



# National Competition Rules

## Season 2026/27

*Applicable to:*

*(Women's) Premiership*

*(Women's) Regional Play Off Series*

*(Women's) Caledonia North Regional League Divisions 1 and 2*

*(Women's) Caledonia Midlands/East Regional League Divisions 1 and 2*

*(Women's) West Regional League Divisions 1, 2 and 3*



# Scottish Rugby National Competition Rules

Season 2026/27

## 1 DEFINITIONS

<b>'Board'</b>	means the Scottish Rugby Club Rugby Board, or any sub-committee of the Board operating under the specific authority of the Board.
<b>'Best Playing Record Calculation ("BPRC")'</b>	means average Competition Points gained in completed Matches multiplied by total Matches possible (e.g. a Club plays in 15 of its 22 possible Matches, achieving 34 Competition Points: BPRC adjusted points = $34/15 \times 22 = 49.86$ ).
<b>'Championship Committee'</b>	means the Scottish Rugby Championship Committee.
<b>'Championship Secretary'</b>	means the person who deals with the day-to-day running of the Scottish Rugby Competitions.
<b>'Club'</b>	means any club, team or other body (as the context may require) which participates in a Scottish Rugby Competition.
<b>'Club Investment Fund Standards' ("CIF")'</b>	means the minimum standards and requirements issued by Scottish Rugby from time to time.
<b>'Competitions'</b>	means the Scottish Rugby league and knock-out competitions designated by the Board from time to time and listed in Appendix 1.
<b>'Competitions Committee'</b>	means a committee elected or appointed to assist in the organisation of an individual Scottish Rugby Competition.
<b>'Competitions Secretary'</b>	means the person appointed by Scottish Rugby to act as Secretary to a Scottish Rugby Competitions Committee.
<b>'Cup' and 'Women's Cup'</b>	means such knock-out competitions as are designated as Scottish Rugby Competitions by the Board and as the context may require.
<b>'Emergency Loan Player'</b>	means a player permitted to participate for a club by virtue of Rules 5.26-5.28.
<b>'Game On'</b>	means the Law variations approved for use in certain Scottish Rugby Competitions, as further detailed in Appendix 2 and on the Scottish Rugby website.
<b>'International Clearance'</b>	means the formal process under World Rugby Regulation 4 and Scottish Domestic Regulation 4.2 (Clearance to Play in another Union) whereby a Player is granted permission by both Unions to change the Union within which they are registered to play.
<b>'Laws of the Game'</b>	means the Laws of the Game as issued by World Rugby from time to time and a reference to a "Law" shall be to that Law as worded within the Laws of the Game.
<b>'Match'</b>	means a match played or to be played in a Competition.
<b>'Player'</b>	means any person who is named by a Club to participate in a Match.
<b>'Playing Enclosure'</b>	means the Field of Play and the Perimeter Area as set out in Law 1.
<b>'Primary League Club'</b>	means the Club which currently holds the Player's registration and is responsible for maintaining all aspects of the Player's registration details.
<b>'Regulations'</b>	means any supplementary regulations provided or approved by the Board in respect of individual Competitions, or generally.
<b>'Rules'</b>	means the Scottish Rugby Competition Rules approved by the Club Rugby Board from time to time.
<b>'Scottish Rugby'</b>	means Scottish Rugby Union.
<b>'Secondary League Club'</b>	means the one additional Club for which a Player is formally registered to play.
<b>'World Rugby'</b>	means the game's world governing body.

## 2 ORGANISATION AND APPLICATION

### The Competition Rules

- 2.1 The Competitions shall be governed by the Rules.
- 2.2 The Rules and changes to them shall be subject to approval by the Board.
- 2.3 The Board may provide supplementary Regulations in respect of individual Competitions (see Appendix 1). The Board reserves the right to amend the Rules and Regulations from time to time.
- 2.4 The Board shall have the power to rectify any error or omission in the Rules and the Regulations in such manner as it deems fit.
- 2.5 In the Rules and Regulations, unless specified or the context otherwise requires, words importing any gender shall include all other genders, and importing singular shall, where appropriate, include plural.
- 2.6 Should any provision of the Rules or Regulations be held by any court or other competent authority to be illegal, void or unenforceable (in whole or in part) the remainder of the Rules and/or Regulations shall continue to be enforceable.

### Championship Committee

- 2.7 The Board shall be assisted in the organisation of the Competitions by a Championship Committee. Membership of the Championship Committee shall comprise:
  - 2.7.1 the Championship Convenor (the "Convenor") who shall be appointed by the Board;
  - 2.7.2 the Women's Competitions Committee Convenor (appointed by the Board);
  - 2.7.3 the Reserve League Committee Convenor (appointed by the Board);
  - 2.7.4 one representative elected in accordance with the Championship Committee Election Rules from each of the following club groups: the Premiership; National League 1; National League 2, 3 and 4; the Caledonia Regional League; the East Regional League; and the West Regional League;
  - 2.7.5 a referees' representative; and
  - 2.7.6 a schools and youth rugby representative.
- 2.8 Subject to Rule 15, the Championship Committee shall have the power to make decisions on all matters arising out of or in relation to the organisation, control and management of the Competitions (including as to eligibility and qualification) which shall be final and binding on all participants in the Competition. In relation to these and any other matters arising in relation to the Competition but not specifically mentioned in the National Competition Rules, the Championship Committee shall have the power to take such action and make such decisions, order, rulings and impose such penalties as it deems necessary and following such procedures as it considers appropriate and such shall, subject to Rule 15, be final and binding on all participants.
- 2.9 The Championship Committee shall have the authority to delegate any of its powers, duties or obligations under these Rules to any person, Competitions Committee, sub-committee or other body provided that it retains the ability to resume the exercise of those powers at any point. Delegation of powers, duties or obligations shall not prevent the Championship Committee from exercising those powers or undertaking those duties or obligations should the Championship Committee consider it necessary or appropriate to do so. References in the Rules and Regulations to a Competitions Committee shall be deemed to include the Championship Committee where the Championship Committee has itself elected to exercise that power.
- 2.10 The Women's Competitions shall be administered by the Women's Competitions Committee under the delegated authority of the Championship Committee.
- 2.11 The membership of the Women's Competitions Committee shall comprise:
  - 2.11.1 a Convenor (appointed by the Board);
  - 2.11.2 one representative elected from the Clubs participating in the Premiership;
  - 2.11.3 two representatives elected from the Clubs participating in each of the Caledonia North, Caledonia Midlands/East and West Regional Leagues; and
  - 2.11.4 such other individuals as may be co-opted to the Committee (in a non-voting capacity).
  - 2.11.5 Scottish Rugby shall appoint a Competitions Secretary to assist in the administration of the Championship.
- 2.12 Where by reason of the routine nature of the matter, or such urgency that a meeting of the Championship

Committee or respective Competitions Committee cannot reasonably be arranged, and subject to any direction given by the Championship Committee, the Convenor/Chair may exercise any of the powers, discretions and/or authorities given to the respective Competitions Committee under the Rules and Regulations.

#### Compliance

- 2.13 By agreeing to participate in a Competition the participating Club agrees to be bound by both the letter and the spirit of the Rules and Regulations, and such other Scottish Rugby Rules, Regulations, Policies or Procedures as may affect participation in competitions.
- 2.14 The participating Clubs shall ensure compliance by all of their Players and officials with applicable Rules and Regulations.
- 2.15 Participating Clubs shall comply with the Club Investment Fund Standards issued from time to time by Scottish Rugby unless a dispensation has been given to them by Scottish Rugby. Scottish Rugby shall have the power to suspend the participation rights of any Club which fails to meet or to maintain these Standards.
- 2.16 Except where a Scottish Rugby Policy, Rule or Regulation provides to the contrary, World Rugby's Laws of the Game of Rugby Football (the "Laws") and the World Rugby Regulations Relating to the Game shall apply.

