



# Scottish Rugby

## MATCH APPROVALS AND PERMISSION TO TOUR

---

LEADERSHIP · ENGAGEMENT · ACHIEVEMENT · ENJOYMENT · RESPECT

## FOREWORD

The benefits of participation in sport are widely recognised, not just in terms of health but in building confidence, teamwork and friendships. Scottish Rugby's Values of **Leadership, Engagement, Achievement, Enjoyment and Respect** apply across all areas of our sport, from mini rugby through to our international teams.

We all have a responsibility to look after the participants in our game, with their wellbeing and safety at the centre of everything we do. Scottish Rugby's aim is that everyone who is involved with our sport has a positive experience and goes on to achieve their full potential both within the game and in life.

World Rugby requires that all matches are played with the approval of the Union hosting the match and that any teams traveling to play in other Unions also have the approval of their Home Union. This process ensures that those regulations relating to player safety and insurance are observed and that the game is played in a controlled and regulated manner. Scottish Rugby supports these objectives.

In view of this, Scottish Rugby has adopted the attached Policy and the associated Regulation (*SDR 16 : Match Approvals and Permission to Tour*) on the approval of matches. All those within the jurisdiction of Scottish Rugby are obliged to comply with both the Policy and the Regulation.

To support our Policy and Regulation, we will provide advice and guidance to players, clubs and to the volunteers who are the heartbeat of our game. We will also monitor best practice in this area and will, where necessary and appropriate, update our Policy and Regulation accordingly.

**MARK DODSON**

Chief Executive  
Scottish Rugby

12 July 2023

## CONTENTS

- 2** Foreword
- 4** Policy Statement
- 5** Scottish Rugby Core Values
- 6** Roles and Responsibilities
- 7** Definitions
- 8** SDR 16 : Match Approvals and Permission to Tour
- 12** Contact Us
- 12** Raising a Concern
- 12** Amendment of the Regulation

## POLICY STATEMENT

Scottish Rugby is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all those participating in our sport. In doing so we will adopt policies to enable players to participate in an environment which protects the wellbeing of all players and prevents the game being brought into disrepute.

This is achieved in part by ensuring that all matches are played in accordance with the applicable regulations.

Scottish Rugby has therefore adopted a Regulation (*SDR 16 : Match Approvals and Permission to Tour*) with a view to protecting player welfare and the integrity of the game.

All those under the jurisdiction of Scottish Rugby must comply with *SDR 16 : Match Approvals and Permission to Tour*.

### Key principles:

- Every participant in the game has a responsibility to comply with World Rugby Regulations.

- Scottish Rugby, and all those governed by Scottish Rugby, shall follow best practice in relation to Match Approvals and Tour Permissions.

- Scottish Rugby has adopted a Policy and a Regulation (*SDR 16 : Match Approvals and Permission to Tour*) in relation to the regulation of Match Approvals and Tour Permissions, and the sanctioning of those who might breach this Regulation. This Regulation conforms to World Rugby's Regulation 16 (Organisation of International Matches; International Tournaments; International Tours) including 16.2 (Matches, Tours and Tournaments below National Representative level).

- Scottish Rugby believes that best practice is represented by SDR 16 and World Rugby Regulation 16.

- No rugby football match or tournament, including in relation to any [World Rugby](#) recognised variation of the game, shall take place within Scotland without the approval of Scottish Rugby.

- A team proposing to host a team from another Union, or to visit another Union to play a match or matches, may not do so until they have completed the Permission to Tour process.

- All players, coaches and other team management members must follow the terms of SDR 16 and World Rugby Regulation 16, together with any further guidance published by Scottish Rugby in relation to Match Approvals.

## SCOTTISH RUGBY CORE VALUES

Scottish Rugby is the Governing Body of the sport of Rugby Union in Scotland and promotes these core values from our National Teams through to grassroots rugby.

Our core values are:

**LEADERSHIP**

**ENGAGEMENT**

**ACHIEVEMENT**

**ENJOYMENT**

**RESPECT**

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

To ensure an environment in which all participants can enjoy their rugby, everyone involved in the game must work together. It is EVERYONE'S responsibility to contribute to fair competition and to the wellbeing of players and others involved in the game.

### SCOTTISH RUGBY WILL:

- Develop and publish a regulation in relation to match approvals and permission to tour, *SDR 16 : Match Approvals and Permission to Tour*, and will ensure that the Regulation and any associated guidance is regularly reviewed and updated.
- Require that member clubs comply with the Regulation ~~as part of the Club Investment Fund Standards~~.
- Provide education materials, advice and assistance in relation to the Regulation to players and their clubs.
- Manage and respond to match approval and permission to tour requests, queries and concerns in an efficient and fair manner.
- Take disciplinary action against those who breach the Regulation.

