws.
- CSA may, at its discretion, invite:
 - Invitees, including Startups and Professional entities; and
 - Observers, who shall have no voting or governance rights.
- The Governing Board is answerable only to Permanent Members.
- Invitees and Observers may be promoted to Permanent Members, subject to Board approval.

Article 3 — Regulatory Authority and Scope

- CSA shall regulate Corporate Tournaments organised by its Members.
- These By-Laws, together with their Schedules and Annexures, shall apply without exception to such tournaments.
- In addition to Corporate Teams, CSA may enable tournaments by permitting participation of:
 - Startup Teams;
 - Institutional teams recognised under these By-Laws; and
 - other Non-Corporate Teams as permitted under these By-Laws.
- CSA's role is regulatory and supervisory in nature — it is not commercial or operational.

Article 4 — Corporate Member Team and Institution Member Team Status

Tournament participation is distinct from CSA membership and confers no governance, voting, or representational rights. Only team categories expressly permitted under these By-Laws may participate in CSA-Regulated Tournaments.

4.1 Corporate Member Team

A “Corporate Member Team” is a team fielded by, or on behalf of, a Permanent Member of CSA (i.e., a Corporate Entity admitted as a Permanent Member under Article 2). Such a team participates in CSA-Regulated Tournaments as of right, subject to compliance with these By-Laws. Its participation does not itself confer any governance or voting rights beyond those the Permanent Member already holds under Article 2.

4.2 Institution Member Team

An “Institution Member Team” is a team fielded by, or on behalf of, an entity admitted by CSA as an Invitee under Article 2, or by any other team category permitted to participate under these By-Laws whose fielding entity is not itself a Permanent Member. Participation of an Institution Member Team in a given CSA-Regulated Tournament is at the discretion of the Organizer, provided the team fulfills the eligibility, verification, tenure, and squad requirements applicable to its category under Articles 5 to 7. Institution Member Team status confers no governance or voting rights.

“Corporate Member Team” and “Institution Member Team” are participation-status labels under this Article 4, distinct from the team category labels (e.g., “Corporate Team”) defined under Article 5.

4.3 Corporate Representation and Disclaimer of Branding Responsibility

CSA does not verify, certify, approve, guarantee, endorse, or assume any responsibility for the internal authorisation, sponsorship, consent, branding, naming, or representation arrangements between a team and any Corporate Entity whose name, logo, identity, or brand is used, displayed, or represented by that team.

Participation of any team under the Corporate Team category does not imply, create, or constitute official representation, endorsement, sponsorship, or authorisation by the concerned Corporate Entity.

Each team is solely responsible for:

- securing all internal approvals;
- complying with corporate branding and representation policies;
- ensuring lawful and authorised use of corporate names, logos, and identity; and
- resolving any dispute arising from unauthorised, disputed, restricted, or withdrawn corporate representation.

CSA shall bear no liability whatsoever for any claim, dispute, loss, damage, reputational impact, or legal consequence arising from lack of corporate authorisation, misuse of corporate branding, or disputes between teams and Corporate Entities concerning representation.

CSA's regulatory recognition of a team is strictly limited to eligibility classification and compliance with these By-Laws, and is not a validation, endorsement, certification, or confirmation of any claim of official corporate representation.

Any dispute relating to corporate authorisation, branding, sponsorship, or representation shall be resolved exclusively between the concerned team and the concerned Corporate Entity, without recourse to CSA, and shall not affect tournament eligibility unless eligibility criteria under these By-Laws are independently breached.

Article 5 — Team Categories and Definitions

5.1 Recognised Team Categories

For participation in CSA-Regulated Tournaments, only the following team categories are recognised and permitted, subject to compliance with these By-Laws:

- Corporate Team
- Startup Team
- Educational Institution Team
- Working Professional Team
- Controlled Mixed Corporate Team
- Legacy Institution or Club Team
- Government Institution or Department Team

No team is eligible to participate unless it clearly falls within one of the above categories and satisfies the applicable eligibility, composition, control, and verification requirements prescribed under these By-Laws.

5.2 Team Classification

Teams are further classified into two structural categories:

- **Direct Representation Teams** — Corporate Teams, Startup Teams, Educational Institution Teams, and Working Professional Teams.
- **Composite Representation Teams** — Controlled Mixed Corporate Teams and Legacy Institution or Club Teams.

5.3 Definitions of Entities and Corresponding Teams

5.3.1 Corporate Entity

“Corporate Entity” means any organisation, institution, or body, whether public or private, including companies (public or private, including publicly listed companies and multinational companies operating in India), Public Sector Undertakings, having a minimum of five hundred (500) employees globally and a structured HR function.

Note: Retail shops, sole proprietorships, partnerships, and small trade establishments do not qualify as Corporate Entities, even if registered under GST or PF laws.

5.3.1.1 Corporate Team

“Corporate Team” means a team representing a Corporate Entity, constituted in either of the following forms:

(a) Formally Approved Corporate Team

A team officially authorised, endorsed, nominated, or sponsored by a Corporate Entity, evidenced by any of the following:

- a written authorisation or nomination letter issued by the Corporate Entity;
- official internal or external communication confirming team representation;
- corporate sponsorship confirmation; or
- any other documentation accepted by the Tournament Committee as sufficient proof of official recognition.

(b) De-Facto Corporate Team

A team consisting of one hundred percent (100%) players who are employees of the same Corporate Entity, who collectively represent that entity in practice, where formal institutional approval, sponsorship, or nomination is not feasible, available, or operationally practical.

Safeguards: Absence of formal approval shall not, by itself, disqualify such a team, provided employment verification of all players is satisfactorily established. The Tournament Committee retains full authority to recognise, reject, reclassify, or disqualify any De-Facto Corporate Team where misuse, manipulation, or regulatory evasion is detected.

5.3.2 Educational Institution

“Educational Institution” means any university, college, or autonomous institute that is legally recognised by a competent authority.

5.3.2.1 Educational Institution Team

“Educational Institution Team” means a team consisting exclusively of academic and non-academic staff, or permanent employees, of the same Educational Institution, subject to the age and eligibility regulations prescribed under these By-Laws.

5.3.3 Working Professional

“Working Professional” means an individual who:

- belongs to a statutory or government-recognised profession;
- holds active registration with the relevant statutory or government-recognised professional body; and
- is either self-employed or salaried.

5.3.3.1 Working Professional Team

“Working Professional Team” means a team consisting exclusively of Working Professionals belonging to the same statutory profession and registered with the same statutory or government-recognised professional institute, including, without limitation:

- Doctors (National Medical Commission / State Medical Councils)
- Advocates (Bar Council of India or respective State Bar Councils)
- Chartered Accountants (ICAI)
- Company Secretaries (ICSI)
- Cost & Management Accountants (ICMAI)
- Architects (Council of Architecture)
- Engineers (IEI / AICTE recognised)
- Actuaries (IAI)
- Other statutory professionals approved by the Governing Board

5.3.4 Startup

“Startup” means an entity incorporated in India as a Private Limited Company, Limited Liability Partnership, or registered Partnership Firm, which:

- is not more than ten (10) years from the date of incorporation;
- has not exceeded ₹100 crore turnover in any financial year, and is engaged in innovation or the operation of a scalable, technology-driven business model; and
- is recognised as a Startup by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Government of India.

“Scalability” means the ability of the business to expand users, transactions, or revenue without a corresponding linear increase in manpower, physical assets, or operational costs.

Note: Mere creation or operation of a website, mobile application, or online presence, without demonstrable innovation or scalability, does not qualify an entity as a Startup. Determination of compliance with this Article, including verification of DPIIT recognition, rests with the Organising Authority, whose decision is final and binding.

5.3.4.1 Startup Team

“Startup Team” means a team consisting exclusively of players who are founders, co-founders, directors, partners, or full-time employees of the same Startup.

5.3.5 Controlled Mixed Corporate Team

“Controlled Mixed Corporate Team” means a composite team formed by combining players from more than one Corporate Entity (each qualifying under Article 5.3.1), permitted only where:

- a single Corporate Team cannot be fielded due to manpower constraints; and
- all team composition caps, player-category ceilings, and competitive balance regulations are strictly complied with.

Safeguards: Such teams shall not aggregate elite or dominant players for competitive advantage. The Tournament Committee retains absolute discretion to approve, restrict, restructure, or reject such teams.

Rationale: This is an exception category designed to enable participation where single corporates lack sufficient players, without diluting tournament credibility or enabling proxy teams.

5.3.6 Legacy Institution or Club

“Legacy Institution or Club” means a registered sports club, association, society, or trust that:

- has a continuous operational existence of not less than twenty-five (25) years;
- possesses a verifiable constitution, registration, and governance structure;
- operates primarily within Cuttack or Bhubaneswar; and
- maintains verified member identity records.

“Legacy Institution or Club Team” means a team representing such an institution or club, consisting of its registered members and players in accordance with its internal constitution.

Rationale: This exception category provides a limited, controlled pathway for historically significant clubs and institutions to participate, without diluting CSA's corporate governance intent.

5.3.7 Government Institution or Department

“Government Institution or Department” means a department, ministry, statutory or quasi-judicial bodies, autonomous body, or other instrumentality of the Union Government, a State Government, or a local government body, recognised as such under applicable law — excluding any Public Sector Undertaking, which is classified as a Corporate Entity under Article 5.3.1.