### 3 COMPOSITION AND FORMAT OF THE LEAGUES

#### Composition

- 3.1 The Women's Premiership shall comprise:
  - 3.1.1 a Premiership, to be contested by eight teams in one division
- 3.2 The Regional Leagues shall comprise:
  - 3.2.1 the Caledonia North Regional Leagues, which shall be contested by Clubs in the Region in a league format to be decided by the Women's Competitions Committee;
  - 3.2.2 the Caledonia Midlands/East Regional Leagues, which shall be contested by Clubs in the both the Caledonia Midlands and East Regions in a league format to be decided by the Women's Competitions Committee; and
  - 3.2.3 the West Regional Leagues, which shall be contested by Clubs in the Region in a league format to be decided by the Women's Competitions Committee;
- 3.3 The Women's Competitions Committee reserves the right to amend the format of promotion/relegation where required for operational reasons.
- 3.4 Clubs seeking admission to the Women's competitions must apply in writing to the Competitions Secretary. Admission shall be subject to such conditions as the Competitions Committee may require. Successful applicants may be placed in an appropriate league or division at the Competitions Committee's sole discretion.
- 3.5 A Club may not have more than one team in any division.

#### Competition Format

- 3.6 The Premiership shall be played in three stages.
  - 3.6.1 Stage 1: the Teams shall play each other on a home-or-away basis.
  - 3.6.2 Stage 2: The teams finishing Stage 1 in positions 1 to 4 shall play each other on a home and away basis in Stage 2 Division 1 and teams finishing Stage 1 in positions 5 to 8 shall play each other on a home and away basis in Stage 2 Division 2. League points gained in Stage 1 will be carried forward to Stage 2.
  - 3.6.3 Stage 3: at the end of Stage 2: the Teams in places one and two in Division 1 shall contest a final match to decide the Women's Premiership winners. The Team ranked first shall play at home against the Team ranked second. If the scores are level at full-time the Knock-Out Match Extra Time Rules (Rule 11.3) shall apply.
- 3.7 In each Regional League Division 1 the Teams shall play each other on a home-and-away basis.
- 3.8 Subject to Rule 13:
  - 3.8.1 The Team winning the Premiership Final shall be the Scottish Champions.

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- 3.8.2 The Team finishing fourth in the Women's Premiership Stage 2 Division 2 shall, along with the teams finishing in first place in each Regional League Division 1, play off on a home and away basis in the Regional Play-off series. Should, however, the team finishing in first place within a Regional League be a 2XV then the highest placed 1XV team in the league topped by the 2XV team shall replace that team in the play-off series.
- 3.8.3 The Team winning the Regional Play-off series shall play in the Premiership the following season
- 3.9 The format and competition structure of each Regional League Division 2 and lower division, though normally comprising a maximum of 10 Teams, shall be defined by the Women's Competitions Committee.
- 3.10 A Club's second and lower XVs may play in the Regional Leagues but cannot be promoted to the Women's Premiership.
- 3.11 In exceptional or emergency circumstances (including where the playing season is delayed or suspended) the Competitions Committee may temporarily revise the format of the Women's Competitions.
- 3.12 All promotions shall be subject to the promoted club being able to demonstrate that it is able to meet the published criteria for membership of the relevant league and:
  - 3.12.1 The first-placed Team in each Regional League Division 2 shall be promoted to the relevant Regional League Division 1.
  - 3.12.2 The team finishing bottom of each Regional League Division 1 shall be relegated to the relevant Regional League Division 2.
  - 3.12.3 Before the start of each season the promotion and relegation between each Regional League's second and lower divisions shall be notified by the relevant Competition Secretary.

## 4 FIXTURES

### Date and Kick-Off Time

- 4.1 The date, time and the identity of the home and away Clubs in any Match shall be as determined and notified by the relevant Competitions Secretary.
- 4.2 Matches shall be played on the date and at the time notified. By exception, and where both Clubs agree, the home Club may make written application to the Competitions Secretary for a Match to be played at an alternative time or on an alternative date (including evenings and weekdays). Applications shall be made no later than 7 days prior to the scheduled kick-off time and must be accompanied by evidence as to the consent of both Clubs. Written permission/confirmation must be obtained from the Women's Competitions Committee Secretary. Applications received within 7 days prior to the scheduled kick off time may not be considered. Consideration will be given to timeous applications providing it involves no detrimental impact to the conclusion of league and competition schedule. Where, in the reasonable view of the Competition Committee, such concerns exist, the Competition Committee may refuse an application.
- 4.3 Matches taking place on the same day as a home international played by the senior men's and/or women's Scotland team, shall normally kick-off no later than 2 hours prior to the international match kick-off. Where there is agreement between both teams for a Match to be played at an alternative time the relevant Championship or Competition Committee Secretary must be notified no later than 7 days prior to the scheduled kick-off time and must be accompanied by evidence as to the consent of both Clubs.
- 4.4 The Championship Committee and the relevant Competitions Committee reserve the absolute right to reschedule any Match. In the event of a postponed or abandoned Match requiring to be rescheduled, other Matches may require to be rescheduled or further rescheduled in order to accommodate that Match.
- 4.5 Matches shall normally be played at the home Club's regular venue. The home Club must advise the relevant Competitions Secretary, the visiting Club and the referee promptly if a Match is to be played at a different venue.
- 4.6 Scottish Rugby retains full ownership of all copyright, database, and associated rights relating to fixtures, fixture lists, and result lists. Scottish Rugby holds exclusive entitlement to grant or license others the right of access to home club grounds ("Access Rights") for the purpose of transmitting, filming, or otherwise recording, by any form of media, any audio and/or visual content that depicts or describes any part of a match ("Copyright Materials").
- 4.7 All Clubs shall adhere to the terms of any and all agreements entered into by Scottish Rugby from time to time concerning Access Rights, including but not limited to Television Rights, Radio Rights, Footage Rights, and Marketing Rights (collectively referred to as the "Commercial Contracts") as they relate to Scottish Rugby

competitions.

- 4.8 Should a broadcaster or media partner with whom Scottish Rugby holds a Commercial Contract exercise their right to broadcast a match, the Clubs involved must reschedule the fixture to the specified date and/or time as directed by Scottish Rugby. In such cases, no financial compensation shall be payable to the Clubs.
- 4.9 Where necessary to meet the requirements of a Commercial Contract, a match may be relocated to an alternative venue deemed suitable by Scottish Rugby. Clubs agree to cooperate fully in facilitating any such venue changes.
- 4.10 Clubs acknowledge that Scottish Rugby may issue additional rules and regulations in relation to the implementation of Commercial Contracts. These may include, but are not limited to, requirements around broadcasting, perimeter advertising, and matchday programme content. Clubs agree to comply with all such guidelines as issued and updated by Scottish Rugby.

