Below is the process and system that I devised for home matches in both domestic and European competition for Dundalk Football Club. This was overhauled from the previous system and has been in place and successful for over 250 home matches, including high profile league clashes and matches across three European competitions - UEFA Champions League, UEFA Europa League and UEFA Conference League.

Accreditation Process for Home Match

Pre-Event Planning:
Determine Accreditation Criteria:

·   Identify the categories of individuals eligible for accreditation (journalists, photographers, broadcasters, etc.).

·   Define specific criteria for each category, such as minimum credentials, affiliation, or previous coverage of the team.

Communication Plan:

·   Develop a communication plan to inform media outlets and individuals about the accreditation process. This is to be sent out before the season and follow-up throughout.

·   Craft clear and concise messages for distribution via email, official website, and social media channels, detailing deadlines and requirements.

Accreditation Portal Setup:

·   Utilise an online accreditation portal to streamline the application process, advertise press email should there be issues with the portal.

·   Customise the portal to capture necessary information, upload credentials, and allow for easy status tracking.

Application and Approval Process:
Opening of Accreditation Window:

·   Open the accreditation portal a predetermined number of days before the home match.

·   Ensure that communication channels are active and monitored for inquiries.

Application Submission:

·   Media personnel submit applications through the online portal, providing necessary details and uploading credentials.

·   Automated confirmation emails acknowledge receipt of applications.

Review and Verification:

·   Press Officer or accreditation team reviews applications for completeness and compliance with criteria.

·   Verify the legitimacy of media outlets and check the credentials provided.

Approval and Denial Notifications:

·   Communicate approval or denial of applications promptly.

·   Provide reasons for denials and instructions for rectification if applicable.

Accreditation Material Preparation:

Pass Design and Printing:

·   Design visually distinct accreditation passes with security features.

·   Print and prepare passes in advance, ensuring an adequate quantity for approved individuals.

Seating Plan:

·   Develop a seating plan indicating designated areas for each category of accredited individuals.

·   Clearly define and communicate seating zones, such as Press Box, Photography Zone, and Broadcast Area.

Information Package:

·   Compile an information package for accredited individuals, including match schedules, venue maps, and any specific instructions.

·   Distribute the package electronically or physically, depending on the preferences of the media personnel.

On-Site Execution:
Accreditation Check-In:

·   Set up an accreditation check-in area outside the stadium or in a designated press zone.

·   Staff the check-in area with trained personnel to assist media personnel and verify identities against accreditation passes.

Issue Passes:

·   Distribute accreditation passes to approved individuals upon successful check-in.

·   Provide a designated area for on-site accreditation support for any last-minute issues.

Media Facilities Access:

· Ensure accredited individuals have access to designated media facilities, including press boxes, interview areas, and mixed zones.

· Communicate any specific protocols or restrictions.

Post-Event:
Post-Event Evaluation:

· Conduct a post-event evaluation of the accreditation process, gathering feedback from media personnel and internal staff.

· Identify areas for improvement and implement changes for future matches.

Documentation and Reporting:

· Document the number of accredited individuals, notable media coverage, and any incidents during the match.

· Generate a comprehensive report for internal use and share key metrics with relevant stakeholders.

Archive Accreditation Data:

· Archive accreditation data securely for compliance and future reference.

· Maintain a record of accredited individuals for historical purposes and future communications.