



# National Competition Rules

Season 2026/27

*These National Competition Rules shall apply in respect of the following competitions as designated by the Club Rugby Board:*

*(Men's) Scottish Cup*

*(Men's) National League Cup*

*(Men's) National Shield*

*(Men's) Regional and National Bowl*



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# Scottish Rugby National Competition Rules

## 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>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.
<b>‘Competitions Committee’</b>	means a committee elected or appointed to assist in the organisation of an individual Scottish Rugby Competition.
<b>‘Competition Secretary’</b>	means the person appointed by Scottish Rugby to act as Secretary to a Scottish Rugby Competitions Committee.
<b>‘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 <a href="#">Rules 5.20-5.21</a> .
<b>‘Game On’</b>	means the Law variations approved for use in certain Scottish Rugby Competitions, as further detailed on the <a href="#">Scottish Rugby website</a> .
<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>‘Pro Player’</b>	means a player contracted to Glasgow Warriors or Edinburgh Rugby
<b>‘Pro Team Academy Player’</b>	means a player contracted to either Glasgow Warriors or Edinburgh Rugby Academy aged between 18-23yrs old
<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 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.

## ORGANISATION AND APPLICATION

### The Competition Rules

- 2.1 The Competitions are governed by these Rules, which, together with any amendments or supplementary Regulations, require approval from the Club Rugby Board. The Club Rugby Board may issue additional Regulations for individual Competitions, amend the Rules and Regulations, and correct any error or omission as it considers appropriate.
- 2.2 Unless the context requires otherwise, words importing one gender include all genders, and words in the singular include the plural. If any provision is held to be illegal, void or unenforceable (in whole or in part), the remaining provisions will continue in force.

### Championship Committee

- 2.3 The Club Rugby Board is supported in organising the Competitions by the Championship Committee comprising:
  - 2.3.1 the Championship Convenor (the “Convenor”) appointed by the Club Rugby Board;
  - 2.3.2 the Women’s Competitions Committee Convenor (appointed by the Club Rugby Board);
  - 2.3.3 the Reserve League Committee Convenor (appointed by the Club Rugby Board);
  - 2.3.4 one representative from each of the following club groups, elected in accordance with the Championship Committee Election Rules: Premiership; National League 1; National League 2, 3 and 4; Caledonia Regional League; East Regional League; and West Regional League;
  - 2.3.5 a referees’ representative; and
  - 2.3.6 a schools and youth rugby representative.
  - 2.3.7 Scottish Rugby shall appoint a Competitions Secretary to support administration
- 2.4 Subject to the Appeals Process, the Championship Committee may decide all matters relating to the organisation, control, and management of the Competition (including eligibility and qualification). Its decisions are final and binding on all participants.
- 2.5 The Championship Committee may delegate any of its powers, duties, or responsibilities to any person, Competitions Committee, sub-committee, or other body. It may resume or exercise those powers at any time and may continue to exercise them if it considers it necessary or appropriate. References to a Competitions Committee include the Championship Committee where it acts in the capacity.
- 2.6 Where a matter is routine or urgent and a meeting cannot reasonably be arranged, the Convenor/Chair may, subject to any direction from the Championship Committee, exercise that Committee’s powers under these Rules and Regulations.

### Compliance

- 2.7 By entering a Competition, a Club agrees to comply with these Rules and Regulations, their spirit, and any other applicable Scottish Rugby rules, policies or procedures.
- 2.8 Clubs shall ensure that their Players and officials comply with all applicable Rules and Regulations.
- 2.9 Clubs must comply with Scottish Rugby Club Investment Fund Standards unless granted a dispensation. Scottish Rugby may suspend any Club which fails to meet or to maintain these Standards.
- 2.10 Unless otherwise stated in Scottish Rugby rules or policies, World Rugby’s Laws of the Game of Rugby Football (the “Laws”) and the World Rugby Regulations Relating to the Game shall apply.

## COMPOSITION AND FORMAT OF THE LEAGUE COMPETITIONS

### Scottish Cup

- 3.1 The Scottish Cup shall be contested by Teams competing in the Premiership and National League Division 1. The detailed format of the competition shall be published by the Championship Secretary prior to the start of the competition.