#### **Postponed and Cancelled Matches**

- 4.11 If, as a consequence of government advice a Match cannot be played the Club must without delay inform the relevant Competitions Secretary of the full circumstances and the Match shall be postponed.
- 4.12 Matches postponed under Rule 4.11 shall ordinarily be rearranged/rescheduled for a date prior to the conclusion of the season. Should any such Match not be played by that date, and subject to Rule 13.2, the Competition Points awarded to each Club in the relevant league table shall be adjusted according to the 'Best Playing Record Calculation' to determine the final league positions.
- 4.13 In the event of any re-arranged knock-out or play-off Match having to be cancelled in accordance with Rule 4.11, the Competitions Committee may determine that the Club with the higher standing in the final league table shall be declared as the winner of that Match.
- 4.14 If a Match is likely to be postponed for any other reason, the home Club must seek to play at an alternative venue or, if the home team is in the first half of its league season, the home Club may seek the opposition Club's consent for the fixture to be reversed. In the event of a postponement the home Club shall promptly notify the opposition Club, the Match referee and the Competitions Secretary. Where a Club makes no reasonable attempt to find an alternative venue the relevant Competitions Committee reserves the absolute right to apply sanctions to the offending Club, including a formal reprimand and warning and/or deduction of Competition Points.
- ~~4.15~~ Where a match is postponed for any reason other than non-fulfilment it shall ordinarily be rescheduled to the next available fixture date free of Competition fixtures. Where necessary the relevant Competition Committee may require a rescheduled fixture to be played midweek. Other Matches may require to be rescheduled or further rescheduled in order to accommodate that Match.

~~4.15.16~~ A Club may submit a request to reschedule a fixture for consideration by the Competitions Committee where exceptional and unforeseen circumstances, wholly outwith the Club's control, result in the Club being unable to field a suitably trained Front Row due to injury and/or concussion protocols. Any such request must be submitted to the Competition Secretary no later than the Tuesday immediately preceding the scheduled fixture. Upon review of the request, the Competitions Committee shall have the discretion to approve and reschedule the fixture where it deems the circumstances to be valid.

~~4.16.17~~ If a second or subsequent postponement is likely, the Match the Competitions Committee may direct where and when the Match should be played.

#### **Abandoned Matches**

~~4.17.18~~ Where a Match is abandoned before 20 minutes of the second half have elapsed it shall ordinarily be rescheduled to the next available fixture date free of Competition fixtures. Other Matches may require to be rescheduled or further rescheduled in order to accommodate that Match.

~~4.18.19~~ If a Match is abandoned after at least 20 minutes of the second half have elapsed the Match shall be deemed to have been completed and the score at the time of the abandonment shall stand as the Match result.

~~4.19.20~~ The right is reserved for the relevant Competitions Committee to investigate the causes of any abandonment and to take such action as it deems appropriate.

~~4.20.21~~ For the avoidance of doubt the procedures regarding any red or yellow cards, citing or misconduct complaints during an abandoned Match shall be the same as if the Match had been completed.

#### **Non-Fulfilment of Fixtures**

~~4.21.22~~ No Club may, without reasonable grounds, fail to fulfil its fixture obligations. The relevant Competitions Committee shall be the sole judge as to whether all reasonable avenues have been exhausted in trying to

fulfil a Club's fixture obligations.

~~4.24.23~~ Where a Match is postponed, other than in the Women's Regional Play Off Series, the Club's opponents shall be credited with a 28-0 win and awarded five competition points. The Club responsible for the cancellation shall receive no points and the Competitions Committee shall consider whether a Complaint should be raised in respect of the non-fulfilment.

~~4.24.24~~ Applicable to the Women's Regional Play Off Series only, if a Club fails to fulfil a fixture on the date notified it shall receive the following automatic penalty:

~~4.23-44.24.1~~ First default (in season): a three Competition Point deduction;

~~4.23-24.24.2~~ Second default: a four Competition Point deduction; and

~~4.23-34.24.3~~ Third default and subsequent defaults: a five Competition Point deduction.

~~4.24.25~~ If a Club fails to fulfil a fixture on the date notified and provides less than 48 hours' notice to their opponents, the relevant Regional Competitions Committee may consider further sanctions.

~~4.25.26~~ A Club subject to penalty under Rule 4.23 ~~and/or Rule 4.25~~ or Scottish Rugby may request that the penalty be reviewed by the Competitions Committee, but only on the grounds that the default was caused by exceptional and unforeseen circumstances wholly outwith its control. Requests must be lodged with the Competition Secretary within 7 days of the scheduled kick-off time. On review the Competitions Committee shall have right to cancel, reduce, affirm or increase the penalty.

~~4.26.27~~ Where a Club is subject to penalty under Rule 4.23.3 the Competitions Committee shall also have the additional power to relegate and/or disqualify the Club where it considers this to be either necessary or appropriate.

~~4.27.28~~ Where in the view of the Competitions Committee any default was due to the wilful actions of any Club it may additionally:

~~4.27-44.28.1~~ apply sanctions to either or both Clubs, including a formal reprimand and warning as to future conduct and/or deduction of up to an additional five Competition Points and/or disqualification from the relevant competition and/or a deduction of up to the full amount of any participation money which the Club may be entitled to; and / or

~~4.27-24.28.2~~ award the Competition Points to either Club, divide them between the Clubs as it sees fit or decide that no Competition Points should be awarded and order that the Match be replayed.

~~4.28.29~~ In the event of a Club not fulfilling a fixture and the opposition Club incurring unnecessary expense, the relevant Competitions Committee may award a financial penalty towards the reimbursement of the non-offending Club's and the Match Official's actual costs. Proof of actual costs will be required.

~~4.29.30~~ If a Club fails to fulfil three or more Competition fixtures in consecutive seasons the Championship Committee may suspend the Club from participation in Competitions for such period as the Championship Committee deems appropriate.

## 5 THE PLAYERS

### Registration, De-Registration & Eligibility

- 5.1 All Players participating in the Competitions must be registered on the Scottish Rugby registration system (SCRUMS).
- 5.2 A Player is registered when, subject to these Rules, the Player has been allocated a unique reference number and the Player appears on the system under the Club's list of active registered Players. For the avoidance of doubt, registration of itself does not confer eligibility to play and players must comply with these rules and all other eligibility requirements including, inter alia, International Clearance. Scottish Rugby reserves the right to refuse, suspend or request further information in respect of any application.
- 5.3 Incoming Players requiring International Clearance shall not be eligible to participate in Scottish Rugby competitions until Scottish Rugby has provided written confirmation of the completion of the International Clearance process.
- 5.4 A Player may be registered to only one Primary League Club and one Secondary League Club. A Player's Primary League Club shall ordinarily be the Club with which the Player trains and plays most frequently. The Player may ask their Primary League Club to also register them with a Secondary League Club. The Player shall not be eligible to play for their Primary or Secondary Club until their name appears on that body's list of active registered Players.
- 5.5 A Player may not participate in a Match in an adult competition until the Player has attained the age of 18

years unless the Player has received prior written dispensation to do so from Scottish Rugby.