Rationale: This category exists to permit genuine government departments/ministries — as distinct from Public Sector Undertakings, which are classified as Corporate Entities — to field teams under CSA-Regulated Tournaments, subject to the eligibility and verification requirements under Article 6.10.

Article 6 — Player Source Restrictions, Cross-Category Controls and Anti-Circumvention Rules

This Article governs player sourcing, inter-category movement, employment qualification, and anti-circumvention safeguards across all team categories. These provisions apply strictly and uniformly to preserve fairness, integrity, and competitive balance.

6.1 The Golden Rule: One Player — One Team — One Season

This is the foundational principle underlying all player participation in CSA-Regulated Tournaments. It applies uniformly across every team category, and every other provision of these By-Laws must be read subject to it.

The Golden Rule

A player may represent only one team, in one category, for one Season, across all CSA-Regulated Tournaments.

A player who has represented a team in a Season may not represent any other team in that same Season, except strictly as permitted under Clause 6.1.2 (Mid-Season Resignation Exception) or Clause 6.1.3 (Statutory Professional Election).

6.1.1 General Application

- The Golden Rule applies irrespective of team category, and binds Corporate Teams, Startup Teams, Educational Institution Teams, Working Professional Teams, Controlled Mixed Corporate Teams, and Legacy Institution or Club Teams alike.
- A player's category election for a Season is exclusive and, save for the exceptions below, irrevocable once the Season commences.

6.1.2 Mid-Season Resignation Exception

Notwithstanding the Golden Rule, where a player genuinely resigns from, or otherwise ceases their employment, engagement, or membership with, the entity, institution, profession, or club they represented, that player may register and represent their new employer's or institution's team for the remainder of that Season, subject to all of the following conditions:

- the resignation or cessation is genuine, voluntary, and independently verifiable, and is not a device to circumvent eligibility, composition, or anti-circumvention rules;
- the player satisfies, in full, the eligibility, verification, and tenure requirements of the new team's category (tenure requirements, where applicable, being assessed prospectively from the date of joining the new entity, subject to any waiver expressly granted by the Tournament Committee for this purpose);
- the player is withdrawn from the squad and Playing Squad of the original team with effect from the date of resignation;

- the player registers with only one new team for the remainder of that Season — a player may switch teams once, and only once, per Season under this exception; and
- the transfer is reported to, and approved by, CSA prior to the player turning out for the new team.

For the avoidance of doubt, this exception is an application of, and not a departure from, the Golden Rule: at no point during the Season does the player simultaneously represent, or remain eligible to represent, more than one team.

Note: This clause operates alongside, and does not narrow, the general restrictions on mid-tournament transfers and replacements set out in Article 7.5.

6.1.3 Statutory Professional Election

A salaried employee who also qualifies as a Working Professional under Article 5.3.3 may, prior to the commencement of the Season, elect to participate either as a Corporate Player representing their employing Corporate Entity, or as a Working Professional representing their statutory profession. Such election is exclusive, Season-bound, and irrevocable upon commencement of the tournament; upon making the election, the player is strictly prohibited, for that Season, from changing team category or representing any other team or category, except as permitted under Clause 6.1.2.

6.2 Corporate Teams — Player Source Restrictions

- Only full-time or fixed-term permanent employees of the same Corporate Entity are eligible for inclusion in a Corporate Team squad.
- The following shall not be considered employees for the purpose of squad formation:
 - third-party vendor or outsourced personnel;
 - consultants, freelancers, or retainers;
 - part-time, contractual, or temporary workers not on the employer's payroll; and
 - proxy, sponsored, or borrowed players.

Where a Corporate Entity participates as a Corporate Team in a CSA-Regulated Tournament, every employee of that Corporate Entity is, for that tournament, ineligible to represent any other team category — including a Startup Team, a Controlled Mixed Corporate Team, an Educational Institution Team, or a Legacy Institution or Club Team — regardless of whether that employee is registered on the Corporate Team's squad. This bar operates at the level of the Corporate Entity's participation, not at the level of individual player registration, and the only permitted alternative is a Statutory Professional Election under Clause 6.1.3, made prior to the Season and subject to Article 5.3.3.

Note: For example, if Infosys participates in a tournament as a Corporate Team, no employee of Infosys — whether or not registered on Infosys's Corporate Team squad — may represent a Controlled Mixed Corporate Team or a Legacy Institution or Club Team in that same tournament. An employee of a Corporate Entity that does not itself field a Corporate Team in the tournament is not barred by this clause, and may be eligible for a Controlled Mixed Corporate Team, subject to Article 6.6.

6.2.1 CSA-Approved Entity Exception

Notwithstanding Article 6.2, a Corporate Entity may apply to CSA for a limited exception permitting a specified employee, or class of employees, to represent a Controlled Mixed Corporate Team or a Legacy Institution or Club Team notwithstanding the Corporate Entity's own participation as a Corporate Team, where the Corporate Entity demonstrates a genuine business basis for the exception — such as a distinct subsidiary, division, or joint venture with separate management and reporting structures. Any such exception shall be granted only where:

- the Corporate Entity submits a written application to CSA identifying the employee(s), the subsidiary/division/joint venture structure relied upon, and supporting documentation (e.g., separate incorporation, separate payroll, or separate management reporting);
- CSA is satisfied that the structure is genuine and not created or invoked to circumvent Article 6.2;
- the exception is granted in writing, in advance of the Season, and is specific to the tournament and Season for which it is sought; and
- the exception does not, in CSA's assessment, undermine the participation ceiling under Article 8 or the anti-circumvention safeguards under Article 6.7.2.

CSA's decision on any such application is final and non-appealable.

6.3 Educational Institution Teams — Player Source Restrictions

Only currently enrolled academic and non-academic staff, and permanent non-teaching employees, of the same Educational Institution are eligible for squad inclusion. The following shall not be considered employees or institutional representatives for the purpose of squad formation:

- students and alumni;
- third-party vendor or outsourced personnel;
- consultants, freelancers, or retainers;
- part-time, contractual, or temporary staff not on the institution's rolls; and
- proxy, sponsored, or borrowed players.

A player registered under the Educational Institution Team category shall not be eligible to participate in any other team category during the same Season, except as a Working Professional, subject to Article 5.3.3 and Clause 6.1.3.

6.4 Working Professional Teams — Player Source Rules and Category Lock-in

Working Professional Teams may consist exclusively of individuals belonging to the same statutory profession and holding active registration with the same statutory or government-recognised professional body, irrespective of their employer, industry, or institutional affiliation. Accordingly, such teams may include players who are otherwise salaried employees of Corporate Entities or Educational Institutions, or self-employed professionals.

6.4.1 Seasonal Category Opt-in

Any salaried employee seeking classification as a Working Professional shall, prior to tournament commencement, expressly opt in to be classified as a Working Professional for that Season. This opt-in overrides any corporate employment classification for the entire Season.

6.4.2 Category Lock-in and Exclusivity

Once a player is verified and classified as a Working Professional for a Season, that player shall not represent any Corporate Team, Startup Team, Educational Institution Team, Controlled Mixed Corporate Team, or Legacy Institution or Club Team during that Season, and shall not change team category mid-season under any circumstances (save as permitted under Clause 6.1.2). This lock-in applies irrespective of changes in employment, professional status, or organisational affiliation occurring during the Season.

6.5 Startup Teams — Player Source Restrictions

Only founders, co-founders, directors, partners, and full-time employees of the same Startup are eligible for squad formation. The following shall not be considered employees for the purpose of squad formation:

- third-party vendor or outsourced personnel;
- consultants, freelancers, or retainers;
- part-time or contractual workers not on the employer's rolls; and
- proxy, sponsored, or borrowed players.

Recent hires with less than six (6) months' work experience with the Startup are strictly disallowed, to prevent opportunistic or proxy team formation. Startup Teams shall not, directly or indirectly, source players from any other team category.

6.6 Controlled Mixed Corporate Teams — Player Source and Composition Restrictions

Controlled Mixed Corporate Teams may consist of employees drawn from multiple Corporate Entities, subject to Tournament Committee approval. The following shall not be considered employees for the purpose of squad formation:

- third-party vendor or outsourced personnel;
- consultants, freelancers, or retainers;
- part-time or contractual workers not on the employer's rolls; and
- proxy, sponsored, or borrowed players.

Such teams shall not, directly or indirectly, source players from any other team category. Recent hires with less than six (6) months' tenure are strictly disallowed, to prevent opportunistic team formation.

An employee of a Corporate Entity that itself participates as a Corporate Team in the tournament is ineligible for inclusion in a Controlled Mixed Corporate Team squad, under Article 6.2. Only employees of Corporate Entities that do not field their own Corporate Team in that tournament may be drawn upon.

Squad size shall be as per the Tournament Allowance prescribed by the Organizer for the tournament, and shall in no event exceed twenty (20) players.

6.7 Legacy Institution or Club Teams — Membership and Source Restrictions

Only registered members of the Legacy Institution or Club are eligible for tournament participation. Recently admitted members are strictly disallowed, to prevent opportunistic or proxy team formation; every player shall have been a registered member of the club or institution for a minimum of twelve (12) months. Such teams shall not, directly or indirectly, source players from any other team category.