### National League Cup

- 3.2 The National League Cup shall be contested on a knock-out basis those teams competing in the National League Divisions 2, 3 and 4.

### National Shield

- 3.3 The National Shield shall be a knock-out competition contested by first XV’s from Clubs competing in the first and second divisions of the East and West Regional Leagues, and in Caledonia Regional League Division 1 (North and Midlands Conferences). The relevant Regional Competitions Committee may make such

adjustments as necessary where a Regional League's second division is structured in multiple parallel sections.

- 3.3.1 The first, second, and third rounds shall be drawn on a regional basis within the Caledonia, East, and West Regions, producing two Caledonia teams, three East teams, and three West teams to progress to the quarter-finals.
- 3.3.2 The quarter-finals shall be contested by the eight third-round winners, drawn on a national basis.
- 3.3.3 The semi-finals and final shall be contested by the winners of the preceding round.

## National Bowl

- 3.4 The National Bowl competition shall be contested by the remaining first XV Regional League teams which choose to enter together with any other team admitted to the competition by the relevant Competitions Committee.
  - 3.4.1 Regional Bowl: Local competitions for the Bowl shall be organised in each of the following four regions/areas: West, East (Edinburgh and the Borders), Midlands and North.
  - 3.4.2 National Bowl: The four regional winners in each competition shall contest the respective national Semi-Finals.
  - 3.4.3 The National semi final winners shall contest the National Final.

## FIXTURES

### Date and Kick-Off Time

- 4.1 The date, time and home/away status are set by the relevant Competitions Secretary. Each Match, except for the national finals, shall be played at the home ground of the Club drawn first. The venues for the national finals shall be determined by the Board. The home Club in a final shall be determined by the order of the semi-final draw, with the finalist drawn first being the home Club.
- 4.2 Matches must be played as scheduled. By agreement of both Clubs, the home Club may apply in writing to the Competitions Secretary to change the date or time (including evenings and weekdays). Applications must be submitted at least 7 days before kick-off time and include evidence of both Clubs consent. Approval will only be granted where the change does not adversely affect the completion of the league or competition schedule.
- 4.3 On days of senior Scotland international matches, fixtures should normally kick off no later than 2 hours before the international. Alternative times may be agreed by both Clubs, with notice and evidence of consent provided at least 7 days in advance to the Competitions Secretary.
- 4.4 The Championship Committee or relevant Competitions Committee may reschedule any Match, including at short notice. Rescheduling one Match may require changes to others.
- 4.5 Matches are normally played at the home Club's usual venue. Any change of venue must be promptly notified to the Competitions Secretary, the visiting Club, and the referee.
- 4.6 Scottish Rugby owns all rights in fixtures, results, and related data, and has exclusive authority to grant access for recording, broadcasting, or transmitting matches in any media. Clubs must comply with all agreements relating to these rights (including broadcast and commercial arrangements). Where required:
  - 4.6.1 Matches may be rescheduled or moved to an alternative venue;
  - 4.6.2 Clubs must cooperate fully with such changes; and
  - 4.6.3 No compensation is payable for rescheduling due to broadcast requirements.Scottish Rugby may issue additional rules to implement these arrangements, including requirements for broadcasting, advertising, and matchday content. Clubs must comply with all such rules.

### Gate Receipts

- 4.7 For all knock-out Matches, other than national finals, gate receipts (net of any VAT payable by the home Club) shall be shared equally between the two Clubs. The visiting Club's share shall be paid following the Match.
- 4.8 Free admission, including via season tickets or Club membership, shall not apply. Where an entry fee is charged, all spectators shall pay the same fee for equivalent access.

### Postponed and Abandoned Matches

- 4.9 Where a Cup Match is postponed or abandoned before 20 minutes of the second half have elapsed, it shall be replayed as directed by the Competitions Secretary. Rescheduled Cup Matches shall normally be played on the next available date free of Competition fixtures and shall take priority over rescheduled League Matches. Where necessary, the relevant Competitions Committee may require a Match to be played midweek. Other fixtures may be rearranged to accommodate the rescheduled Match. A Club failing to comply

with any direction may be subject to disqualification and/or other sanctions.