- 5.6 A Player wishing to transfer Club must notify their current Club of their desire to transfer. The Player's new Club shall apply in the prescribed manner to transfer the Player's registration.
- 5.7 Clubs shall ensure that their list of registered Players is at all times accurate and up to date, including in relation to whether each Player remains active. Clubs shall deactivate a Player's registration on receipt of a request from the Player. Clubs wishing to deactivate a Player's registration shall inform the Player in writing.
- 5.8 Where a Player receives International Clearance to play outwith Scotland the Player's registration must be deactivated by their Club promptly.
- 5.9 Where a Player requires a work permit, visa or other consent to play in Scotland, the Player's Club must deactivate their registration at the end of that consent.
- 5.10 A Player's registration may be suspended or cancelled (including with retrospective effect), where the Player or their Club has breached the Regulations Relating to the Game, Policies, Rules, Regulations or registration procedures.
- 5.11 Subject to the foregoing, a Player's registration status on any particular date shall be determined by the listing of active registered Players on that date.
- 5.12 It shall be a specific offence:
  - 5.12.1 to register or attempt to register a Player without the Player's consent;
  - 5.12.2 to play a Player in a Match who is not eligible to participate;
  - 5.12.3 for a Player or Club to fail to comply with Player payment provisions of SDR 4.1 Player Status and Player Contracts. For the avoidance of doubt, the payment and/or the provision of material benefits to any Player in return for their participation is prohibited unless specifically permitted by SDR 4.1;
  - 5.12.4 to mislead the Championship Committee, Competitions Committee or Scottish Rugby in any matter relating to Player registration or eligibility.
- 5.13 Where a Club has been found to have fielded an ineligible Player, or to have fielded a Player whose name did not appear on the Team Sheet, the relevant Competitions Committee shall have the right to impose a sanction on the Club for which the Player participated, including a formal reprimand and warning as to future conduct and/or deduction of up to an additional five Competition Points and/or disqualification from the relevant competition. The Player shall also be liable to such additional penalty or suspension as the relevant Competitions Committee considers appropriate.
- 5.14 In the Women's Premiership, each Regional League Division 1 and the Women's Regional Play Off Series:
  - 5.14.1 All Players participating in the Competition (other than as Emergency Player Loan Scheme Players) must be properly registered as an active Player with the Club that they are representing.
  - 5.14.2 A Player cannot be first registered with a Secondary League Club if that Club has three or fewer league matches to play.
  - 5.14.3 A Player may not play in Matches for more than two Clubs in any season except where the Player has obtained the prior written permission of the Women's Competitions Committee.
- 5.15 In Regional League 2 and below a Player may play for a Club to which the player is not registered, provided always that the player is registered with a club on Scottish Rugby's registration system. Playing as a loan Player shall not mean that the Player becomes registered to that Club or be included in the limit of playing for two clubs (as per Rule 5.14.3) however players who have made more than three Premiership appearances during the season cannot be used as a borrowed player in Regional League Division 2 or lower.
- 5.16 The number of borrowed players a Club can use in Regional League 2 is up to 5 per match. In Regional League 3 there is no restriction.

#### Dual Registration

- 5.17 A Player's Primary and Secondary League Clubs must be in different league divisions. Should a Player's Primary or Secondary League Club be promoted / relegated into the same division as their other dual registered Club, the Player must be deregistered from their Secondary League Club. **Where a Player is registered with two Clubs at the same Regional League level, the Player's Primary Club shall be considered the higher Club.**
- 5.18 Dual Registered Players may not play for their lower placed Club if they have played more than 40 minutes for their higher placed Club in the same weekend.

- 5.19 A dual-registered Player may not play for the first XV of their lower-placed Club in the last three league matches or the Regional Play Off Series, unless at least 50% of their previous first XV Matches that season have been for the lower-placed side or where the Player has obtained the prior written permission of the Women's Competitions Committee.
- 5.20 A Player who has been selected for Scotland Women (or the Senior National Team of another Union) in the preceding 12 months shall be ineligible to be Dual Registered unless they receive dispensation from the Competitions Committee.
- 5.21 The number of Dual Registered Players permitted to participate for their lower-placed Club in a Match squad shall be:
- 5.21.1 In the Women's Premiership Stage 2 and the Women's Regional Play Off Series: The number of Dual Registered Players permitted to participate for their higher-placed Club in a Match squad in any play-off Match shall be three and any such Player must also have played in a minimum of two matches that season for their higher-placed Club in order to be eligible to play in the Premiership Final Match or Regional Play-off Series for her higher-placed Club.
- 5.21.2 Regional League Division 1: up to three
- 5.21.3 Regional League Division 2 and lower: no restriction.
- 5.22 No Player may be included in squads for Matches which are being played either concurrently or are overlapping other than as permitted in Rule 5.23.2

#### **Ineligible First XV Players**

- 5.23 If a Club has a second XV or lower team competing in a Competition, a Player who has started a first-team Match for the Club shall be ineligible to play for the Club's second XV (or lower) in a Competition match that season unless: (a) the Player's Club's first and second teams have concurrent Matches; or (b) less than 50% of the Player's appearances that season have been in the starting XV of the first team; or (c) dispensation has been granted by the Competitions Committee.
- 5.23.1 For the purposes of team selection, 1XV and 2XV fixtures played over the same weekend will be treated as concurrent matches
- 5.23.2 Any player who has played less than 40 minutes for their clubs 1XV shall be eligible to play in their clubs 2XV over the same weekend provided that the eligibility criteria in Rule 5.23 is met.

#### **Transfer Deadline**

- 5.24 The Transfer Deadline shall not apply below Regional League Division 1.
- 5.25 Any Player receiving International Clearance to play in Scotland, being Dual Registered or being transferred between Clubs after the relevant transfer deadline may not participate for their new Club in the Women's Premiership, Women's Regional Play Off Series or Regional Division 1 for the remainder of that season unless either:
- 5.25.1 the relevant competition Regulations permit; or
- 5.25.2 the Player attains the age of 18 years after the Transfer Deadline; or
- 5.25.3 the Player receives written permission from the Competitions Committee to do so. Permission will normally only be granted in exceptional circumstances (for example a non-rugby related change of domicile or other reasonable change of circumstances which makes it impossible or impractical, in the view of the Championship Committee, for the player to continue to play for their current club.

#### **Emergency Loan Scheme**

- 5.26 A Club which would otherwise be unable to fulfil a Match or to meet the requirements of Law 3.8 due to a short-term lack of suitably experienced front-row forwards, may take on loan up to two front-row Players from other Clubs. Emergency Loan Players shall not become registered to their loan Club for these purposes.
- 5.27 No Player may play on loan in a Match for:
- 5.27.1 a Club in the same division as the Player's Primary Club;
- 5.27.2 a Club in a lower division in its final three Competition Matches; and
- 5.27.3 no Player who has participated for their Primary League Club in more than eight matches may play on loan with a Club in a lower division.
- 5.28 No Player may play on loan in a Match for a Club where their participation on loan risks compromising their Primary Club's ability to meet its own competition obligations.

## 6 THE TEAMS

### Team Colours

- 6.1 Clubs must ensure that they avoid a clash of team colours (jersey and/or socks). The Match referee shall be the sole judge as to whether colours clash. Where necessary it shall be the responsibility of the home Club to change.
- 6.2 Clubs proposing to play other than in their normal colours (as annotated in SCRUMS) must advise the opposition and the Match referee not less than 72 hours before kick-off.

### Team Sheets

- 6.3 Clubs must deliver a fully completed team sheet to the Match referee and to the opposition manager/coach not later than 30 minutes before kick-off. Changes to the team sheet may be made up to kick-off. No player shall be eligible to take part in a match unless their name appears on the team sheet submitted.
- 6.4 The team sheet must specify the jersey number or some other form of unique identification, full name and registration number of each Player. Players capable of playing at tight-head prop, loose-head prop and hooker must be highlighted as such. The team sheet must separately identify any Player playing for their Secondary League Club and any Emergency Player Loan Scheme Players.
- 6.5 Any Club wishing to use an identification method other than jersey numbers must request approval from the Championship Committee or respective Competitions Committee no later than 10 days before a fixture.
- 6.6 Team sheets must be submitted to Scottish Rugby within 48 hours of kick-off in accordance with the procedures set out by Scottish Rugby.
- 6.7 For the avoidance of doubt it shall be considered a breach when:
  - 6.7.1 A club fails to timeously deliver a team sheet to the other Club and Match referee; or
  - 6.7.2 If a Club fails to submit a team sheet fully, accurately or timeously it shall receive the following automatic penalty:
    - 6.7.2.1 First default (in season): £25 of the Clubs 'CIF' payment;
    - 6.7.2.2 Second default: £50 of the Clubs 'CIF' payment; and
    - 6.7.2.3 Third default and subsequent defaults: £50 per instance of an inaccurate, late or missing Teamsheet. In the event of five or more failures the relevant Competition Secretary shall consider raising a Complaint (in accordance with Rule 14) against the Club.
- 6.8 A Club subject to penalty under Rule 6.7 or Scottish Rugby may request that the penalty be reviewed by the Competitions Committee, but only on the grounds that the default was caused by exceptional and unforeseen circumstances wholly outwith its control. Requests must be lodged with the Competition Secretary within 2 weeks of the scheduled kick-off time. On review the Competitions Committee shall have right to cancel, reduce, affirm or increase the penalty.