### MEMBER CLUBS WILL:

- Ensure that their players, coaches, officers and other club officials are aware of Scottish Rugby's Regulation *SDR 16 : Match Approvals and Permission to Tour*.
- Ensure that all of their club's players and club officials comply with the terms of the Regulation and any associated guidance.
- Report any suspected breaches of the Regulation.

### PLAYERS, COACHES AND TEAM OFFICIALS WILL:

- Abide by the terms of Scottish Rugby's *SDR 16 : Match Approvals and Permission to Tour* and any associated guidance. In particular:
  - Ensure that any proposed Matches in Close Time, against Scratch Teams or against teams from other Unions are approved by Scottish Rugby in advance; and
  - Ensure that any Proposed matches or tours in another Union are approved by Scottish Rugby in advance.
- Ensure that the game is played in accordance with Scottish Rugby's Core Values.
- Take responsibility for their own welfare and that of other players.

## DEFINITIONS

### CLOSE TIME

Means the period each year during which there is a mandatory break from playing rugby matches for player welfare reasons.

### CLUB

Means any club, team or other body (as the context may require) which participates in a Scottish Rugby National Competition or is otherwise under the regulatory authority of Scottish Rugby.

### DISCIPLINE MANAGER

Means the person, having appropriate knowledge and expertise, who is appointed by Scottish Rugby to act on its behalf in this capacity in matters arising under this Regulation.

### DISCIPLINARY RULES

Means the Scottish Rugby Disciplinary Rules, as issued from time to time by Scottish Rugby.

### MISCONDUCT

Shall have the meaning ascribed to it in Scottish Rugby Disciplinary Rules.

### NATIONAL COMPETITION

Means those Scottish Rugby league and knock-out competitions designated by Scottish Rugby from time to time and listed as such in National Competition Rules.

### PLAYER

Means any person who is named by a Club to participate in a Match.

### SCOTTISH RUGBY

Means Scottish Rugby Union, a company incorporated in Scotland with registered number SC748672 and Scottish Rugby Limited, a company incorporated in Scotland with registered number SC132061, and their successors from time to time.

### SCRATCH TEAM

Shall have the meaning ascribed to it in Clause 9.1 of this Regulation.

### WORLD RUGBY

The international governing body for the sport of Rugby Union.

### WORLD RUGBY REGULATIONS

Means the World Rugby Regulations Relating to the Game, as issued from time to time by World Rugby.

# SCOTTISH DOMESTIC REGULATION 16 : MATCH APPROVALS AND PERMISSION TO TOUR

## 1. POSITION STATEMENT

- 1.1 Scottish Rugby considers that:
  - 1.1.1 every participant in the game has a responsibility to promote an environment which protects the wellbeing of all players and prevents the game being brought into disrepute;
  - 1.1.2 control over the playing of matches is necessary to protect the integrity of the game, its values and its Regulations; and
  - 1.1.3 failure to adequately regulate the playing of matches could bring the sport into disrepute.

## 2. OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 Scottish Rugby is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all those participating in our sport and has adopted policies to enable players to participate in an environment which protects the wellbeing of all players.
- 2.2 Scottish Rugby has therefore developed this Regulation (*SDR 16 : Match Approvals and Permission to Tour*) with a view to:
  - 2.2.1 protecting the wellbeing of all players; and
  - 2.2.2 protecting and promoting the image of the game of rugby football.
- 2.3 These objectives shall be effected through:
  - 2.3.1 facilitating the approval of matches and tours on a structured and timeous basis;
  - 2.3.2 providing effective deterrents to those in breach of Scottish Rugby and World Rugby Regulations; and
  - 2.3.3 protecting and promoting the image and interests of the game, its clubs, teams, sponsors and other stakeholders.

## 3. WORLD RUGBY REGULATION 16

- 3.1 Scottish Rugby acknowledges that it is obliged to comply with those Regulations Relating to the Game issued from time to time by World Rugby.
- 3.2 Scottish Rugby recognises that World Rugby has issued a specific Regulation in respect of the Organisation of International Matches; International Tournaments; International Tours ([World Rugby Regulation 16](#)). Scottish Rugby has adopted [World Rugby Regulation 16](#) within Scottish Rugby's domestic regulations to the fullest possible extent as Scottish Rugby's own domestic regulation.
- 3.3 This, Scottish Domestic Regulation 16, should therefore be read in conjunction with World Rugby Regulation 16 and supplements the provisions of that document.