- 4.10 Where a Match is likely to be postponed, the home Club must make reasonable efforts to secure an alternative venue. In the event of a postponement, the home Club must promptly notify the opposition Club, the Match referee, and the Competitions Secretary. Failure to make reasonable efforts may result in sanctions, including a formal warning and/or deduction of Competition Points.
- 4.11 A postponed Match shall normally be rescheduled to the next available date free of Competition fixtures, and no sooner than seven days after the original fixture date. Other Matches may be rearranged where necessary to accommodate the rescheduled fixture.
- 4.12 A Cup fixture may only be rescheduled once without the consent of the relevant Competitions Committee. Where a rescheduled Match cannot be played, or where required for the completion of the Competition, the Championship Committee may determine the outcome, including by the toss of a coin.
- 4.13 Where a Match is abandoned after at least 20 minutes of the second half have been completed, the Match shall be deemed complete and the score at the time of abandonment shall stand.
- 4.14 The relevant Competitions Committee may investigate the circumstances of any abandoned Match and take such action as it considers appropriate.
- 4.15 For the avoidance of doubt, all disciplinary procedures, including those relating to red cards, yellow cards, citing, and misconduct, shall apply to an abandoned Match as if it had been completed.

## Non-Fulfilment of Fixtures

- 4.16 A Club failing to fulfil a knock-out Match may be subject to disqualification and/or other sanctions.
- 4.17 A Club failing to fulfil a league-format Match within a Cup competition shall be subject to the following sanctions:
  - 4.17.1 First default (in season): a three Competition Point deduction;
  - 4.17.2 Second default: a four Competition Point deduction; and
  - 4.17.3 Third default and subsequent defaults: a five Competition Point deduction
- 4.18 A Club penalised under **Rule 4.17**, or by Scottish Rugby, may request a review by the Competitions Committee on the grounds that the default arose from exceptional and unforeseen circumstances wholly outwith its control. Any such request must be submitted to the Competitions Secretary within 72 hours of the scheduled kick-off. Following review, the Competitions Committee may cancel, reduce, uphold, or increase the penalty
- 4.19 Where a club is subject to penalty under **Rule 4.17.3** 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.
- 4.20 Where the Competitions Committee determines that a default has resulted from the wilful actions of a Club, it may additionally:
  - 4.20.1 impose further sanctions on either or both Clubs, including a formal reprimand, a warning as to future conduct, a deduction of up to an additional five Competition Points, disqualification from the relevant Competition, and/or a deduction of up to the full amount of any participation money to which the Club may be entitled; and/or
  - 4.20.2 award Competition Points to either Club, apportion them between the Clubs as it considers appropriate, determine that no Competition Points shall be awarded, and/or order that the Match be replayed.
- 4.21 Where a fixture is not fulfilled and the opposing Club incurs unnecessary expense, the Competitions Committee may require the defaulting Club to reimburse the reasonable costs of the non-offending Club and Match Officials, subject to proof of such costs.

## THE PLAYERS

### Registration, De-Registration & Eligibility

- 5.1 All Players must be registered on the Scottish Rugby system (SCRUMS). A Player is registered once allocated a unique reference number and listed as active for a Club. Registration alone does not confer eligibility; Players must meet all other requirements (including International Clearance). Scottish Rugby may refuse, suspend, or request further information on any application.