### Number of Starting Players

- 6.9 In the Premiership and each Regional League Division 1:
  - 6.9.1 a Club may start a Match with fewer than 15 Players (but not less than 12 Players), providing that this includes a suitably experienced front row and subject to it fielding at least five players in the scrum at all times; and
  - 6.9.2 if a Club is reduced (through injury or the dismissal of Players) to less than 12 Players then the Match shall be abandoned at that point.
- 6.10 In all other Regional Divisions:
  - 6.10.1 A team may start a match with fewer than 15 players (but not less than 10 players), subject to it fielding at least five Players in the scrum at all times. If a Club starts the Match with less than 15 Players both Clubs must start with an equal number of Players ("Player Matching").
  - 6.10.2 Irrespective of how many players are in the starting team, Player Matching must be maintained throughout the Match other than where a player has been permanently or temporarily dismissed from the field.
  - 6.10.3 A Match may start with uncontested scrums, subject to there being at least five Players in the scrum at all times and the Club requesting uncontested scrums not being allowed to include any replacements in its Match day squad. A Team requiring to start a Match with uncontested scrums

must advise the opposition and the referee as soon as possible and, other than in exceptional circumstances, no later than 30 minutes before kick-off. The Team requesting uncontested scrums must also advise the relevant Competitions Secretary no later than 48 hours after kick-off.

6.10.4 If a Club is reduced (through injury or the dismissal of Players) to less than 10 Players then the Match shall be abandoned at that point.

6.11 Any Match not complying with the above requirements shall be declared unfulfilled and may be investigated as a Non-Fulfilled Fixture.

#### **Replacements / Substitutes**

6.12 The number of replacements/substitutes shall be as follows:

**Women's Premiership and Women's Regional Play Off Series:** Up to seven

**Regional League Division 1:** Up to seven

**Regional League Division 2 and lower:** Up to seven

6.13 There is no requirement for there to be parity as to the number of replacements available to each team and the requirements of Law 3.8 in respect of the number of front row players within any Match squad must be observed.

The maximum number of rolling substitutions a team may use in any Match shall be 12. The 15-minute limit on temporary Blood Replacements in Law 3 does not apply to rolling substitutions.

#### **Dispensation for International Players**

6.14 Where five or more Players from a club are selected for the Scotland Senior National Representative Teams on a National Competition date, that Club may:

6.14.1 play the fixture under the competition rules, or

6.14.2 apply for permission to play the Match using Player Matching (down to a minimum of 12-a-side), or

6.14.3 On one occasion during the season only, apply for permission to re-schedule the fixture to the next available stand-by date.

#### **Late Arrival**

6.15 Where some or all of its Players have been unavoidably delayed, a Club may request the Match referee to delay the kick-off to enable it to achieve a full side. No Match may be delayed such that the Match would not be completed in good time. The Match referee shall be the sole judge in this regard.

## **7 THE GROUND**

#### **The Pitch**

7.1 The home Club shall provide a suitable pitch complying with Law 1. The dimensions of the pitch shall be as near as is practicable to the maximum permitted by Law 1 and must exceed any requirement set by Scottish Rugby.

7.2 Padding around the goalposts, conforming to Law 1.7, must be provided.

7.3 If the home Club fails to meet the requirements of Rule 7.1 or 7.2 the Match referee may order that the Match be postponed.

#### **Technical Zones**

7.4 Two technical zones (one for each team) must be provided. The technical zones shall be on the same side of the pitch and shall be marked on the ground. Where practicable they shall be located in the Perimeter Area of the Playing Enclosure and shall commence not less than 5m either side of the half-way line. The technical zones must be set back at least 2m from the touch line.

7.5 A maximum of six club personnel (coaches, medics, water carriers or other officials) may be present in each technical zone. All persons present in the technical zone (a) must conduct themselves at all times in an orderly fashion in accordance with the highest standards of disciplined and sporting behaviour; and (b) must not obstruct, interfere with or direct any comments towards the Match officials.

7.6 Replacements must stay outwith the Playing Enclosure, unless warming up or about to enter the Field of Play as a replacement.

#### **Sin Bins**

- 7.7 Two "sin bin" areas (one for each team) must be provided. The sin bin areas shall be at least 10m apart and shall be afforded a clear view of the Playing Enclosure.

#### **Fitness of Ground or Conditions for Play**

- 7.8 If, prior to the day of the Match, there is doubt as to the potential fitness of the ground the following arrangements must be made:
- 7.8.1 Advance warning, being at least 72 hours where reasonably practicable, must be provided to the visiting Club and the Match referee. The visiting Club and referee must be advised as to any potential contingency arrangements.
  - 7.8.2 The visiting Club shall provide details of a point of contact in relation to the potential postponement and shall also advise as to their intended time of departure.
  - 7.8.3 The home Club shall arrange for an independent assessment of the pitch. The assessment should, where reasonably practicable, be made by the Match referee, failing which by another independent person (such as a local referee, referee coach/assessor, Scottish Rugby official or an official from another club).
  - 7.8.4 The assessment shall be undertaken not less than 60 minutes prior to the visiting Club's intended departure time. The result of the inspection shall be communicated to the visiting Club not less than 30 minutes before its intended departure time and to the Match referee.
  - 7.8.5 Should the home Club fail to arrange for an independent assessment the visiting Club may do so. Where said assessment indicates the ground to be playable and the home Club has postponed the fixture, the relevant Competitions Committee may investigate as to whether an offence has been committed.
- 7.9 Where prior to kick-off there is doubt as to the fitness of the ground or the conditions for play, the Match referee and the team captains shall inspect the pitch. If any one of these three persons deems the pitch or conditions to be unplayable then the Match shall be postponed. This decision shall lie solely with the team captains and the Match referee. The captains shall notify their own Club of the decision.
- 7.10 Within 48 hours of the decision not to play a Match the home Club shall advise the relevant Competitions Secretary as to the reason why that Match was not fulfilled. The Competitions Secretary may seek further information in order to decide whether a Complaint should be raised against either or both Clubs.
- 7.11 Where a Club does not own or have rights over its ground, and the ground is declared unplayable by the holder of said rights, written evidence of such decision must be obtained and must be submitted to the Competitions Secretary. In the event of failure to provide written evidence to the Competitions Secretary, the Competitions Committee may decide whether a Complaint should be raised against the home Club.

## **8 THE MATCH**

### **Match Organisation**

- 8.1 Unless otherwise directed by the relevant Competitions Committee, the home Club shall be responsible for the logistics involved in the staging of the Match.
- 8.2 The home Club shall ensure that the designated venue is fit for the purpose of staging the Match including, but not limited to, ensuring that:
- 8.2.1 the designated venue complies with all applicable government and local restrictions, health and safety legislation, local authority consent and associated requirements, and is safe for the purpose of admitting persons to the venue to assist in the organisation of, or to play in and/or spectate at the Match;
  - 8.2.2 at all times it maintains appropriate insurance to cover its potential liabilities arising from the staging of the Match, including the admission of spectators and others to the venue.
- 8.3 The home Club shall ensure that the visiting Club are advised of all relevant venue health and safety and associated requirements.
- 8.4 The home Club shall ensure that spectators are kept at a reasonable distance from the Playing Enclosure and at no time are able to enter the Playing Enclosure to interfere or interact with the Match, the Match officials or any of the Players or other Persons entitled to be within the Playing Enclosure.