An employee of a Corporate Entity that itself participates as a Corporate Team in the tournament is, under Article 6.2, absolutely ineligible for inclusion in a Legacy Institution or Club Team squad, whether or not that employee is registered on the Corporate Team's squad.

Squad size shall be as per the Tournament Allowance prescribed by the Organizer for the tournament, and shall in no event exceed twenty (20) players.

6.7.1 Outside-Stakeholder Exception (Tournament Committee Approval)

The Legacy Institution or Club category exists, in part, to give such clubs room to organise and to engage outside stakeholders — patrons, affiliated partners, or sponsor-nominated members — in the course of running the club. Accordingly, the Tournament Committee may, in its discretion, approve the inclusion of a member who has not completed the minimum twelve (12)-month membership tenure, where such admission reflects a genuine organisational or stakeholder relationship of the club, subject to all of the following:

- the club submits a written application to the Tournament Committee identifying the member and explaining the organisational or stakeholder relationship relied upon;
- the Tournament Committee is satisfied that the admission is not primarily for the purpose of tournament participation;
- not more than two (2) such approved members may be included in a Legacy Institution or Club Team's squad in any Season; and
- CSA's prior written approval is obtained, in addition to the Tournament Committee's recommendation.

This exception is narrow, discretionary, and does not dilute the twelve (12)-month tenure requirement as the default rule.

6.7.2 Anti-Circumvention Safeguards for Legacy Institution or Club Teams

Because the Legacy Institution or Club category is verified through club membership rather than corporate payroll, it is the category most susceptible to being used as a backdoor for corporate participation. The following safeguards apply specifically to this category, in addition to the Universal Anti-Circumvention Rule under Article 6.9:

- No Corporate Entity, or any person or entity acting on its behalf, may sponsor, fund, control, or otherwise influence a Legacy Institution or Club Team in a manner that enables the team to function, in substance, as a de facto extension of that Corporate Entity.
- This clause applies primarily to Corporate Entities that do not themselves field a Corporate Team in the tournament (whose employees are not already absolutely barred under Article 6.2). Where more than twenty percent (20%) of a Legacy Institution or Club Team's declared squad consists of individuals who are current employees of, or were employed within the preceding twelve (12) months by, the same such Corporate Entity, the squad shall be presumed to be a circumvention device, rebuttable only by clear evidence of genuine, independent club membership predating such employment.
- Corporate sponsorship of a Legacy Institution or Club Team, where permitted, shall be limited to financial or branding support and shall not extend to team selection, squad composition, or player recruitment, which shall remain within the exclusive governance of the club's own membership and management.
- A Legacy Institution or Club Team found to be substantially controlled, directed, or recruited by a Corporate Entity shall, at CSA's discretion, be reclassified as a Controlled Mixed Corporate Team (and made subject to that category's rules), or disqualified, under Article 6.9.

6.8 Eligibility Restriction for State/National Players, Sports Quota Recruits, and Coaches

This clause imposes an additional, category-independent eligibility restriction applicable to specific classes of individuals, over and above the category-wise restrictions set out in Clauses 6.2 to 6.7 and 6.10.

6.8.1 Definitions

“State/National Player” means a player who:

- has represented any State or Union Territory in an official National Championship, National Games, or any equivalent competition organised or recognised by the respective National Sports Federation, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), or any other recognised apex governing body of the sport concerned; or
- has represented India in any official international competition recognised by the respective International Federation or the Government of India.

“Sports Quota Recruit” means an individual recruited or employed by a Corporate Entity, Educational Institution, or other participating entity on the basis of a sports quota or similar sports-recruitment scheme.

“Coach” means the individual designated by their employer as its coach, responsible for coaching, team strategy, player management, and on-field/sideline guidance, and registered as such with the Organizer.

6.8.2 Ineligibility

Eligibility Restriction — State/National Players, Sports Quota Recruits, and Coaches

A State/National Player, a Sports Quota Recruit, and any individual serving as a Coach shall not be eligible to represent or participate in CSA-Regulated Tournaments in the sport concerned, unless expressly permitted under the Tournament Regulations.

This ineligibility shall continue until the individual attains the age of forty-five (45) years. For a State/National Player or a Sports Quota Recruit only, this ineligibility shall alternatively lapse upon the expiry of twenty (20) years of inactivity — that is, twenty (20) continuous years during which the individual has neither represented the State, Union Territory, or India in the manner described in Clause 6.8.1, nor otherwise been selected, registered, or fielded for any such representative honour, or has not held Sports Quota Recruit status — reckoned from the date the individual last so represented, was so selected, or last held such status, whichever of the age or inactivity thresholds occurs earlier.

6.8.3 Scope

- This restriction applies irrespective of the team category (Corporate, Educational Institution, Working Professional, Startup, Controlled Mixed Corporate, Legacy Institution/Club, or Government Institution or Department) under which the individual would otherwise seek to represent or participate, and applies to a Coach regardless of which team's Coach they are registered as.
- Where an individual qualifies as a State/National Player in a sport different from the one in which they seek to participate, the Tournament Committee shall determine applicability on a case-by-case basis, having regard to the level of skill transfer and competitive advantage involved.
- This restriction is in addition to, and does not dilute, any other eligibility, verification, or tenure requirement applicable to the individual's team category.

6.8.4 Rationale

This restriction exists to preserve competitive balance — between teams fielding State/National Players, Sports Quota Recruits, or high-experience Coaches, and teams without such access — by permitting such individuals to participate or serve only once they have aged out of peak competitive advantage or have been sufficiently long removed from representative-level competition.

6.8.5 Declaration and Verification

Every player shall declare their State/National Player or Sports Quota Recruit status, and every team shall declare its Coach's date of birth, as part of squad declaration under Article 7.4, together with proof of date of birth and, where applicable, the date last represented or last held such status. Concealment or misrepresentation shall constitute a serious integrity breach, attracting sanctions under Articles 6.9 and 10.

6.9 Universal Anti-Circumvention Rule

No team or player shall adopt any device, arrangement, or artificial classification for the purpose of circumventing eligibility, composition, or participation rules. The Tournament Committee retains absolute discretion to:

- reject or cancel player registrations;
- reclassify teams, or disqualify players or teams; and
- impose sanctions, where any circumvention, misrepresentation, or manipulation is detected.

The burden of proving eligibility lies entirely on the Team and the Player concerned, and not on CSA.

6.10 Government Institution or Department Teams — Player Source Restrictions

Only regular employees or officials of the same Government Institution or Department — whether permanent, temporary, or currently posted on deputation to that entity — are eligible for inclusion in a Government Institution or Department Team squad. The following shall not be considered employees or officials for the purpose of squad formation:

- contractual or outsourced personnel not on the entity's sanctioned strength;
- consultants or retainers;
- interns or trainees not on regular service; and
- proxy, sponsored, or borrowed players.

Where a Government Institution or Department fields a Government Institution or Department Team in a tournament, every employee or official of that entity is, for that tournament, ineligible to represent any other team category, whether or not registered on that squad — mirroring the entity-wide lock under Article 6.2 — save via a Statutory Professional Election under Clause 6.1.3.

Squad size shall be as per the Tournament Allowance prescribed by the Organizer for the tournament; no numerical limit applies if the Organizer does not prescribe one.

Article 7 — Verification, Squad and Integrity Control Framework

7.1 Scope of Verification and Exclusion of Corporate Authorisation

Verification under this Article is strictly limited to:

- eligibility classification;
- employment or institutional affiliation;
- statutory professional registration;
- tenure validation; and
- integrity compliance for tournament participation.

7.2 Core Verification Principles

Every player participating in a CSA-Regulated Tournament shall be genuinely affiliated with the entity, institution, profession, or club they represent, and capable of independent verification to the satisfaction of CSA.

7.2.1 Corporate Teams and Educational Institution Teams

This verification framework applies uniformly to Corporate Teams and Educational Institution Teams. Each player shall be a full-time or fixed-term employee of the concerned entity or institution, verified through any one or more of the following:

- an employer-verified professional profile (including LinkedIn or equivalent);
- PF or ESI enrolment linked to the employer or institution;
- official HR or administrative certification issued by the employer or institution; or
- any additional employment document expressly required by CSA.

7.2.2 Working Professional Teams

Each player representing a Working Professional Team shall be verified exclusively on the basis of active statutory or professional registration, and shall submit at least one of the following:

- a valid professional identity card or registration certificate issued by a statutory or government-recognised professional body;
- proof of active membership with the relevant professional institute or council; or
- a publicly verifiable professional profile evidencing current professional engagement, subject to CSA verification.

7.2.2.1 Professional Opt-in Declaration

Any salaried employee seeking classification as a Working Professional shall, in addition to professional verification, submit a Seasonal Category Election Declaration confirming that the player:

- voluntarily elects to participate as a Working Professional for the relevant Season;
- waives all rights to participate in any Corporate Team or other category during that Season (save as permitted under Clause 6.1.2); and
- understands that such election is exclusive, final, and irrevocable upon tournament commencement.

7.2.2.2 Default Classification Rule

In the absence of a valid and timely Election Declaration, a salaried professional shall be deemed classified as a Corporate Employee and eligible only under the Corporate Team category. Any misrepresentation, concealment, or manipulation of professional or employment status constitutes a serious integrity breach, attracting sanctions under Articles 6.9 and 10.

