

What is a qualifying club?

These are members' clubs that people join for particular social, sporting or political reasons, and which have bought alcohol in bulk to supply its members in this context.

They commonly include Labour, Conservative and Liberal Clubs, the Royal British Legion, other ex-services clubs, working men's clubs, miners' welfare institutions and social and sports clubs.

How to qualify

To be a qualifying club you must comply with the following rules:

- the club must have at least 25 members
- the club must be conducted in good faith
- at least 48 hours must pass between people being admitted to membership, or as candidates for membership, and their admission to the club
- if members are admitted without nomination, the club rules must state they will not be allowed the privileges of membership until 48 hours have elapsed from them becoming a member.

Conditions for supplying alcohol on the premises:

- you must not supply alcohol to members on the premises unless it is on behalf of the club
- an elected committee (made up of club members aged 18 or over) must manage the purchase and supply of alcohol for the club, unless this is managed by the club in general meetings or by a body of members. There is an exemption to this condition for industrial and provident societies, friendly societies and miners' welfare institutions
- no person can receive any commission, percentage or similar payment at the club's expense concerning the purchase of alcohol by the club
- no person can gain a financial benefit from the supply of alcohol by the club to guests or members, except where this benefits:
 - accrues to the club as a whole, or
 - contributes to a general gain for the club.

Good faith

The following factors must be considered when deciding whether a club is conducted in good faith:

- arrangements restricting the club's freedom to purchase alcohol
- whether club rules state that club assets can only be spent for the benefit of the club, or for charitable, benevolent or political purposes
- arrangements for informing members about club finances
- the standard and accuracy of the club's financial records and accounts
- the nature of the premises occupied by the club.

If we are not satisfied that your club is being conducted in good faith, we must give you notice of our decision and the reason for it.

Benefits of being a qualifying club

- nobody needs to hold a personal licence to sell or supply alcohol
- you do not need to appoint a designated premises supervisor
- the police and authorised persons have more limited powers of entry because the premises are considered private and not open to the public
- the premises are not subject to powers of police closure on grounds of disorder and noise nuisance (unless they are being used under a Temporary Event Notice or premises licence at

the time). This is because they operate under strict rules of discipline and rules that are rigorously enforced.

- the premises are not subject to potential magistrates' court orders to close all licensed premises in an area where disorder is happening or expected to happen.