### **Match Ball**

- 8.5 The home Club shall provide at least three match balls compliant with the Laws.

#### **Half-Time Interval**

- 8.6 The half-time interval shall normally be five minutes. The length of the interval may be altered by agreement between the Clubs provided that this is notified to the Match referee prior to kick-off but shall not be more than 15 minutes.
- 8.7 The teams may retire to covered accommodation at half-time.

#### **Competition Points**

- 8.8 In all Competitions, four points shall be awarded for a win and two points shall be awarded for a draw ("Match Points"). In addition, one bonus point shall be awarded to a Club scoring four or more tries and one bonus point shall be awarded to a losing Club which finishes within seven points or fewer of the winning Club ("Bonus Points").

#### **Notification of Results**

- 8.9 The home Club shall be responsible for notifying the Match result to the Competitions Secretary in accordance with the procedures set out by Scottish Rugby.

## **9 THE MATCH: LAW VARIATIONS**

- 9.1 In each Regional Division 2 and lower the Game On Law Variations may be applied (see Appendix 2).
- 9.2 At the discretion of the relevant Competitions Committee the U19 Scrummage Law Variations shall apply below Regional Division 1.

## **10 REFEREES AND TOUCH JUDGES**

- 10.1 Scottish Rugby shall appoint a referee and assistant referees for each Match in the Women's Premiership.
- 10.2 In all Regional Leagues and the Women's Regional Play Off Series the Match referee shall be appointed by the home Club's local referee society. Responsibility for confirmation of the Match referee shall lie with the home Team. Each Club must provide a touch judge.

## **11 METHOD FOR DECIDING ON LEAGUE PLACINGS AND IN TIED KNOCK-OUT MATCHES**

#### **Tied League Placings**

- 11.1 In the event of two or more teams being tied as to the number of Competition Points the criteria for distinguishing between the teams shall be the aggregate Competition Points achieved by the teams in the head-to-head Matches between them, failing which the aggregate Match points difference in these head-to-head Matches.
- 11.2 If neither of the above can determine which Club should be placed the higher and an issue of qualification to the next stage of competition, promotion, relegation, or a competition title depends on the respective rankings;
- 11.2.1 a play-off Match shall ordinarily be arranged by the Competitions Secretary at a neutral venue.
- 11.2.2 where a play-off match cannot be arranged because government advice means a Match cannot be played, the Women's Competitions Committee may determine that the criteria in 11.3.1-11.3.5 be applied, firstly to the Competition Matches between the teams and, if this fails to separate the Clubs, to all of the Clubs' Matches in the Competition over the season. Should this fail to separate the Clubs the Women's Competitions Committee may determine that the Clubs be separated by the toss of a coin.

#### **Play-Off and Knock-Out Matches: Extra Time**

- 11.3 If the scores at full-time in a play-off or knock-out Match are equal, extra time shall be played comprising 10 minutes each way with a one-minute interval. A coin shall be tossed by the Match referee to determine the direction of play. If the scores are still equal after extra time the following criteria (in the order given and including occurrences in extra time) shall be used to decide the winner:
- 11.3.1 the team scoring more tries;
- 11.3.2 the team scoring more conversions;
- 11.3.3 the team scoring more drop goals;

11.3.4 the team receiving fewer red cards; and

11.3.5 the team receiving fewer yellow cards.

11.4 If the event that none of the above is able to separate the teams further periods of extra time shall be played during which the Club which scores first shall be the winner.

## **12 CLUBS DISQUALIFIED, SUSPENDED OR WITHDRAWING**

12.1 If a Club is disqualified, suspended or voluntarily withdraws from a league after the start of the season, the results of all Matches played by that team shall be deleted and the positions in the division shall be established from the Matches played between the remaining Clubs.

12.2 If the deletion of a Club's results and the subsequent revised positions in the division have a direct effect on a Teams' qualification into the next stage of competition or the promotion or relegation of a team which has already completed its full programme of fixtures, the relevant Competitions Committee may make such arrangements as it deems appropriate to best resolve the issue.

## **13 PROMOTION AND RELEGATION IN LEAGUE COMPETITIONS**

13.1 Subject to the application of Scottish Rugby's Policies, Procedures, Rules and Regulations (if relevant, and to the extent applicable), the basis on which Clubs are to be promoted/relegated shall be as set out in these rules. Normally, any vacancy arising shall be filled by an additional Club being promoted before one fewer is relegated. In the event of an additional Club requiring to be promoted from a regional based competition, the additional Club shall normally be promoted from the withdrawing Club's Region.

13.2 Within each of the competition structures (Premiership, National and Regional Leagues (as a single entity); the Reserve Leagues; and the Women's Premiership and Regional Leagues), in the event that, for whatever reason, an aggregate of 65% of all possible league Matches in the relevant competition structure have not been played by the conclusion of a season (Close Time), or where the Championship Committee deems that there is no reasonable prospect of 65% of the league Matches in the relevant competition structure being played by that date, the Championship Committee may declare the season for that competition structure to be null and void and there shall be no promotion/relegation in respect of that season.

13.3 The final placings in each division, the determination of league titles, the Clubs to be promoted/relegated between divisions and the composition of those divisions for the succeeding season shall be subject to the lists issued by the Competitions Secretary at the conclusion of the Season.

13.4 A Club may apply to the Championship Committee or their respective Competitions Committee to request an exemption from promotion. In respect of such applications:

13.4.1 a Club may only apply once in a two-year period in respect of any league or division;

13.4.2 the application must be submitted no later than 1 November in that Season; and

13.4.3 prior to granting the exemption the applicant shall satisfy the Women's Competitions Committee that the promotion would be materially detrimental to player welfare and/or the finances or infrastructure of the Club.

13.5 Where a request for exemption from promotion is approved and the Club concerned was subject to a play-off, the other play-off team shall be promoted.

13.6 The determination of the Women's Competitions Committee in respect of relegation and promotion matters shall be final and binding on all participating Clubs.

## **14 COMPLAINTS**

14.1 A complaint into an alleged breach of the Rules or Regulations (a "Complaint") may be raised by:

14.1.1 the Championship Secretary (in relation to any Competition);

14.1.2 a Competitions Secretary (but only in relation to matters affecting that competition); or

14.1.3 a Club (but only in relation to a matter which affects it directly and which causes it to suffer significant disadvantage in a Competition, or some other form of material prejudice).

14.2 All Complaints must:

14.2.1 state (a) the nature of the Complaint, including the Rule/Regulation alleged to have been breached, and (b) the nature and the extent of the disadvantage/prejudice allegedly suffered; and

- 14.2.2 be signed on behalf of the complainant (in the case of a Club this shall be by either the Club President or Secretary or in the absence of such another nominated Club Official).
- 14.3 Complaints submitted on behalf of participating Clubs must be submitted to the relevant Competitions Committee or, as the case may be, the Championship Committee within 14 days of the alleged infringement occurring (for the avoidance of doubt the 14-day period shall run from the actual event, not from the date of the complainant becoming aware of it).
- 14.4 The subject of the Complaint shall be sent a copy of it as soon as practical following receipt.