7.2.3 Startup Teams

Each player representing a Startup Team shall be a founder or full-time employee of the Startup and shall satisfy all of the following:

- continuous association with the Startup for a minimum of six (6) months immediately preceding tournament commencement;
- an employer-verified professional profile (including LinkedIn or equivalent); and
- PF or ESI enrolment or equivalent statutory employment proof.

7.2.4 Controlled Mixed Corporate Teams

Each player in a Controlled Mixed Corporate Team shall:

- qualify individually as a Corporate Employee under Articles 5.3.1 and 5.3.1.1;
- have completed a minimum continuous tenure of six (6) months with their respective Corporate Entity; and
- submit verification documents applicable to Corporate Employees.

7.2.5 Legacy Institutions and Clubs

Each player representing a Legacy Institution or Club shall:

- be a registered member of the club or institution for a minimum of twelve (12) months, save where an outside-stakeholder exception has been approved under Article 6.7.1;
- submit a valid membership card or equivalent official record; and
- appear in the club's verified membership registry.

Guest players, temporary members, and tournament-specific inductees are not eligible for verification.

7.2.6 State/National Player, Sports Quota Recruit, and Coach Declaration

In addition to the category-specific verification above, every player shall submit the declaration required under Article 6.8.5 confirming whether they qualify as a State/National Player or a Sports Quota Recruit under Article 6.8.1, together with proof of date of birth and, where applicable, the date on which the player last represented their State, Union Territory, or India, or last held such recruitment status. Every team shall similarly declare its Coach's date of birth as part of squad declaration. Where the restriction under Article 6.8 applies, the age and, where applicable, period of inactivity of the individual concerned shall be independently verified before that individual is included in any squad, Playing Squad, or registered as Coach.

7.2.7 Government Institution or Department Teams

Each player representing a Government Institution or Department Team shall be a regular employee or official of the concerned entity (including those on deputation to it), verified through any one or more of the following:

- a valid service identity card or equivalent official credential;
- GPF, NPS, or other statutory service proof; or
- a sanctioned-post confirmation letter issued by the department.

7.3 Tenure and Anti-Opportunism Controls

- Where tenure requirements are prescribed for a team category, such tenure must be continuous and immediately preceding the tournament commencement date.
- Recent hires or members inducted primarily for tournament participation are strictly disallowed in categories subject to enhanced integrity controls.
- Any misrepresentation of tenure, affiliation, or professional status constitutes a serious integrity breach under these By-Laws.

7.4 Squad Declaration: General Principles

- Each team shall submit a squad declaration in the manner and timeline prescribed by CSA or the tournament Organizer.
- The Golden Rule — One Player, One Team, One Season (Article 6.1) — applies across all CSA-Regulated Tournaments, irrespective of category.

7.5 Additions, Replacements, and Transfers

- Unless expressly restricted, squad additions and replacements may be permitted mid-Season, subject to verification and CSA approval.
- Mid-tournament transfers between teams are prohibited, except in cases of: verified cessation of employment or membership (including the Mid-Season Resignation Exception under Article 6.1.2); verified termination of professional registration; or exceptional circumstances approved by CSA.
- Replacements shall not be used as a mechanism to introduce ineligible or opportunistic players.

7.6 Differential Squad Regulation Matrix

“Tournament Allowance” means the squad size for a team, for a given tournament, as expressly prescribed by the Organizer under Clause 9.1.2 of Schedule 1. Where the Organizer does not expressly prescribe a squad size, the Tournament Allowance for that team shall be treated as unrestricted, subject to the fixed maximums set out below for exception-based categories.

Corporate Teams, Educational Institution Teams, and Working Professional Teams are recognised as inherently verifiable and institutionally accountable categories, with stable employment or statutory affiliation. Accordingly, squad size for these categories follows the Tournament Allowance, and no numerical squad limit is imposed if the Organizer does not expressly prescribe one, subject always to verification and integrity requirements.

Startup Teams, Controlled Mixed Corporate Teams, and Legacy Institutions & Clubs are permitted only as exception-based participation categories, intended to promote inclusivity and variety, and are therefore subject to enhanced controls, including squad size limits, tenure requirements, and restrictions on additions. Controlled Mixed Corporate Teams and Legacy Institutions & Clubs follow the Tournament Allowance but are additionally subject to a fixed ceiling of twenty (20) players, which the Organizer cannot exceed even if a higher Tournament Allowance is otherwise prescribed. The category-specific controls are set out below.

Team Category	Max Squad Size	Mid-Season Additions	Replacement Permitted	Min. Tenure	Integrity Scrutiny
Corporate Teams	Tournament Allowance; no limit if unspecified	Permitted	Permitted	Not prescribed	Standard
Educational Institution Teams	Tournament Allowance; no limit if unspecified	Permitted	Permitted	Not prescribed	Standard
Working Professional Teams	Tournament Allowance; no limit if unspecified	Permitted	Permitted	Not prescribed	Standard
Startup Teams	Tournament Allowance; no limit if unspecified	Permitted	Permitted	Minimum 6 months	Very High
Controlled Mixed Corporate Teams	Tournament Allowance, not exceeding 20	Not permitted	Only within declared squad	Minimum 6 months	Very High
Legacy Institutions & Clubs	Tournament Allowance, not exceeding 20	Not permitted	Only within declared squad	Minimum 12 months	Very High
Government Institution or Department Teams	Tournament Allowance; no limit if unspecified	Permitted	Permitted	Not prescribed	Standard

Tenure requirements remain subject to the Article 6 eligibility rules and the Article 7 verification protocols above.

7.7 Verification, Audit and Regulatory Authority

CSA reserves the absolute right to:

- reject any player or team on verification grounds;
- require enhanced scrutiny for exception-based categories; and
- conduct post-approval audits at any stage of the tournament.

For any breach of verification, squad declaration, or integrity norms, CSA may take immediate interim regulatory action, including provisional suspension, provisional disqualification, or match forfeiture, pending final determination under Article 10.

7.8 Non-Creation of Rights

Compliance with this Article enables tournament participation only. It does not confer CSA membership, create governance or voting rights, or establish any entitlement beyond the specific tournament.

Article 8 — Participation Ceiling

Unless otherwise notified:

- Startup Teams shall not exceed 10% of total tournament slots.
- Educational Institution Teams shall not exceed 10% of total tournament slots.
- Government Institution or Department Teams shall not exceed 10% of total tournament slots.
- Non-corporate and non-institutional teams (clubs, professionals, mixed teams) shall not exceed 20% of total tournament slots.
- Within the 20% ceiling immediately above, Legacy Institution or Club Teams shall not exceed five percent (5%) of total tournament slots, or three (3) Legacy Institution or Club Teams per tournament, whichever is lower, given the heightened circumvention risk attached to this category under Article 6.7.2.
- Notwithstanding the individual ceilings above, the aggregate participation of all non-corporate teams — Startup Teams, Educational Institution Teams, Government Institution or Department Teams, and non-corporate/non-institutional teams together — shall not exceed thirty percent (30%) of total tournament slots in any CSA-Regulated Tournament.
- Corporate and institutional Teams shall constitute not less than seventy percent (70%) of total tournament slots.

CSA retains discretion to allocate fewer slots to any non-corporate category to maintain competitive balance and tournament integrity.

Where insufficient Corporate and institutional Teams are available, CSA may, notwithstanding the ceilings above, permit non-corporate participation up to 50% for that tournament only, with the minimum Corporate Team requirement correspondingly and temporarily reduced. Such relaxation is tournament-specific and creates no

precedent or entitlement; at no point may non-corporate participation compromise the corporate-first character of CSA tournaments.

Note: The Participation Ceiling is a regulatory limit, and not a quota or entitlement.

Article 9 — Organizer Obligations

- Organizers shall collect eligibility declarations, conduct preliminary verification, and retain records.
- CSA may audit, direct additional verification, reject teams, or impose corrective measures.
- CSA's determinations on regulatory matters shall be final for tournament purposes.

Article 10 — Sanctions, Enforcement and Disciplinary Framework

10.1 General Principle

All sanctions imposed under these By-Laws shall be proportionate, reasoned, non-arbitrary, and commensurate with the nature, gravity, intent, frequency, and impact of the violation, guided by the principles of fairness, consistency, deterrence, and preservation of sporting integrity.

10.2 Classification of Violations

10.2.1 Minor Violations

Procedural, technical, clerical, or administrative lapses that are non-deliberate, non-deceptive, and non-manipulative, and do not result in material sporting, eligibility, or competitive advantage, nor compromise tournament integrity. Such violations are typically inadvertent, readily rectifiable, and not part of a pattern of repeated or systemic abuse. Illustrative examples (non-exhaustive) include:

- late submission of verification documents;
- clerical or typographical errors;
- incomplete documentation due to oversight;
- minor discrepancies not affecting eligibility; and
- first-time procedural lapses.

An act ordinarily qualifies as a Minor Violation only where absence of intent and absence of competitive impact are clearly established.

10.2.2 Major Violations

Acts or omissions involving misrepresentation, concealment, circumvention, or deliberate non-compliance that materially affect eligibility, fairness, or competitive balance, but do not amount to organised fraud or systemic manipulation. These involve intentional, reckless, or grossly negligent conduct, and may include repeated Minor Violations. Illustrative examples (non-exhaustive) include:

- submission of misleading, false, or materially incorrect information;
- concealment of material employment, professional, or institutional facts (including concealment of State/National Player or Sports Quota Recruit status under Article 6.8);
- use of ineligible players;
- proxy employment arrangements;
- misclassification of team category;
- repeated procedural non-compliance; and
- attempted circumvention of verification mechanisms.

