

# Football Through My Lens – Competition Guidelines

## About the Competition

Football is more than a game — it's emotion, identity, and community. Football Through My Lens is a national photography competition from UCFB and the National Football Museum, inviting students aged 16–18 to capture what football means to them through a single image.

Selected entries will be showcased at the National Football Museum in Manchester.

## Who Can Enter

- Open to UK residents aged 16–18
- Students in school or college, or home-educated

## The Brief

Submit one photograph that captures what football means to you.

We are not just looking for images of the game itself — we are looking for photographs that explore the passion, emotion and culture that surrounds football, and the role it plays in people's lives.

### Your image might capture:

- The emotion of the game — joy, frustration, anticipation or celebration
- The culture of football — traditions, rituals, identity and belonging
- The community around football — friends, families, local clubs and shared experiences
- The contrast between grassroots and professional football, or the spaces in between
- The everyday places where football exists — from parks and playgrounds to stadiums

### Your photograph should:

- Tell a story

- Feel personal and meaningful
- Show your unique perspective on football

You do not need professional equipment. Strong ideas and storytelling are more important than technical perfection.

## **What to Photograph**

If you're not sure where to start, here are some examples of what your photograph could capture. These are suggestions — you are encouraged to explore your own ideas.

### **People**

- Players, supporters, coaches or referees
- Individuals or small groups connected to the game

### **Moments and Emotions**

- Joy, celebration, anticipation or disappointment
- The small moments that capture the feeling of football

### **Community and Culture**

- Local clubs, teams and shared experiences
- Football traditions, identity and belonging
- Items such as scarves, shirts, stickers or banners

### **Everyday Football**

- Informal games in parks, streets or playgrounds
- Spaces where football exists beyond formal matches

### **The Game Itself**

- Action on the pitch
- Grassroots or professional environments

## **Competition Timeline (At a Glance)**

- Entries open: 1 July 2026
- Deadline: 20 September 2026
- Judging: October 2026
- Showcase Celebration: 26 November 2026 (National Football Museum)

## How to Enter

### Step 1: Complete the entry form

- Name and contact details
- Image title
- Short description (maximum 100 words)

### Step 2: Submit your photograph

- JPEG format (.jpg)
- Submit via email following instructions
- Include your name and exact image title in the subject line

*Entries are only valid once both the form and image are received.*

## Photography Tips

- Try to fill the frame — focus clearly on your subject
- Experiment with different angles and perspectives
- Take photos from different heights
- Look for interesting lighting
- Consider basic edits such as brightness or contrast
- Think about what draws attention in your image

## Prizes

### 1st Place

Student:

- iPad (model and specification to be confirmed)
- 4 tickets to a football match at Wembley Stadium (or equivalent), subject to availability
- UCFB hoody
- Photograph exhibited at the National Football Museum

School:

- £2,000 contribution towards football kit
- Kit must include UCFB branding
- Coaching session delivered by UCFB
- National Football Museum Takeover Day (for up to 120 students)
- Winners' plaque
- Display version of the winning photograph

## 2nd Place

Student:

- £100 voucher
- 2 tickets to a UCFB event
- UCFB hoody
- Photograph exhibited at the National Football Museum

School:

- £500 contribution towards sports equipment
- 2 x facilitated sessions delivered by National Football Museum (max 60 students)
- Winners' plaque
- Display version of the photograph

## 3rd Place

Student:

- £50 voucher
- UCFB hoody
- Photograph exhibited at the National Football Museum

School:

- £250 contribution towards sports equipment
- Self-guided tour of National Football Museum (max 45 students)
- Winners' plaque
- Display version of the photograph

## Additional Recognition

- Shortlisted entrants will be invited to the showcase event
- Additional commendation prizes may be awarded at the judges' discretion

## Full Competition Timeline

**Entries Open:** 1 July 2026

**Submission Period:** July–20 September 2026

**Judging:** October 2026

**Shortlisting & Notification:** Late October / early November 2026

**Showcase Celebration:** 26 November 2026 at the National Football Museum

## **Judging Criteria**

- Creativity and originality
- Storytelling and emotional impact
- Connection to the theme
- Overall impression

## **Permissions and Safety**

- Ensure you have permission from anyone identifiable in your image
- Take extra care when photographing individuals under 18
- Avoid sensitive or private situations without consent
- If unsure, always ask before taking or submitting a photograph

## **Use of Images**

Entrants must ensure submissions are original and that they have permission from identifiable individuals.

Images may be used for exhibition and promotional purposes by UCFB and the National Football Museum.