

# Artificial Rugby Turf : Frequently Asked Questions

## Who is covered by the Regulation?

All those under the rugby jurisdiction of Scottish Rugby. This is potentially a very wide group and includes our member clubs, affiliated schools, club officials, coaches, players and referees.

## Why does Scottish Rugby have a Regulation on Artificial Rugby Turf?

This is primarily a matter of player safety. Our world governing body, World Rugby, has worked with sports turf manufacturers to establish safe standards in respect of artificial pitches being used for rugby. Scottish Rugby is obliged to follow these standards.

## Are all 3G surfaces not safe for Rugby?

No. There are a wide variety of artificial sports surfaces in use and not all of them meet the standard required for rugby. In particular many surfaces do not have a suitable “shock pad” beneath the artificial turf surface.

## Why is the “shock pad” so important for Rugby?

The inherent features of our sport mean that special care is required when e.g. a player is tackled or is being lifted in a lineout. To create a safe environment an appropriate degree of cushioning from the shock pad is very important.

## Why does Scottish Rugby have to approve locations using Artificial Rugby Turf?

Whilst we are obliged to do this under World Rugby Regulation 22, our primary concern is to provide assurance to users that the surface is safe for rugby use. To do this we examine a *Field Test Report* produced by an independent, accredited Test Institute.

## Why does Scottish Rugby only provide “Conditional Approval”?

Scottish Rugby’s conditional approval is based on three distinct areas:

1. The approval period can last for up to two years – we want to be sure that if at any point during this period the pitch ceases to comply with the standard, it will be removed from rugby use;
2. We want to ensure that those using the pitch are clear as to its status for rugby use. We therefore require the operator to erect signage to say that the pitch meets the World Rugby standard and to show the date when it will require to be re-tested to demonstrate continuing compliance;
3. Scottish Rugby participates in World Rugby’s injury monitoring programme. We require that this obligation is passed on to pitch users.

Irrespective of whether the pitch passes its performance tests, unless the operator signs up to the above conditions we will not approve it for rugby use.

## Why is a distinction made between “Contact” and “Non-Contact” Training?

For certain aspects of training the special safety features of an approved artificial rugby turf surface are very important. These include for tackling, scrummaging and lineout practice. For other “non-contact” activities these can often be done safely on almost any surface. **For the avoidance of doubt participants are not allowed to play matches or carry out contact training on any artificial turf surface which has not been approved in writing by Scottish Rugby.**

## **Where can I find a list of approved locations?**

We keep a register of conditionally approved locations on our website.

## **What if the location we are planning to use is not on the Scottish Rugby list?**

Participants may not play matches or carry out contact training activities at this location. You may, however, play touch or tag rugby, or carry out non-contact training.

## **Why do we have to report injuries on artificial turf surfaces?**

This is part of the World Rugby injury monitoring programme.

## **Why do we separately have to report on Serious Injuries?**

The Scottish Rugby *Serious Injury Reporting* regime is important for insurance purposes. The reporting criteria are different from those in relation to artificial rugby turf.

## **What are the consequences if my club plays a match or undertakes contact training on a surface which has not been approved?**

The circumstances may be investigated and the Discipline Manager may decide to initiate misconduct proceedings against you and / or your club.

## **Any Further Questions?**

Please contact Graham Ireland at [graham.ireland@sru.org.uk](mailto:graham.ireland@sru.org.uk) or phone 0131 346 5004.