## 4. APPLICATION

- 4.1 This Regulation shall apply to all persons and all bodies subject to the authority of Scottish Rugby. Those Clubs, Players and other participants in the game under the jurisdiction of Scottish Rugby must observe and comply with this Regulation.
- 4.2 Scottish Domestic Regulation 16 and World Rugby Regulation 16 may be amended from time to time. It is each participant's responsibility to ensure they are aware of the most current version and to comply with them.
- 4.3 Violations of this Regulation shall be dealt with in accordance with clause 10 (Sanctions) below.



## 5. APPROVAL OF MATCHES

- 5.1 No rugby football match or tournament, including in relation to any World Rugby recognised variation of the game, shall take place within Scotland without the approval of Scottish Rugby. Scottish Rugby shall have an absolute right to refuse permission in respect of any match or tournament.
- 5.2 Unless otherwise revoked by Scottish Rugby, approval is hereby granted in respect of any match which:
- 5.2.1 is subject to the National Competition Rules and the date and time of which has been determined and notified in accordance with those Rules; or
- 5.2.2 has been arranged between two or more member Clubs during the playing season and does not conflict with a match within a National Competition approved under 5.2.1 above.
- 5.3 For the avoidance of doubt no member Club or affiliated school shall play a match:
- in Close Time
  - against a touring team in Scotland;
  - within the jurisdiction of another Union on tour; or
  - against a Scratch Team
- without the prior written permission of Scottish Rugby.

## 6. APPROVAL OF MATCHES IN CLOSE TIME

- 6.1 No XV-a-side, ten-a-side or seven-a-side match or tournament shall take place within Scotland during Close Time without the prior written approval of Scottish Rugby.
- 6.2 Scottish Rugby may consider applications for the approval of matches / tournaments during Close Time. In granting any such approval Scottish Rugby shall be entitled to impose such conditions as it deems to be appropriate on a case-by-case basis.
- 6.3 Where any such approval has been granted for three consecutive years, deemed approval may be assumed for the match or event to take place on the same terms, and on a similar date, in future years. Scottish Rugby reserves the absolute right to revoke any such deemed approval without prior notice.
- 6.4 For the avoidance of doubt Scottish Rugby shall have the absolute right to refuse permission to play in Close Time.

## 7. APPROVAL OF OVERSEAS TOUR

- 7.1 No member Club/affiliated school may arrange or fulfil a Tour outwith Scotland without:
- a) obtaining prior written approval from both Scottish Rugby and from the Union(s) being visited;
- b) arranging such travel, medical and other insurance as may be appropriate (and demonstrating the same where requested by Scottish Rugby);
- c) in the case of age-grade teams:
- ascertaining the age banding regulations and law variations applicable in the jurisdiction being visited and obtaining written confirmation from Scottish Rugby that participation under these regulations / laws is acceptable to Scottish Rugby; and
  - Complying with any safeguarding requirements for the Tour as may be determined by Scottish Rugby.
- d) complying with any other conditions or requirements as Scottish Rugby may require.
- 7.2 For the avoidance of doubt Scottish Rugby shall have the absolute right to refuse permission to Tour.

## 8. PERMISSION FOR INCOMING TOURS

- 8.1 No member club/affiliated school may arrange or fulfil a match/tournament involving an incoming team without written evidence from the touring team's Union that it has been granted permission to Tour, and ensuring that such permission has been countersigned by Scottish Rugby.
- 8.2 It shall be a precondition of Scottish Rugby granting permission for the tour that the host club / school has and, where requested by Scottish Rugby, is able to evidence that it has:
  - a) ascertained that the visiting team has such personal accident, travel, health and other insurances as may be appropriate;
  - b) in the case of age-grade teams and players, it has provided the visiting team with a copy of Scottish Rugby age banding and age-related law variations and has obtained the visiting team's written agreement to abide by the same for the duration of their tour to Scotland; and
  - c) complied with any conditions or requirements Scottish Rugby may have set out in granting permission for the incoming Tour.
- 8.3 For the avoidance of doubt Scottish Rugby shall have the right to refuse permission to host any incoming Tour.

## 9 PERMISSION FOR MATCHES INVOLVING SCRATCH TEAMS

- 9.1 For the purpose of this regulation a Scratch Team is one which is neither:
  - a) a team organised by and representing a club in membership of Scottish Rugby or of another [World Rugby](#) recognised Union; or
  - b) is a representative team of a Union recognised by World Rugby.
- 9.2 No member club/affiliated school may arrange or fulfil a match involving a Scratch Team without the prior written permission of Scottish Rugby.
- 9.3 It shall be a precondition of Scottish Rugby when granting permission for the match that:
  - a) the organisers of any Scratch Team participating in the match/tournament have arranged catastrophic injury insurance for its players on a basis acceptable to Scottish Rugby;
  - b) the organisers of the match and any Scratch Team agree to be bound by Scottish Rugby's regulations; and
  - c) the organisers of the match and any Scratch Team agree to comply with any conditions or requirements Scottish Rugby may set out in granting permission for the match.
- 9.4 For the avoidance of doubt Scottish Rugby shall have the right to refuse permission for any match or tournament involving a Scratch Team.