An act constitutes a Major Violation where intent, recklessness, or conscious disregard of rules is established, and material competitive or eligibility advantage is caused or attempted.

10.2.3 Gross Violations

Grave, fraudulent, malicious, or organised acts involving deliberate deception, impersonation, fabrication, conspiracy, or systemic manipulation, which strike at the root of sporting integrity, governance credibility, and tournament fairness. Illustrative examples (non-exhaustive) include:

- fabrication, forgery, or falsification of identity, employment, PF, ESI, or professional records;
- impersonation or fielding of substitute or proxy players;
- organised proxy employment or eligibility rackets;
- systematic team misclassification;
- collusion, conspiracy, or inducement to subvert verification or enforcement processes;
- repeated violations after prior sanction or formal warning; and
- bribery, coercion, inducement, or suppression of material evidence.

An act constitutes a Gross Violation where deliberate fraud, systemic abuse, or organised manipulation is established on the basis of clear, cogent, and convincing evidence.

10.3 Indicative Sanctions

Violation Class	Indicative Sanctions
Minor Violations	Verbal or written warning/advisory; time-bound rectification direction; conditional or provisional participation; administrative penalties.
Major Violations	Match forfeiture; disqualification of player(s); disqualification of team; suspension from one or more tournaments; withdrawal of tournament privileges.
Gross Violations	Immediate and permanent disqualification; multi-tournament or permanent debarment; blacklisting of player(s) and/or teams.

10.4 Determination Criteria

In determining sanctions, CSA shall consider, among other things:

- the nature, seriousness, and gravity of the violation;
- the degree of intent, recklessness, negligence, or mala fide conduct;
- the extent of competitive or eligibility advantage gained or attempted;
- the repetitive or habitual nature of the misconduct, if any;
- the past disciplinary record;
- the level of cooperation during investigation and verification; and
- the impact on tournament credibility and sporting integrity.

10.5 Progressive and Enhanced Sanctions

CSA may impose cumulative, progressive, or enhanced sanctions for repeated, continuing, or aggravated violations, including escalation of penalties for recidivism.

10.6 Residual Discretion and Exceptional Circumstances

Nothing in this Article restricts CSA's authority to impose higher or exceptional sanctions in cases involving systemic abuse, institutional manipulation, organised fraud, or conduct seriously prejudicial to the reputation, integrity, or governance of corporate sports competitions, provided such discretion is exercised in a reasoned, proportionate, and recorded manner.

10.7 Reasoned Orders and Appeal

All sanctions shall be recorded in writing with brief reasons, communicated to the concerned parties, and shall be subject to appeal in accordance with Article 11.

Article 11 — Dispute Resolution

This Article governs the resolution of all disputes, objections, and interpretations arising in connection with these By-Laws and tournament operations, in a manner that prioritises sporting integrity, fairness, and timely completion of competitions. Any dispute involving clubs shall be subject to CSA regulations, finally determined by the CSA Governing Board, and shall not be grounds for challenging CSA's corporate character.

11.1 Internal Resolution Mechanism

All disputes, differences, objections, or clarifications arising out of player eligibility, team classification, verification, match conduct, disciplinary actions, or interpretation of these By-Laws shall be referred to the Tournament Committee for resolution. The Tournament Committee shall adjudicate such matters expeditiously, with due regard to fairness, competitive balance, and tournament continuity.

11.2 Final Appellate Authority

A party aggrieved by a decision of the Tournament Committee may submit a written representation to the Governing Board within such time as prescribed in the tournament regulations. The decision of the Governing Board shall be final and binding on all players, teams, and participating entities.

11.3 No Stay of Tournament Proceedings

No dispute, objection, or representation shall operate to stay, suspend, delay, or invalidate any match, fixture, result, or tournament standing. All participants expressly agree that the orderly conduct, schedule integrity, and timely completion of the tournament shall take precedence over procedural or technical objections.

11.4 Binding Effect

Participation in any tournament governed by these By-Laws constitutes unconditional acceptance of this dispute resolution framework, and of all decisions taken under it.

Article 12 — Schedules and Annexures

This Article governs the legal status, interpretation, and regulatory hierarchy of Schedules, Annexures, and operational guidance documents issued under these By-Laws.

12.1 Schedules

- Schedule 1 — Tournament Regulations comprises tournament-specific operational rules, formats, fixtures, timelines, match conditions, and procedural requirements issued by the Tournament Organizer.
- Tournament Regulations shall operate strictly within the framework of these By-Laws, regulate only procedural and operational aspects of tournament conduct, and shall not override, amend, dilute, or contradict any provision of these By-Laws — particularly those relating to eligibility, team classification, participation norms, verification standards, and anti-circumvention safeguards.
- In the event of any conflict, inconsistency, or ambiguity between the Tournament Regulations and these By-Laws, these By-Laws shall always prevail.

12.2 Annexures

- Annexure I — Eligibility Flowchart, Self-Assessment Checklist, and Frequently Asked Questions — is issued purely as a practical, interpretative, and explanatory guidance document.
- Annexure II — Other Administrative and Operational Definitions.

In case of any inconsistency, conflict, omission, or interpretational doubt arising from Annexure I or II, the provisions of these By-Laws shall prevail absolutely.

12.3 Hierarchy of Regulatory Instruments

Regulatory instruments issued under this framework operate in the following strict hierarchy of authority:

- CSA By-Laws (Articles 1–12) — the supreme and controlling instrument;
- Schedules (Tournament Regulations) — subordinate operational instruments; and
- Annexures (Guidance and Explanatory Materials) — non-binding interpretative aids.

Any instrument, communication, guideline, or clarification inconsistent with this hierarchy is void to the extent of such inconsistency.

12.4 Power to Issue Clarifications and Circulars

The Governing Board and Tournament Committee may, from time to time, issue clarifications, circulars, guidance notes, and operational advisories for the effective implementation of these By-Laws. Such instruments shall be binding for operational compliance, shall not create new rights or dilute existing restrictions, and shall remain subordinate to these By-Laws.

12.5 Non-Derogation Clause

No Schedule, Annexure, clarification, circular, advisory, or operational document shall be interpreted in a manner that:

- weakens eligibility norms;
- permits indirect participation;
- enables proxy representation; or
- circumvents regulatory safeguards established under these By-Laws.

Schedule 1 — Tournament Regulations and Guidelines

Issued under, and subject to, the CSA By-Laws.

1. Purpose

- These Tournament Regulations operationalise the CSA By-Laws and provide a uniform regulatory framework for the conduct of corporate tournaments, across sports, regulated by the Corporate Sports Alliance ("CSA").
- These Regulations are sport-agnostic and apply uniformly irrespective of the sport for which a particular tournament is organised, subject to Clause 1.1A below.
- These Regulations apply to all tournaments conducted, sanctioned, regulated, or enabled by CSA or by any CSA Member.
- These Regulations are subordinate to, and governed by, the CSA By-Laws. In the event of any inconsistency, ambiguity, or conflict, the CSA By-Laws prevail.

1A. Multi-Sport Application

CSA is not limited to any single sport. These Regulations, and the CSA By-Laws generally, apply uniformly across all sports for which a CSA-Regulated Tournament is organised, subject to the following:

- Sport-specific playing conditions (such as format, duration, number of players per side, scoring method, and equipment) are not prescribed by these Regulations and shall be determined by the Organizer for each tournament, consistent with the recognised rules of the sport concerned and Clause 2 below.
- Eligibility, verification, tenure, squad, and integrity requirements under the CSA By-Laws (Articles 5 to 10) apply identically across sports, and shall be read as referring to "the sport concerned" for the tournament in question.
- Where a CSA Member or Organizer conducts tournaments in more than one sport, each sport shall be treated as a separate tournament for the purposes of squad declaration, verification, and the participation ceiling under Article 8, unless CSA directs otherwise.

2. Reference Nature of Regulations and Organizer Discretion

These Tournament Regulations function as reference governance guidelines intended to promote consistency, transparency, and integrity across CSA-Regulated Tournaments. Subject always to compliance with the CSA By-Laws, tournament Organizers may adapt, supplement, or refine operational aspects of these Regulations, including:

- match formats and scheduling;
- playing conditions;
- tournament structure;

- logistics and venue arrangements; and
- administrative and disciplinary processes.

Notwithstanding the above, tournament Organizers shall not amend, dilute, bypass, override, or deviate from the mandatory provisions of the CSA By-Laws, including Article 4 (Team Participation and Non-Membership Status), Article 5 (Team Categories & Definition), Article 6 (Player Source Restrictions, Cross-Category Controls & Anti-Circumvention Rules), Article 7 (Verification, Squad & Integrity Control Framework), and Article 8 (Participation Ceiling). Any Organizer-specific rule, interpretation, or practice inconsistent with these Articles is void and unenforceable to the extent of such inconsistency.