#### **Complaint Process**

- 14.5 Complaints shall be heard by the relevant Competitions Committee, or a sub-committee of it comprising not less than three members (the "Complaints Committee"). Where the Complaint is heard by a sub-committee, the Complaints Committee shall elect one of its members as Chair. Any member with an actual or potential conflict of interest shall be required to recuse themselves.
- 14.6 The Complaints Committee may:
- 14.6.1 Regulate its own procedure and determine any matter arising in relation to the Complaint. Meetings of the Complaints Committee may take place either in whole or in part in one place, by letter, telephone, e-mail, video-conference, on-line forum, webcast or by any combination of convenient means. Complaints shall normally be heard based on the papers but may be by way of hearing where the Complaints Committee or one of the parties so requests;
- 14.6.2 Determine the timescale for the proceedings. For the avoidance of doubt the Complaints Committee shall be entitled to expedite the process where it considers that this is required for the benefit of the competition. The Complaints Committee may also set aside the requirement for Complaints to be brought within 14 days where it believes that it is in the best interests of the game to do so;
- 14.6.3 Call upon, receive and consider such evidence as it thinks appropriate; and
- 14.6.4 Request the attendance at any hearing into a Complaint of any Club, team or person under the jurisdiction of Scottish Rugby. Where a Club, team or person requested to attend refuses or fails to do so the Complaints Committee may adjourn the hearing or proceed in their absence. Any Club, team or person failing to co-operate with the Complaints Committee or seeking to mislead at any point in the Complaint process may be subject to Misconduct proceedings under Scottish Rugby's Disciplinary Rules.
- 14.7 The subject of the Complaint shall have the right:
- 14.7.1 to be represented at any hearing by up to two people, in the case of a Club one of whom must be a Club member. The name and capacity of those attending shall be advised to the Complaints Committee in advance of the hearing;
- 14.7.2 to submit evidence, call witnesses and make representations at any hearing; and
- 14.7.3 to be notified in writing of the outcome of the hearing as soon as is reasonably practicable.
- 14.8 The onus of proof shall be on the complainant to establish the breach of the Rule or Regulation alleged. The standard of proof shall be on the balance of probabilities.
- 14.9 A written statement giving reasons for the decision of the Complaints Committee shall be provided if so requested by the parties and upon the lodging of a note of appeal.

#### **Sanctions**

- 14.10 Where a Complaint has been upheld, the Complaints Committee shall be entitled in its absolute discretion to impose any or all of the following sanctions or penalties (including on a suspended basis):
- 14.10.1 a formal reprimand and warning as to future conduct or a reprimand;
- 14.10.2 a deduction of up to the full amount of any participation money which the Club may be entitled to
- 14.10.3 award of costs;
- 14.10.4 require any Match complained of to be replayed on such terms as are deemed appropriate;
- 14.10.5 the deduction of up to five Competition Points in respect of each offence;
- 14.10.6 forfeiture of and/or the granting to another Club of the Competition Points for a Match (including Bonus Points) or the awarding of the result in the Match complained of;
- 14.10.7 the suspension or expulsion of a Club, team, Player or person from participation in any Competition for such period as may be deemed appropriate;

14.10.8 such other penalty or sanction as may be deemed appropriate (including educational based sanctions where applicable).

**Acts of Misconduct**

14.11 For the avoidance of doubt a Competitions or Complaints Committee shall be entitled to refer any act of potential Misconduct (as defined in the Disciplinary Rules) to the Discipline Manager for further consideration.

## **15 APPEAL PROCEDURE**

**The Appeals Committee**

- 15.1 The Board shall establish an independent Competition Appeals Panel (the "Appeals Panel") to hear and determine appeals against decisions of the Championship Committee and Competitions Committees, including decisions delegated to the Championship Convenor, Championship Secretary and/or other bodies or individuals appointed to assist with the organisation of specific competitions.
- 15.2 The Board shall appoint the members of the Appeals Panel and, from those members, a Chair of the Appeals Panel. The members of the Appeals Panel shall comprise legally qualified persons together with current and former administrators/players and such others as are considered by the Board to have skills and experience relevant to the work of the Appeals Panel.
- 15.3 The Chair of the Appeals Panel shall from time to time select not less than three members of the Appeals Panel to sit as an Appeals Committee and shall select one of those members (who shall ordinarily be a legally qualified solicitor or advocate of at least five years' standing) to act as Chair of the Appeals Committee. The Scottish Rugby Regulatory Department shall provide administrative support to the Appeals Committee.
- 15.4 All decisions of the Appeals Committee shall be made by majority. No member of the Appeals Committee may abstain. The Chair of the Appeals Committee shall have both a deliberative and, where the Appeals Committee consists of an even number of members, a casting vote.

**Grounds for Appeal**

- 15.5 The grounds for appeal shall be limited to the following:
  - 15.5.1 the original decision was unduly harsh or oppressive;
  - 15.5.2 the body or person making the decision misdirected itself in relation to the Laws of the Game and/or the relevant competition Rules and Regulations;
  - 15.5.3 the body or person making the decision, in the exercise of its discretion, took account of factors it should not have or failed to take account of factors it should have;
  - 15.5.4 there has been a breach of natural justice; or
  - 15.5.5 no other reasonable body or person appointed to that role would have reached that decision.
- 15.6 For the avoidance of doubt:
  - 15.6.1 no Club, team or person may appeal in respect of any sanction imposed on, or other decision made concerning, another Club, team or person; and
  - 15.6.2 no Appeal may be brought against an operational decision made in the running of a Competition, notwithstanding that the effect of such decision could impact financially or otherwise on the Club, body or individual.

**Timing and Form of Appeal**

- 15.7 Notes of appeal must be in writing, be signed by the appellant and must be lodged with the Appeals Committee Secretary within seven days of the decision appealed against being made. The note of appeal must contain the following:
  - 15.7.1 the name of the party making the appeal and the office held /capacity of the person signing it;
  - 15.7.2 the decision appealed against, including details of the party which made the original decision, the date of the decision and any sanction imposed;
  - 15.7.3 the full grounds of appeal; and
  - 15.7.4 any documentation upon which the appellant intends to rely in relation to the appeal.
- 15.8 Other than on cause shown and with the approval of the Appeals Committee, it shall not be permissible to introduce evidence which was available, or could reasonably have been available, at the time the decision

appealed against was made but which was not brought to the attention of the original Complaints Committee.

#### **Appeal Process**

- 15.9 The Appeals Committee shall, subject to the requirements of natural justice, have the power to:
- 15.9.1 regulate its own procedure and determine any matter arising in relation to the Appeal. Meetings of the Appeals Committee may take place either in whole or in part in one place, by letter, telephone, e-mail, video-conference, webcast or by a combination of convenient means;
  - 15.9.2 determine the timescale for the appeal. The timescale shall be advised to the appellant, who may request a postponement of any hearing on cause shown. For the avoidance of doubt the Appeals Committee shall be entitled to expedite the process where it considers that this is required for the benefit of the competition or in the best interests of the game to do so;
  - 15.9.3 call upon, receive and consider such evidence as it thinks appropriate; and
  - 15.9.4 request the attendance at any hearing of any Club, team or person under the jurisdiction of Scottish Rugby. Where a Club, team or person requested to attend refuses or fails to do so the committee may adjourn the hearing or proceed in their absence. Any Club, team or person failing to co-operate with the Appeals Committee or seeking to mislead at any point in the Complaint process, may be subject to Misconduct proceedings under Scottish Rugby's Disciplinary Rules. The appellant shall have the right to be represented at any hearing by up to two people, in the case of a Club one of whom must be a Club member. The name and capacity of those attending shall be advised to the Appeals Committee in advance of the meeting.
- 15.10 Scottish Rugby's Discipline Manager or his nominee may represent the original decision making body or person at any Appeal Hearing.
- 15.11 Where evidence is given before the Appeals Committee, there shall be no cross-examination of witnesses except through the Chair and to the extent that the Appeals Committee in its discretion permits. The deliberations of the Appeals Committee shall be in private.
- 15.12 No appeal shall be decided upon grounds not contained within the note of appeal lodged by the appellants. The Appeals Committee may, on cause shown, allow further grounds of appeal to be stated providing that the party who made the original decision or its representative is given an opportunity, within a reasonable time, to answer the same.

