

Is a premises a legitimate club?

A suggested set of questions that licensing authorities may wish to consider when determining whether or not a premises is a legitimate club

1) Do they have a permit?

If they have a **club gaming permit**, they would be entitled to offer poker for unlimited stakes and prizes and also allow certain bankers games to be played (pontoon and chemin de fer), but club gaming permits may only be issued to members' clubs and miners' welfare institutes.

If the club doesn't have a club gaming permit, they would only be able to offer exempt gaming, which is subject to limits on stakes and prizes. The limits are detailed below.

If they only have a **club machine permit**, they would *not* be allowed to offer the playing of poker for unlimited stakes and prizes, but only exempt gaming, which is subject to limits on stakes and prizes.

The limits for poker stakes and prizes for exempt gaming are:

Stakes

- £1000 per week
- £250 per day
- £10 per person per game

Prizes (money or money's worth)

- £250 per game

2) Do they employ, and can they identify, the designated premises supervisor/gaming supervisor?

Clubs selling alcohol should comply with the code of practice and have a designated premises supervisor/gaming supervisor.

3) How does the designated premises supervisor/gaming supervisor keep a record of:

- Number of games played?
- Number of players playing?
- The amount staked?

Code of Practice for Equal Chance Gaming in Clubs and Premises with an Alcohol Licence states that this must be done to ensure that individual, daily and weekly stake and prize limits are not exceeded.

4) Poker: what is the house take for playing poker?

If the poker takes place in a legitimate members' club and they don't have a club gaming permit, then the maximum participation fee for poker is £1. If they have a club gaming permit, then the maximum participation fee is £3. The house may not deduct a percentage from the pot.

5) Do they have a membership scheme?

Only legitimate clubs qualify for exempt gaming and club gaming permits or club machine permits. Evidence of a valid membership scheme would help to establish whether they are a legitimate club which is permanent in nature. The club must have at least 25 members and be established wholly or mainly for the purposes *other than gaming*, except if the gaming is restricted to bridge or whist.

6) Can they show you the club's constitution?

The same applies here. This would help to establish whether they are a legitimate club which is permanent in nature.

7) Can they show you the members' register?

The same applies here. This would help to establish whether they are a legitimate club which is permanent in nature. The club must have at least 25 members.

8) Does the club sell alcohol? If so, do they have a premises certificate?

Evidence of a valid premises certificate would help to establish whether they are a legitimate members' club or not.

9) What is the primary activity of the club?

Members' clubs may not have the provision of facilities for gaming as a primary activity of the club. The gaming activity must be secondary to the normal activities of the members' club.

10) If they have a club gaming permit, look for the following:

The number and type of machines made available. Clubs with club gaming or club machine permits may only have the following number and types of machines:

- *Club gaming permits*: Maximum of three machines of categories B3A to D, but only one B3A machine can be sited as part of this entitlement.
- *Club machine permits*: Maximum of three machines in categories B4 to D.

The type of games offered. Clubs with club gaming permits may offer the following gaming on the premises:

- equal chance gaming (includes poker and bingo),
- bridge or whist
- only the following bankers games: pontoon, chemin de fer.

Whether the club complies with the code of practice. So they should have a gaming supervisor, check identification, appropriate location of machines, self-exclusion and social responsibility policies etc. Members' clubs which offer gaming must comply with the *Code of Practice for Equal Chance Gaming in Clubs and Premises with an Alcohol Licence* (where they offer equal chance gaming such as poker) and the *Gaming Machine Permits Code of Practice* (where they offer gaming machines under the authority of gaming machine permit).

See also

[Quick guide – Poker in clubs](#)

[Quick guide – Members club or commercial club](#)