



# Scottish Rugby

## Artificial Rugby Turf Policy

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## Foreword

We all have a responsibility to look after the participants in our game, with their wellbeing and safety being 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.

One element of this is for us all to ensure that those pitches used for training and games are of a safe standard. In relation to artificial rugby turf surfaces, this means complying with the turf standard set out in World Rugby Regulation 22. As further explained in this document, the use of World Rugby Regulation 22 standard pitches for training and matches in Scotland is governed by Scottish Rugby's Artificial Rugby Turf Policy.

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

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# 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.

Contact rugby activities may only take place on surfaces compliant with Law 1. Where that surface is artificial turf, it must comply with both World Rugby Regulation 22 and Scottish Domestic Regulation 22.

Everyone within the Scottish Rugby community will be made aware of our policies to promote the safety and wellbeing of those playing the game.

## Key principles:

- **Primary responsibility for the health and wellbeing of each player lies with the individual player. In agreeing to participate players must take seriously the risk of injury to themselves and to others.**

- **Participation in a contact sport carries with it a risk of injury. Scottish Rugby, and those governed by Scottish Rugby, shall follow best practice in order to minimise that risk.**

- **Participants in the game are obliged to follow World Rugby's Regulations Relating to the Game, including World Rugby Regulation 22 (Standard Relating to the use of Artificial Rugby Turf).**

- **Scottish Rugby has adopted a Regulation (SDR 22 : Artificial Rugby Turf) in relation to the use of artificial surfaces for training and playing. SDR 22 conforms with World Rugby Regulation 22.**

- **Scottish Rugby believes that best practice is represented by SDR 22 and World Rugby Regulation 22.**

- **The welfare and safety of the player is paramount.**

# 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 the wellbeing of players.

## Scottish Rugby will:

- Develop and publish an artificial turf regulation, SDR 22 : Artificial Rugby Turf, and ensure that the Regulation and any associated guidance is regularly reviewed and updated.
- Require that member clubs comply with the Regulation, in so far as it applies to them as a venue owner, operator, hirer or other user.
- Provide advice and assistance in relation to the Regulation to players and their clubs.
- Manage and respond to referrals and/or concerns in an efficient and fair manner.
- Take disciplinary action against those who breach the Regulation.

## Member Clubs will:

- Ensure that their players, coaches and other club officials are aware of SDR 22 : Artificial Rugby Turf.
- Ensure that players and club officials comply with the terms of the Regulation and any associated guidance.
- Report any suspected breaches of the Regulation to Scottish Rugby.

## Players, Coaches and Team Medics will:

- Take responsibility for their own safety and that of other players.
- Abide by the terms of SDR 22 : Artificial Rugby Turf and any associated guidance.
- Ensure that the game is played in accordance with Scottish Rugby's Core Values.

# Definitions

## Board

Means the Board of Directors of Scottish Rugby Limited, acting under powers delegated under the constitutional documents of the Scottish Rugby Union.

## Club

Means any club, team or other body (as the context may require) which participates in any competition, match or event under the jurisdiction of Scottish Rugby or is otherwise under its jurisdiction.

## Contact Rugby

Means any match or game played under World Rugby's Laws of the Game (including, but not limited to, the variations of the game recognised by World Rugby of Sevens, Tens and Beach Rugby) together with any form of Contact Training.

## Contact Training

Means any practice which involves intentional physical contact between players including, but not limited to, tackling, scrummaging, rucking, mauling and line out practice.

## 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 the Scottish Rugby Disciplinary Rules.

## Non-Contact Rugby

Means any form of the game, whether in a match or in training, which does not involve physical contact between players (other than incidental contact), including touch, tag and beach tag rugby.

## Scottish Rugby

Means the 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.

## 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

## 22 : Artificial Rugby Turf

### 1. Position Statement

- 1.1 Scottish Rugby considers that:
  - 1.1.1 primary responsibility for the health and wellbeing of each player lies with the individual player. In agreeing to participate players must take seriously the risk of injury to themselves and to others;
  - 1.1.2 participation in a contact sport carries with it a risk of injury. Scottish Rugby, and those governed by Scottish Rugby, shall follow best practice in order to minimise that risk; and
  - 1.1.3 the welfare and safety of the player is paramount.