## 10 SANCTIONS

- 10.1 It shall be an offence subject to potential disciplinary proceedings to participate or to encourage others to participate in:
- an unauthorised match or tournament in Scotland, including during Close Time;
  - a Tour outwith Scotland for which permission has not been granted or, where granted, any condition attached to the approval has not been fulfilled;
  - hosting a Tour to Scotland for which permission has not been granted or, where granted, any condition attached to the approval has not been fulfilled;
  - a match or tournament involving a Scratch Team for which permission has not been granted or, where granted, any condition attached to the approval has not been fulfilled; or
  - making misleading or false statements in relation to any application to play in Close Time, any permission to go on Tour or to host an incoming Tour or any application in respect of a match or tournament involving a Scratch Team.
- 10.2 Breaches of 10.1 above shall constitute an act of Misconduct under the Scottish Rugby Disciplinary Rules. Such Misconduct proceeding shall be separate and in addition to any process conducted in respect of the National Competition Rules.
- 10.3 The Discipline Manager (or their nominee) shall investigate potential breaches of the Regulation and, where they determine that there is a case to answer, may either:
- refer the matter to a Scottish Rugby Discipline Committee; or
  - request that World Rugby appoint a Disciplinary Committee to consider the matter.
- 10.4 *Additional Offences* - Notwithstanding anything else in this Regulation, a failure by a player or other person to comply with any requirement or sanction noted in this Regulation, or to assist in the investigation of the same where requested to do so, shall be deemed to constitute a separate and additional act of Misconduct for the purposes of this Regulation.
- 10.5 *Appeals* – The duration and terms of any period of ineligibility and of any other sanction imposed in consequence of this Regulation, may be appealed in accordance with the Appeal provisions of the Disciplinary Rules.

## 11 CONFIDENTIALITY AND PERMITTED DISCLOSURES

- 11.1 Information in relation to potential regulatory breaches must not be disclosed to any person unless expressly authorised under this Regulation. For the avoidance of doubt disclosure to Scottish Rugby is expressly permitted under this Regulation.
- 11.2 Scottish Rugby has agreed to co-operate with World Rugby and other relevant authorities in order to combat breaches of this Regulation and World Rugby Regulation 16. This may include the sharing of intelligence and information in relation to specific cases. Nothing in this Regulation shall prevent or preclude Scottish Rugby or any individual or person from sharing information as to potential breaches with World Rugby or other any appropriate authority.
- 11.3 World Rugby Regulations impose obligations on Scottish Rugby to disclose certain information to third parties, including, without limitation, World Rugby itself. The Discipline Manager (or their nominee) may also require to disclose such information to others for the orderly management of the Regulation and of the game in Scotland. As a condition of their participation, each Club, player and other person agrees to the collection, processing and disclosure of such information (including special category personal information) as may be required to properly implement this Regulation.
- 11.4 Should a player or other person disclose details of any potential act of Misconduct, or where such information becomes known in the public domain other than through the actions of Scottish Rugby, Scottish Rugby shall be free to comment thereon.
- 11.5 On completion of Misconduct proceedings by the Disciplinary Committee, Scottish Rugby may disclose details of the Misconduct and of any sanction applied by the Disciplinary Committee.
- 11.6 Nothing in this Regulation shall prevent Scottish Rugby from disclosing statistical information in relation to match approvals and tour permissions.

## CONTACT US

Advice and further information with regard to SDR 16 : Match Approvals and Permission to Tour may be requested from:

### GRAHAM IRELAND

#### Head of Regulation

Scottish Gas Murrayfield

Roseburn Street

Edinburgh EH12 5PJ

T: ~~0131 346 5004~~

E: [graham.Ireland@sru.org.uk](mailto:graham.Ireland@sru.org.uk)

### RICHARD MCGHEE

#### Discipline Manager

Scottish Gas Murrayfield

Roseburn Street

Edinburgh EH12 5PJ

T: ~~0131 346 5029~~

E: [richard.mcghee@sru.org.uk](mailto:richard.mcghee@sru.org.uk)

## RAISING A CONCERN

Where a concern arises in the relation to a potential breach of SDR 16, or where there is concern that best practice is not being followed, the matter may be referred in confidence to Scottish Rugby Union's Discipline Manager.

## POLICY AMENDMENT PROCESS

Changes to SDR 16 shall be approved by the Scottish Rugby Limited Board.



**SCOTTISH RUGBY**

BT Murrayfield Edinburgh EH12 5PJ | 0131 346 5000 | [scottishrugby.org](http://scottishrugby.org)