#### **Appeal Decision**

- 15.13 Having heard such evidence it deems appropriate and any submission made by or on behalf of the appellant, the Appeals Committee may decide to:
- 15.13.1 affirm the original decision; or
  - 15.13.2 uphold the appeal by setting aside the decision appealed against and quashing any sanction imposed under it; or
  - 15.13.3 uphold the appeal in part by setting aside part only of the decision appealed against and/or modifying any sanction imposed; or
  - 15.13.4 refuse the appeal and increase the sanction imposed on the appellant or substitute an alternative sanction; or
  - 15.13.5 take any step which in the exercise of its discretion the Appeals Committee considers it would be appropriate to take in order to deal justly with the appeal.
- 15.14 The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be advised to the appellant as soon as reasonably practicable after the conclusion of the hearing. Where it considers it appropriate, the Appeals Committee may deliver an oral decision at the conclusion of the hearing. A written statement giving reasons for a decision of the Appeals Committee shall be provided in due course if so requested by the appellant. Scottish Rugby reserves the right to make public the outcome of any appeal and the identity of any Club, team or individuals concerned.
- 15.15 The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be notified to all parties in writing and shall be final and binding on all concerned.

#### **Acts of Misconduct**

- 15.16 For the avoidance of doubt the Appeals Committee shall be entitled to refer any act of potential Misconduct under Scottish Rugby's Disciplinary Rules to the Discipline Committee for further consideration.

## **16 NOTICES**

- 16.1 Any notice served pursuant to the Rules and Regulations shall be in writing and shall be delivered by email or first-class post. All notices shall be deemed, until the contrary is proved, to have been received on the date of sending if sent by email or within 48 hours if sent by first-class post.

## **17 OMISSIONS, INTERPRETATION AND EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

- 17.1 A Competitions Committee, the Championship Committee, a Complaints Committee or the Appeals Committee may, on cause shown, relieve a Club, team or person from the consequences of a failure to comply with the Rules and Regulations which is shown to be a mistake, oversight or other excusable cause on such conditions as the Committee so determines.
- 17.2 With the prior approval of the Board, the Championship Committee (or relevant Competitions Committee) or Appeals Committee shall have the discretion to:
- 17.2.1 decide on matters not provided for in the Rules and Regulations and to take appropriate action thereon;
  - 17.2.2 interpret the meaning of the Rules and Regulations in accordance with the underlying principles and intent (insofar as it can be ascertained) of the relevant Rule / Regulation and the interests of the game;
  - 17.2.3 determine any inconsistency between the Rules and Regulations and to rectify any administrative error.
- 17.3 The Championship Committee or relevant Competitions Committee's decision(s) in respect of those matters referred to in Rule 17.2 shall be final and binding save for any right to appeal as may be allowed under these Rules.

# Appendix 1

## Designated Adult Competitions and Key Dates

### 1 Designated Competitions

The National Competition Rules shall apply in respect of the following competitions and such other competitions as may be designated by the Board from time to time:

#### Adult Men

1. Premiership and National Leagues (Divisions 1,2,3 and 4)
2. Caledonia (Midlands and North), East and West Regional Leagues
3. InterCity Reserve League
4. Regional Reserve Leagues
5. (where scheduled) Scottish Rugby Union Cup competitions

#### Adult Women

1. Premiership
2. Caledonia North, Caledonia Midlands/East and West Regional Leagues
3. Women's Regional Play Off Series
4. (where scheduled) Scottish Rugby Union Cup competitions

### 2 Key Dates

Close Time ends:	<b>03 August 2026</b>
Women's Transfer Deadline:	<b>19 October 2026</b>
Men's Transfer Deadline:	<b>14 December 2026</b>
Close Time begins:	<b>17 May 2027</b>

# Appendix 2

## Game On

### 1 Game On Principles

Where permitted within the Competition Regulations, and subject to:

1. the agreement of the relevant Competitions Committee (in respect of application of the Game On Law Variations within any particular league or division);
2. the agreement of both captains and the Match Referee (in respect of the application of each individual Game On Law Variation within any individual Match); and
3. compliance with any supplementary administrative guidance provided by the Championship Committee as it may affect the use of the Game On Principles;

the Scottish Rugby Game On Law Variations may be used in any competition Match.

For the avoidance of doubt, where used each Game On Law Variation may be applied individually.

### 2 Game On Law Variations

#### Law 3: Number of Players

1. The team captains and the Match referee may agree that team a may start a Match with fewer than 15 Players (but not less than 10 Players), subject to it fielding at least five Players in the scrum at all times. If a Club starts the Match with less than 15 Players both Clubs must start with an equal number of Players ("Player Matching"). Player Matching must be maintained throughout the Match other than where a player has been permanently or temporarily dismissed from the field.
2. Teams can utilise unlimited "Rolling Subs" whereby players are able to return to the field of play as long as they are not injured. Competitions and teams can also apply the Half Game rule whereby all players must play at least half a match.

#### Law 3 / Law 19: Scrum

3. The team captains and the Match referee may agree that teams, subject to the number of players, can reduce the numbers in a contested scrum. As a minimum this should mean:
  - 10/11-a-side: 5 players in a contested scrum
  - 12/ 13 -a-side: 6 players in a contested scrum
  - 14-a-side: 7 players in a contested scrum
  - 15-a-side: 8 players as normal in a contested scrum
  - Teams/ competitions may also play with only 3 qualified front row players in the team
4. The team captains and the Match referee may agree that, where not otherwise permitted, scrummaging may be uncontested. Law 3.8 is not applicable.

#### Law 5: Match Duration

5. The Match should be a minimum of 40 minutes, but can be split into equal halves, quarters or thirds e.g. Teams could agree on a 60 minute match which could be 2 x 30 minutes, 3 x 20 minutes or 4 x 15 minutes. The duration of each match shall be agreed by the team captains and the Match referee but shall be no less than 40 minutes and no greater than 80 minutes (excluding any time lost).

## Appendix 3

### Quick Guide to specific rules and regulations

This is not a conclusive list of all rules and regulations in place and clubs are expected to have read and observe all rules and regulations as outlined in this document.

Rule & Regulation	Premiership	Caledonia, East and West Regional League Division 1	Caledonia, East and West Regional League Division 2 and 3
<b>The U19 Scrummage Law Variations may apply</b>	No	No	Yes
<b>Minimum number of starting players</b>	A team may start a Match with fewer than 15 Players (but not less than 12 Players)	A team may start a Match with fewer than 15 Players (but not less than 12 Players)	A team may start a Match with fewer than 15 Players (but not less than 10 Players) unless Game On is agreed.
<b>Uncontested scrums</b>	A Team must start the Match with a suitably experienced front row.	A Team must start the Match with a suitably experienced front row.	A Match may start with uncontested scrums, subject to there being at least five Players in the scrum at all times
<b>Transfer Deadline</b>	Women's Transfer Deadline: <b>19 October 2026</b>	Women's Transfer Deadline: <b>19 October 2026</b>	The Transfer Deadline shall not apply in Regional Leagues Division 2 and 3.
<b>A Player must be registered with the club they are representing</b>	Yes	Yes	Not applicable.  Note: The number of players (not registered to the club they are representing) a Club can use in Regional League 2 is up to 5 per match. In Regional League 3 there is no restriction
<b>No of Dual Registered</b>	No restrictions for league. See 5.15-5.19 re play-off matches.	Up to three allowed to play for their lower club in league	No restrictions

		fixtures. See 5.15-5.19 re play-off matches.	
<b>No. of replacements permitted</b>	Up to seven (rolling substitutes permitted) to	Up to seven (rolling substitutes permitted)	Up to seven (rolling substitutes permitted)
<b>Player matching required</b>	No	No	Yes
<b>Game On permitted</b>	No	No	Yes