### 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 22 : Artificial Rugby Turf ) with a view to:
  - 2.2.1 protecting the health and wellbeing of players and others; 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 educating those involved in the game as to the conditions under which artificial rugby turf may be used for rugby union training and/or matches;
  - 2.3.2 providing conditional approval in respect of those artificial rugby turf surfaces carrying a current World Rugby certificate of compliance;
  - 2.3.3 providing effective deterrents in respect of those acting in breach of this Regulation; and
  - 2.3.4 protecting and promoting the image and interests of the game, its clubs, teams, sponsors and other stakeholders.

### 3. World Rugby Regulation 22

- 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 Standard Relating to the use of Artificial Rugby Turf (World Rugby Regulation 22). Scottish Rugby has adopted World Rugby Regulation 22 to the fullest possible extent as Scottish Rugby's own domestic regulation in relation to the applicable standard for artificial rugby turf.
- 3.3 This, Scottish Domestic Regulation 22, should therefore be read in conjunction with the World Rugby Regulation 22 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.
- 4.2 Players and other participants in the game must observe and comply with this Regulation. Violations of this Regulation shall be dealt with in accordance with clause 9 (Disciplinary Matters) below.
- 4.3 Scottish Domestic Regulation 22 and World Rugby Regulation 22 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.

## 5. Installing an Artificial Turf Pitch

### Planning Stage : Outline Permission

- 5.1 Parties planning to install an artificial rugby turf surface shall contact Scottish Rugby to seek outline permission and to obtain guidance as to the artificial rugby turf standard. Prior to granting such outline permission Scottish Rugby may request such information as it may require to satisfy itself that the surface will be built and maintained to the standard set out in WR Regulation 22.

### Completion of Installation : Testing of Artificial Turf Surface

- 5.2 On completion of the artificial rugby turf surface the applicant shall arrange for the surface to be tested in accordance with the standard set out in World Rugby Regulation 22. Such testing shall be conducted by an independent test institute accredited by World Rugby.

### Conditional Approval for Rugby Use

- 5.3 Prior to permitting any match or Contact Training to take place on the artificial rugby turf surface the applicant must obtain Scottish Rugby's written conditional approval for rugby use.
- 5.4 Applications for conditional approval shall be made on the prescribed application form and shall be accompanied by a copy of the independent test report and such other information as Scottish Rugby may reasonably require.
- 5.5 Subject to the provision of a satisfactory test report and related information, Scottish Rugby may grant conditional approval for rugby use for a period of up to two years from the date the testing was conducted.
- 5.6 Approval for match use or Contact Training shall be conditional on:
  - 5.6.1 the owner/operator agreeing to remove the surface from Contact Rugby use if it has reasonable grounds to believe that the surface is no longer fully compliant with the standard set out in WR Regulation 22;
  - 5.6.2 permanent signage being erected beside the entrance to the pitch indicating:
    - (a) that the pitch has been certified as being compliant with WR Regulation 22; and
    - (b) displaying the date on which Scottish Rugby's conditional approval expires/re-testing is required.This signage shall be removed immediately should the conditional approval lapse, be suspended or otherwise cease to be effective; and
  - 5.6.3 The owner/operator agreeing to participate in Scottish Rugby's injury surveillance programme.
- 5.7 Approval for matches shall be conditional on the surface being approved for Contact Training and "The Ground", as defined within the laws of the Game, complying with Law 1.

### Expiry, Varying or Removal of Conditional Approval

- 5.8 If use is proposed for beyond the conditionally approved period, the applicant shall re-apply for permission and shall submit such evidence of continuing compliance with WR Regulation 22 as may be required by Scottish Rugby.
- 5.9 Scottish Rugby may at any time, and at its absolute discretion, suspend or withdraw its conditional approval for rugby use (matches and / or Contact Training), or amend or vary any condition of use associated therewith.