3. Regulatory Authority and Applicability

CSA acts as the regulatory and governance authority for all CSA-Regulated Tournaments. Its role is limited to defining eligibility norms, prescribing integrity and verification standards, ensuring compliance with the By-Laws, and issuing regulatory clarifications where required. CSA shall not interfere with the commercial, sponsorship, or revenue arrangements of tournament Organizers, except to the extent necessary to enforce compliance with the CSA By-Laws.

4. Permissible Team Categories

- Only team categories permitted under Article 5 of the CSA By-Laws may participate in CSA-Regulated Tournaments.
- Tournament Organizers shall clearly declare, in advance, which permitted categories are being admitted for a given tournament.
- Teams shall be classified strictly in accordance with Article 5, read with Annexure I for guidance.
- No team shall be admitted under an assumed, proxy, or misrepresented category.

5. Participation Ceiling and Tournament Composition

- Tournament composition shall comply with the Participation Ceiling prescribed under Article 8 of the CSA By-Laws.
- Tournament Organizers shall ensure that Corporate Teams remain the dominant category, that non-corporate and non-institutional participation does not exceed the prescribed ceiling, and that any permitted relaxation (where corporate participation is insufficient) is expressly documented and justified.
- CSA may require Organizers to revise tournament composition if the ceiling is breached or misapplied.

6. Team Eligibility and Verification

- Each participating team shall submit eligibility documentation in the manner prescribed under Article 5, read with Annexure I.

- Organizers are responsible for collecting eligibility declarations, conducting preliminary verification, and escalating doubtful or disputed cases to CSA.
- CSA has the authority to direct additional verification, reject non-compliant teams, and impose corrective measures.

7. Player Eligibility and Integrity

- The Golden Rule — One Player, One Team, One Season (Article 6.1) — applies across all CSA-Regulated Tournaments.
- Mid-season player transfers are not permitted, except in cases of verified resignation or cessation of employment (including under the Mid-Season Resignation Exception at Article 6.1.2), or other exceptional circumstances expressly permitted under the CSA By-Laws.
- Organizers shall ensure strict compliance with Article 7 of the CSA By-Laws, including background verification and integrity safeguards, and with the eligibility restriction for State/National Players and Sports Quota Recruits under Article 6.8.

8. Tenure Requirements for Mixed Teams

- Mixed Teams, where permitted, shall comply strictly with the tenure requirements set out under Articles 6.6, 6.7, and 7.2 of the CSA By-Laws.
- Organizers shall ensure that tenure eligibility is verified prior to tournament commencement and is not retrospectively relaxed.
- Recent hires may be disallowed only in accordance with the specific limitations applicable to Mixed Teams under the By-Laws.

9. Squad Declaration and Player Limits

- Squad size for every team category follows the Tournament Allowance prescribed by the Organizer under Clause 9.1.2 below. For Corporate, Educational Institution, Working Professional, and Startup Teams, if the Organizer does not expressly prescribe a squad size, there is no numerical upper limit, subject to verification requirements.
- Controlled Mixed Corporate Teams and Legacy Institutions & Clubs follow the Tournament Allowance but are additionally capped at a maximum of twenty (20) players under Article 7.6 of the CSA By-Laws, irrespective of any higher Tournament Allowance the Organizer may otherwise prescribe.
- Other teams shall declare a final squad within the timelines prescribed by CSA and the Organizer, shall not exceed the maximum squad size permitted under the By-Laws, and shall be permitted replacements only — not additions — after squad finalisation.

9.1 Organizer-Imposed Squad Limits and Regulatory Control Mechanism

Notwithstanding the maximum squad sizes permitted under Article 7.6 of the CSA By-Laws, the Tournament Organizer may prescribe a lower squad size limit for operational, scheduling, or logistical purposes, subject always to CSA regulatory oversight, through the following mechanism:

9.1.1 Master Squad Declaration to CSA

- Each team shall, prior to commencement of the Season, submit to CSA a complete Master Squad List in accordance with the maximum limits prescribed under the CSA By-Laws.
- CSA shall verify all players in the Master Squad List, and shall approve only those who fully satisfy eligibility, verification, and integrity requirements.
- Only players verified and approved by CSA are eligible for tournament participation in any capacity.

9.1.2 Organizer-Imposed Operational Squad Selection

The Tournament Organizer may require teams to submit, from within their CSA-approved Master Squad List, a tournament-specific Squad not exceeding the Organizer-prescribed squad limit for that tournament. Such Organizer-imposed limits shall be equal to or less than the maximum squad limits prescribed under the CSA By-Laws, shall apply uniformly across all teams within the same category, and shall be purely operational — they shall not dilute CSA eligibility, verification, or integrity standards.

9.1.3 Additions, Alterations, and Regulatory Approval

No addition, substitution, replacement, or alteration to either the CSA-approved Master Squad List, or the Organizer-prescribed Operational Squad, shall be permitted without CSA's prior written approval. Any request for squad modification shall be submitted to CSA with full supporting documentation, shall be subject to fresh verification, and shall be approved solely at CSA's discretion. The Tournament Organizer shall not independently approve any squad change that requires CSA verification.

Note: A player not included in the CSA-approved Master Squad List is ineligible for participation for the entire Season, irrespective of Organizer discretion, exceptional circumstances, or logistical necessity.

9.1.4 Regulatory Supremacy

In all matters relating to squad composition, eligibility, verification, and player integrity, CSA's approval prevails over any operational requirement or administrative discretion exercised by the Tournament Organizer.

10. Legacy Institutions and Clubs

- Legacy Institutions and Clubs are governed strictly by Articles 5, 6.7, and 7 of the CSA By-Laws, read with Annexure I for guidance.
- Organizers shall ensure that such participation remains exceptional, that the corporate character of the tournament is preserved, and that institutional eligibility and legacy credentials are verified.
- Organizers shall specifically verify compliance with the anti-circumvention safeguards under Article 6.7.2 and the participation sub-ceiling under Article 8 before admitting any Legacy Institution or Club Team.

11. Dispute Resolution and Enforcement

- All disputes relating to eligibility, classification, or interpretation of these Regulations shall be referred to CSA.
- CSA's determination on regulatory matters is final and binding for tournament purposes, subject to the CSA By-Laws.
- CSA may impose regulatory sanctions, including team disqualification, withdrawal of regulatory recognition, and issuance of corrective directions.

12. Interpretation and Residual Powers

- Any matter not expressly covered under these Regulations is governed by the CSA By-Laws.
- CSA reserves the right to issue clarifications, advisories, or interpretative notes to ensure uniform application of the regulatory framework.

Annexure I — CSA Eligibility Flowchart, Self-Assessment Checklist and Detailed FAQ

This document is issued as Annexure I under the CSA By-Laws and is to be read together with the CSA By-Laws and the Tournament Regulations. It is intended to provide practical guidance, reduce ambiguity, and ensure uniform application of the eligibility rules. It is interpretative and explanatory only, and does not override or expand the By-Laws.

Part A — Eligibility Flowchart

Step 1: CSA Membership or Tournament Participation?

- CSA Membership — open only to Corporate Entities (Article 2). All others are not eligible for membership.
- Tournament Participation — proceed to Step 2.

Step 2: Identify the Team Category

Determine the true underlying nature of the team — not its branding or sponsor name. Choose exactly one:

- Corporate Team
- Educational Institution Team
- Controlled Mixed Corporate Team
- Working Professional Team
- Startup Team
- Legacy Institution or Club Team

If the team does not clearly fall into one category, it is not eligible unless the Governing Board grants an express exception.

Step 3: Category-wise Eligibility Check

A. Corporate Team — eligible if: the employer qualifies as a Corporate Entity (≥100 employees and a structured HR function); all players are full-time or fixed-term employees; and no consultants, vendors, contractors, or gig workers are included.

B. Educational Institution Team — eligible if: the institution is legally recognised; all players are teaching or non-teaching staff; and no students, alumni, or visiting faculty are included.

C. Controlled Mixed Corporate Team (exception) — eligible, subject to CSA approval, if: players are drawn from multiple qualifying Corporate Entities (Article 5.3.1); each player has at least 6 months' continuous tenure; no recent hires are included; and squad size follows the Tournament Allowance, not exceeding 20 players.

D. Working Professional Team — eligible if: all players belong to the same statutory profession and are registered with the relevant professional body; and no salaried corporate employees are included unless formally opted in under Article 6.1.3.

E. Startup Team — eligible if: the entity was incorporated no more than 10 years ago; turnover has not exceeded ₹100 crore in any financial year; the entity is engaged in innovation or a scalable, technology-driven business model; it is DPIIT-recognised as a Startup; all players are founders or full-time employees with at least 6 months' tenure; and no corporate, professional, or institutional employees are included.

F. Legacy Institution / Club (exception) — eligible, subject to CSA approval, if: the club/institution has at least 25 years of continuous operation; it has a registered constitution and governance structure; it operates primarily in Cuttack or Bhubaneswar; all players are verified members with at least 12 months' membership (subject to the limited outside-stakeholder exception under Article 6.7.1); and squad size follows the Tournament Allowance, not exceeding 20 players.

G. Government Institution or Department Team — eligible, subject to CSA approval, if: the entity is a department, ministry, autonomous body, or other instrumentality of the Union Government, a State Government, or a local government body (excluding any Public Sector Undertaking, which is classified as a Corporate Entity); only regular employees or officials of that entity (including those on deputation to it) are included; and squad size follows the Tournament Allowance, with no numerical limit if unspecified.