## 6. Playing / Training on Artificial Turf Surfaces Within Scotland

- 6.1 Those responsible for organising matches and rugby training sessions are specifically reminded of their duty of care to the participants in their charge and must not organise any activity which is inconsistent with the playing surface or which endangers the health or physical well-being of any participant.
- 6.2 The playing of matches on any surface not permitted under World Rugby's Laws of the Game and Regulations Relating to the Game is expressly prohibited.
- 6.3 Prior to using any third party owned/operated artificial rugby turf field for any match or Contact Training (such as a local Authority venue), the Club shall take appropriate steps to ensure that the surface carries current World Rugby Regulation 22 certification and has Scottish Rugby SDR 22 conditional approval for the planned use.
- 6.4 Where Scottish Rugby has granted conditional approval for rugby use of an artificial rugby turf surface it may be used for practicing and training, including Contact Training.
- 6.5 Where Scottish Rugby has granted conditional approval for rugby use of an artificial rugby turf surface and The Ground complies with Law 1, the pitch may be used to play matches. For the avoidance of doubt, where the surface has been conditionally approved for the playing of matches it may be used for matches within any Scottish Rugby National Competition (as further defined within the then National Competition Rules).
- 6.6 Irrespective of World Rugby Regulation 22 approval, a risk assessment of the venue should be conducted prior to each use. Particular attention should be paid to ensuring that the run-off areas around the pitch:
  - 6.6.1 Are clear and unobstructed; and
  - 6.6.2 Are wide enough for the standard of rugby being contemplated

## 7. Medical Reporting

- 7.1 Where any injury, other than minor superficial abrasions, occurs on an artificial turf surface (whether conditionally approved or otherwise), the team medical attendant or other appropriate official of the Club or team for which the player was participating shall, within 72 hours of the injury occurring, submit a copy of the Artificial Turf : Injury Report Form.
- 7.2 For the avoidance of doubt this shall be in addition to the submission of a Serious Injury Report Form (in circumstances where such a form requires to be submitted).

## 8. Compliance

- 8.1 All those within Scottish Rugby's jurisdiction are obliged to comply with the terms of both World Rugby Regulation 22 and Scottish Domestic Regulation 22 (together herein referred to as "the Regulation").

## 9. Disciplinary Matters

- 9.1 Failure to comply with this Regulation shall be a Misconduct offence subject to potential disciplinary proceedings.
- 9.2 Any disciplinary proceedings arising under the Regulation shall be conducted in accordance with the Misconduct procedures set out within Scottish Rugby's Disciplinary Rules.

## Contact Us

Further information on artificial rugby turf is available from the World Rugby and Scottish Rugby websites.

Advice with regard to Scottish Domestic Regulation 22 (Artificial Rugby Turf), may be obtained by contacting Scottish Rugby Union's Head of Regulation at:

### Graham Ireland

Head of Regulation

BT Murrayfield Stadium

Roseburn Street

Edinburgh EH12 5PJ

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

## Useful Resources

The **World Rugby website** provides a wealth of information on the installation and use of artificial rugby turf surfaces. To access this information please go to:

- **WR Reg. 22:** <https://www.world.rugby/organisation/governance/regulations/reg-22>
- **Approval, Installation and Technical Information:** <https://www.world.rugby/the-game/player-welfare/surfaces>

The **Scottish Rugby website** provides a range of useful information and links including in relation to:

- The current version of **SDR 22**;
- Up-to-date list of Scottish SDR22 **conditionally approved venues**; and
- Access to our specific Artificial Rugby Turf **Injury Report Form**.

These resources can be accessed at: <https://www.scottishrugby.org/rules-and-regulations/player-welfare/artificial-turf>

## Raising a Concern

Failure to follow Scottish Rugby's artificial turf regulation, SDR 22 : Artificial Rugby Turf, shall be regarded as an act of Misconduct under Scottish Rugby's Disciplinary Rules.

Where a concern arises in the relation to non-compliance with SDR 22, or where there is concern that best practice is not being followed, the matter may be referred in confidence to Scottish Rugby's Head of Regulation.

The Head of Regulation will investigate any reported concerns and, where appropriate, shall refer the matter to Scottish Rugby's Disciplinary Manager for consideration of Misconduct proceedings.

## Policy Amendment Process

Changes to SDR 22 : Artificial Rugby Turf shall be approved by the Board.



**Scottish Rugby**

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