Note: Regardless of category, players who qualify as a State/National Player or a Sports Quota Recruit under Article 6.8 remain ineligible until the earlier of attaining the age of 45 years or completing 20 years of inactivity, unless expressly permitted under the Tournament Regulations.

Step 4: Participation Ceiling Check

Does the tournament composition comply with the Article 8 ceilings, and will inclusion of the team breach the applicable non-corporate limits? If compliant, proceed; if not, the team cannot be admitted.

Step 5: Final Verification

Have all required documents been submitted, has Organizer verification been completed, and has any required CSA escalation occurred? If cleared, the team is admitted; if not, the team is rejected.

Part B — Self-Assessment Checklist (Team Declaration Tool)

Section 1: Basic Information

- Team Name: _____
- Declared Category: _____
- Employer / Institution / Association Name: _____
- Tournament Name & Season: _____

Section 2: Category Confirmation (tick all that apply)

Corporate Team

- ☐ Employer has ≥ 100 employees
- ☐ Structured HR function exists
- ☐ All players are full-time / fixed-term employees
- ☐ No vendors / consultants / contractors

Educational Institution Team

- ☐ Institution legally recognised
- ☐ All players are staff or faculty
- ☐ No students or alumni

Controlled Mixed Corporate Team

- ☐ All players employed by qualifying Corporate Entities
- ☐ Each player has ≥ 6 months' tenure
- ☐ Maximum 40-player squad declared upfront
- ☐ No additions post declaration

Working Professional Team

- ☐ All players from the same statutory profession
- ☐ All players registered with the statutory body
- ☐ No salaried corporate employees included without a valid opt-in

Startup Team

- ☐ Entity ≤ 10 years old
- ☐ DPIIT-recognised as a Startup
- ☐ All players ≥ 6 months' tenure
- ☐ No corporate / professional / institutional players

Legacy Institution / Club

- ☐ ≥ 25 years' operational history
- ☐ Registered constitution
- ☐ Verified member records
- ☐ All players ≥ 12 months' membership (or an approved outside-stakeholder exception on file)

Section 3: Player Integrity

- ☐ Each player represents only one team this Season (Golden Rule, Article 6.1)
- ☐ No unauthorised mid-Season transfers planned
- ☐ Any mid-Season transfer is limited to a verified resignation under Article 6.1.2
- ☐ Replacements (if any) comply with category rules
- ☐ Every player's State/National Player and Sports Quota Recruit status has been declared, and the Article 6.8 age/inactivity restrictions have been checked

Section 4: Declaration

We confirm that the above information is true, complete, and accurate. We understand that misrepresentation may lead to disqualification and regulatory action.

- Authorised Signatory: _____
- Designation: _____
- Date: _____

Part C — Detailed FAQs

This section addresses practical, edge-case, and interpretational questions commonly arising during team formation, verification, and tournament administration. These FAQs are illustrative and not exhaustive, and shall not be relied upon to override or expand the By-Laws; in case of conflict, the CSA By-Laws prevail.

CSA Role, Authority and Regulatory Scope

Q1. Is CSA a sports association or governing body like a national or state cricket board?

No. CSA is a corporate governance and regulatory alliance created solely to regulate eligibility, integrity, and participation norms for corporate-centric tournaments. It is not a sports federation, does not select players, and does not claim jurisdiction over the sport itself.

Q2. Does CSA organise, own, or commercially benefit from tournaments?

No. CSA does not organise tournaments, does not receive revenue, and does not participate in sponsorship or commercial arrangements. Its role is strictly regulatory.

Q3. Can a tournament call itself “CSA-approved” or “CSA-certified”?

A tournament may state that it is regulated under the CSA By-Laws only if it fully complies with the CSA framework. Misrepresentation may invite withdrawal of regulatory recognition.

Q4. Are CSA rules optional guidelines?

No. The CSA By-Laws are mandatory for all CSA-Regulated Tournaments. Tournament Regulations provide flexibility only in operational aspects, not in eligibility or integrity norms.

Q5. If there is a conflict between the Tournament Regulations and the CSA By-Laws, which prevails?

The CSA By-Laws always prevail. Tournament Regulations are subordinate instruments.

Q6. Can Organizers create additional rules?

Yes, provided such rules do not conflict with the CSA By-Laws, do not dilute eligibility norms, and do not indirectly permit ineligible participation.

Multi-Sport Scope

Q7. Is CSA limited to cricket, or does it cover other sports?

CSA is not limited to any single sport. The CSA By-Laws and Tournament Regulations are sport-agnostic and apply uniformly to CSA-Regulated Tournaments across all sports, using the phrase “the sport concerned” wherever a sport-specific application is intended.

Q8. Do the eligibility, tenure, and verification rules change from sport to sport?

No. Articles 5 to 10 of the CSA By-Laws apply identically regardless of the sport. What changes from sport to sport is only the playing conditions (format, duration, players per side, scoring method, and equipment), which Organizers set under Schedule 1, Clause 2.

Q9. If a CSA Member runs tournaments in two different sports, are they treated as one combined tournament?

No. Each sport is treated as a separate tournament for squad declaration, verification, and the participation ceiling under Article 8, unless CSA directs otherwise.

Q10. Does the State/National Player and Sports Quota restriction under Article 6.8 apply the same way across sports?

Yes, but only within the sport in which the individual qualifies as a State/National Player or was recruited as a Sports Quota Recruit. Where that sport differs from the one in which the individual seeks to participate, the Tournament Committee decides applicability case-by-case, as set out in Article 6.8.3.

Team Classification and Category Determination

Q11. Can a team choose a category for convenience?

No. Team classification is determined by the actual employment or institutional status of the players, not by branding, sponsorship, or preference.

Q12. What happens if a team fits partially into two categories?

Such a team is not eligible unless CSA expressly approves an exception. CSA does not permit hybrid or proxy categorisation.

Q13. Can a team change its category mid-tournament?

No. Category is locked for the entire Season once the tournament begins.

Q14. Why are Controlled Mixed Corporate Teams treated more strictly?

Because they combine employees from multiple corporates and therefore pose a higher risk of proxy teams, short-term hiring, or opportunistic aggregation.

Q15. Why is squad size capped for Mixed Teams?

To prevent uncontrolled additions, talent pooling, and the creation of de facto professional teams.

Corporate Employment Eligibility Rules

Q16. Who qualifies as a full-time or fixed-term employee?

An individual on the direct payroll of the employer, with salary paid by the employer and subject to HR policies. Consultants, retainers, vendors, interns, apprentices, and outsourced staff are excluded.

Q17. Are probationers eligible?

Yes, provided they are on the payroll as employees and not engaged through a third-party contract.

Q18. Can an employee on notice period continue to play?

Yes, until the effective last working day. Participation after separation is not permitted, except strictly under the Mid-Season Resignation Exception (Article 6.1.2).

Q19. Are employees on unpaid leave, sabbatical, or long absence eligible?

Yes, provided the employment relationship legally subsists at the time of the tournament.

Q20. Are contract-to-hire or deputed employees eligible?

No. Employees must be directly employed by the declaring entity.

Q21. Can a Corporate Player also represent a Startup Team, a Controlled Mixed Corporate Team, a Legacy Institution/Club Team, or an Educational Institution Team in the same Season?

No, and this bar does not depend on whether the individual employee is personally registered on a squad. Under Article 6.2, once a Corporate Entity participates as a Corporate Team in a tournament, every employee of that entity is barred from representing any other team category in that tournament, whether or not they are registered on the Corporate Team's squad. The only permitted alternative is a Statutory Professional Election under Clause 6.1.3 (i.e., playing as a Working Professional instead, if the player independently qualifies under Article 5.3.3). For example, if Infosys participates as a Corporate Team, no Infosys employee — registered on that squad or not — may represent a Controlled Mixed Corporate Team or a Legacy Institution/Club Team in that tournament. An employee of a Corporate Entity that does not itself field a Corporate Team in the tournament is not barred by this clause.

Tenure and Anti-Proxy Safeguards

Q22. Why is a minimum tenure mandatory for exception categories?

To ensure genuine employment or membership relationships and to prevent last-minute hiring or induction solely for tournament participation. This applies specifically to Startup Teams and Controlled Mixed Corporate Teams (minimum 6 months' continuous employment tenure, Articles 6.5 and 6.6) and to Legacy Institution or Club Teams (minimum 12 months' membership tenure, Article 6.7). Corporate Teams, Educational Institution Teams, and Working Professional Teams do not carry a prescribed minimum tenure. A narrow, Tournament Committee-approved exception for genuine outside-stakeholder additions to Legacy teams exists under Article 6.7.1.

Q23. Can a recent hire be allowed with employer confirmation?

No, for the categories to which the restriction applies. The recent-hire bar is specific to Startup Teams and Controlled Mixed Corporate Teams, where a player must have at least 6 months' continuous tenure with the employer (Articles 6.5, 6.6, and 7.3); employer confirmation of a shorter tenure does not create a waiver. This tenure requirement is mandatory and non-waivable, save for the limited waiver contemplated under the Mid-Season Resignation Exception (Article 6.1.2).

Q24. Can a club add players specifically for a tournament?

No. Only verified members with the minimum prescribed tenure may participate.

Students, Institutions and Academic Entities

Q25. Can students participate in any form?

No. Students, alumni, research scholars, interns, and visiting faculty are not eligible under the Corporate or Institutional categories.

Q26. Can a university combine staff from multiple campuses?

Yes, provided all campuses belong to the same legal institution.

Q27. Can an institution sponsor a non-institutional team?

No. Sponsorship does not substitute for employment or institutional affiliation.

Working Professional and Statutory Profession Rules

Q28. Can IT professionals, MBA graduates, or holders of private certifications form Professional Teams?

No, unless the profession is governed by a recognised statutory body approved by CSA.

Q29. Can freelancers or self-employed individuals participate?

Only under Working Professional Teams, and only if governed by a statutory body.

Q30. Can retired professionals participate?

Only if they continue to hold active registration with the relevant statutory body.

Q31. What if a player holds dual roles (for example, employee and statutory professional)?

The player must be classified under one participation category per Season and must comply fully with that category's rules.

Q32. Can a Chartered Accountant employed by a company play for a CA team?

Yes — a Working Professional is classified under one category per Season, either as a Corporate Player or as part of a Working Professional Team, but not both.

Startup and Emerging Entity Teams

Q33. Why are Startup Teams restricted despite being companies?

Because startups typically have small headcounts and a higher risk of temporary hiring or proxy participation. Their inclusion is intended for diversity, not dominance.

Q34. Can a startup employee instead play for a Corporate Team?

Only if the startup independently qualifies as a Corporate Entity under Article 5.3.1.

Legacy, Club and Community Participation

Q35. Why is Legacy participation geographically limited?

To preserve local sporting heritage while preventing large-scale club dominance inconsistent with CSA's corporate-first intent.

Q36. Can a club add a new member without waiting 12 months, if the member is a sponsor or stakeholder the club needs to bring in?

Only through the narrow Outside-Stakeholder Exception under Article 6.7.1. The club must apply to the Tournament Committee explaining the genuine organisational or stakeholder relationship, satisfy the Committee that the addition is not primarily for tournament participation, keep such additions to a maximum of two players per squad per Season, and obtain CSA's prior written approval. This is a discretionary exception, not a general relaxation of the 12-month tenure rule.

Q37. Can a Corporate Entity fund or effectively control a Legacy Institution or Club Team to field its employees without going through the Corporate Team category?

No, and there are two layers of protection. First, if the Corporate Entity itself fields a Corporate Team in the tournament, all of its employees are absolutely barred from the Legacy team under Article 6.2, regardless of squad registration. Second, for a Corporate Entity that does not field its own Corporate Team, Article 6.7.2 still applies: it may not sponsor, fund, or control a Legacy team so that it functions as a disguised extension of itself, and if more than 20% of a Legacy squad consists of current (or, within the preceding 12 months, former) employees of that same Corporate Entity, the squad is presumed to be a circumvention device, and the team may be reclassified as a Controlled Mixed Corporate Team or disqualified.

Q38. Is there a separate cap on how many Legacy Institution or Club Teams can participate in a tournament?

Yes. In addition to the general 20% ceiling on non-corporate/non-institutional teams under Article 8, Legacy Institution or Club Teams are separately capped at 5% of total tournament slots, or three teams per tournament, whichever is lower — reflecting the higher circumvention risk this category carries compared to other exception categories.

Player Participation Limits and Squad Rules

Q39. What does the Golden Rule — “One Player, One Team, One Season” — mean?

A player may represent only one team across all CSA-Regulated Tournaments in a given Season, regardless of category, except strictly as permitted under the Mid-Season Resignation Exception (Article 6.1.2) or the Statutory Professional Election (Article 6.1.3).

Q40. A player resigns from their employer mid-season. Can they represent their new employer's team?

Yes. Under the Mid-Season Resignation Exception (Article 6.1.2), a player whose resignation or cessation of employment, engagement, or membership is genuine and verified may register with, and represent, their new team's for the remainder of that Season, provided the new team's eligibility and verification requirements are satisfied and the transfer is approved by CSA. The player may make this switch once, and only once, in a Season, and must first be withdrawn from the original team's squad.

Q41. Does the Mid-Season Resignation Exception allow a player to represent two teams in the same Season?

No. At every point in time during the Season, the player remains eligible to represent only one team. The exception permits a one-time change of team following a genuine resignation — it does not create simultaneous or dual eligibility.

Q42. Are mid-tournament replacements allowed?

Only in accordance with category-specific rules, and only as replacements, not additions.

Q43. Can a player be added after tournament start due to injury?

Only as a replacement, subject to category rules and Organizer approval.

Q44. Is there any restriction on the matchday line-up?

The matchday line-up (e.g., the Playing XI in cricket, or the equivalent fielded/starting line-up in other sports) must be drawn only from the approved Playing Squad. Category eligibility applies equally to the squad and the matchday line-up.

Q45. What is a “Tournament Allowance”?

It is the squad size for a team, for a given tournament, expressly prescribed by the Organizer under Schedule 1, Clause 9.1.2. If the Organizer does not prescribe one, squad size for Corporate, Educational Institution, Working Professional, and Startup Teams is unrestricted. Controlled Mixed Corporate Teams and Legacy Institutions & Clubs remain capped at 20 players regardless of the Tournament Allowance.

Q46. Can an Organizer set a Tournament Allowance higher than 20 for a Controlled Mixed Corporate or Legacy team?

No. The 20-player ceiling for these two categories under Article 7.6 is fixed and cannot be exceeded by any Organizer-prescribed Tournament Allowance.

State/National Players and Sports Quota Recruits

Q47. Who is covered by the Article 6.8 restriction?

Two classes of players: (a) a “State/National Player” — one who has represented any State or Union Territory in an official National Championship, National Games, or equivalent competition recognised by the National Sports Federation, BCCI, or another apex governing body, or who has represented India in an official international competition; and (b) a “Sports Quota Recruit” — one recruited or employed on the basis of a sports quota or similar sports-recruitment scheme.

Q48. When can such a player participate?

Only once the earlier of two thresholds is reached: the player turns 45 years of age, or 20 continuous years have passed since the player last represented their State, Union Territory, or India (or last held sports-quota recruit status) in the sport concerned — unless the Tournament Regulations expressly permit earlier participation.

Q49. How is the 20-year inactivity period calculated?

It runs from the date the player last represented their State, Union Territory, or India, or was last selected, registered, or fielded for such representative honour, and must be an unbroken 20-year period with no further representation of that kind.

Q50. Does this restriction apply regardless of team category?

Yes. It applies irrespective of whether the player would otherwise be eligible under the Corporate, Educational Institution, Working Professional, Startup, Controlled Mixed Corporate, or Legacy Institution/Club category.

Q51. What if the player conceals their State/National Player or Sports Quota Recruit status?

This constitutes a serious integrity breach and attracts sanctions under Articles 6.9 and 10, including disqualification and, in appropriate cases, blacklisting.

Multi-Team, Sponsorship and Naming Rules

Q52. Can corporates field multiple teams?

Ordinarily, no. However, under exceptional circumstances where there are insufficient corporate teams, multiple teams may be permitted, provided each player represents only one team per Season.

Q53. Does team sponsorship affect eligibility category?

No. Sponsorship, naming rights, or branding do not alter eligibility classification.

Q54. Can a team be named after a sponsor while its players belong to another entity?

Yes, provided eligibility is assessed based on player affiliation, not team name.

Q55. Can a Corporate sponsor field players in a sponsored non-corporate team?

No. Sponsorship does not create employment or eligibility.

Verification, Enforcement and Sanctions

Q56. Who conducts verification?

Primary verification is done by CSA. CSA may also conduct audits or direct additional verification.

Q57. Are Organizers required to retain verification records?

Yes. Records must be retained for audit and dispute-resolution purposes.

Q58. What happens if misrepresentation is discovered later?

CSA may impose retrospective disqualification, sanctions, and withdrawal of regulatory recognition.

Q59. Who is responsible for false declarations?

The Team and its Authorised Signatory may both be held accountable.

Q60. What sanctions may CSA impose?

Disqualification, forfeiture of results, blacklisting of teams or players, and withdrawal of tournament recognition.

Q61. Can sanctions apply across tournaments?

Yes. CSA sanctions may apply across all CSA-Regulated Tournaments.

Q62. Can Organizers waive eligibility rules to increase participation?

No. Organizers have no authority to waive CSA eligibility requirements.

Interpretation, Finality and Residual Powers

Q63. Is CSA's decision appealable?

CSA's decision is final for tournament purposes.

Q64. What if a situation is not covered in these FAQs?

The CSA By-Laws prevail. CSA reserves the right to issue binding clarifications, interpretations, and circulars, which form part of the regulatory framework.

Q65. Does past participation create any precedent or vested right?

No. Each Season is assessed independently. Past acceptance does not guarantee future eligibility.

Q66. Can a player represent different categories in different tournaments of the same Season?

No. Category election is locked per Season across all CSA-Regulated Tournaments.

Q67. Can a player opt to downgrade category to gain easier entry?

No. Category classification is determined by objective eligibility, not competitive convenience.

Q68. Can CSA revise eligibility norms mid-Season?

Only in exceptional circumstances affecting tournament integrity, and such changes apply prospectively.

Q69. Does CSA recognition create any commercial rights or obligations?

No. CSA recognition is purely regulatory and does not create any commercial, branding, or revenue entitlement.