- 5.2 Players requiring International Clearance are not eligible to play until written confirmation of the completion of the International Clearance process is received from Scottish Rugby.
- 5.3 A Player may be registered with one Primary League Club and one Secondary League Club. The Primary Club is normally where the Player trains and plays most. A Player may only play for a Club once listed as active on its register.
- 5.4 Players must be aged 18 or over to play in adult competitions unless granted prior written dispensation.
- 5.5 Players wishing to transfer must notify their current Club. The new Club must apply to transfer the registration in the prescribed manner.
- 5.6 Clubs must keep Player registrations accurate and up to date, including activation status. Registrations must be deactivated:
  - 5.6.1 on a Player's request (with written confirmation to the Player);
  - 5.6.2 when a Player receives International Clearance to play outwith Scotland; or
  - 5.6.3 when any required visa, permit, or consent expires.
- 5.7 A Player's registration may be suspended or cancelled (including retrospectively) for breaches of rules or procedures. Registration status at any time is determined by the official list of active Players on that date.
- 5.8 It shall be a specific offence:
  - 5.8.1 to register a Player without their consent;
  - 5.8.2 to field an ineligible Player;
  - 5.8.3 breach Player payment provisions of SDR 4.1 Player Status and Player Contracts.
  - 5.8.4 mislead Scottish Rugby or any Competitions Committee registration or eligibility matters.
- 5.9 If a Club fields an ineligible Player, or one not listed on the Team Sheet, the Competitions Committee may impose penalties on the Club and the Player.
- 5.10 A Player cannot be first registered with a Secondary Club for the quarter final (or equivalent) rounds.

## Dual Registration

- 5.11 Player's Primary and Secondary Clubs must be in different league divisions. Should a Player's Primary or Secondary League Club be promoted / relegated into the same division (e.g. through promotion or relegation), the Player must be deregistered from their Secondary Club.
- 5.12 A dual-registered Player may not play for the first team of their lower Club in its final four Matches unless fewer than 50% of their appearances in the starting XV that season for the higher Club, or they have prior written permission from the Competitions Committee.
- 5.13 A Player may not be named in the squads for Matches that are played at the same time or overlap.
- 5.14 No more than five secondary registered Players may be included in the Match squad of their lower placed Club.

## Transfer Deadline

- 5.15 The Transfer Deadline date is **Monday 14 December 2026**.
- 5.16 A Player who receives International Clearance, is dual registered, or transfers after the relevant deadline may not play for their new Club in a Scottish Rugby competition for the rest of the season unless:
  - 5.16.1 the competition rules allow it;
  - 5.16.2 the Player turns 18 after the deadline; or
  - 5.16.3 the Player has written permission from the Championship Committee.
- 5.17 Permission will normally only be granted in exceptional circumstances (e.g. a non-rugby change of residence or other situation making it impractical for the Player to remain at their current Club).
- 5.18 The Transfer Deadline shall not apply to Teams participating in a Regional League's second or lower divisions. However, any Player registered under this exemption shall not be eligible to participate in a national semi-final or final of the Shield or Bowl without prior written approval from the Championship Committee. The granting of any such approval shall be at the sole discretion of the Championship Committee.

## Pro Team Contract and Pro Team Academy Players

- 5.19 Players contracted to Edinburgh Rugby or Glasgow Warriors and Scottish Rugby Pro Team Academy Players shall not be eligible to participate in Cup Competition Matches.

## Emergency Loan Scheme

- 5.20 A Club that cannot fulfil a Match or meet the requirements of Law 3.8 due to a short-term shortage of suitably experienced front-row Players may borrow up to two front-row Players from other Clubs. Emergency Loan Players shall not become registered to their loan Club.
- 5.21 A Player may not play on loan:
  - 5.21.1 for a Club in the same Cup Competition as their Primary Club; or

- 5.21.2 for a Club in a lower Cup Competition from the quarter finals or equivalent (or later); or
- 5.21.3 where their participation on loan risks compromising their Primary Club's ability to meet its own competition obligations Without prior approval of the Championship Committee:
- 5.21.4 A Player may not play on loan for the same Club in more than three Matches per season or for more than two Clubs in a season; and
- 5.21.5 A Player who has started in more than eight Premiership or National League Matches for their Primary Club (excluding Reserve League) may not play on loan to a lower division club.

## Premiership & National One Players

5.22 A Player who has started in three or more Premiership, National League Division 1 or Scottish Cup Matches during the season shall not be eligible to participate in the Regional or National Bowl. This restriction does not apply to Players participating in those Competitions under the Emergency Loan Player Regulations. For the avoidance of doubt, a Player who is named as a substitute but does not take the field of play shall not be deemed to have participated in that Match. A Club may apply for dispensation to select a Player who would otherwise be ineligible. Any such application must:

- 5.22.1 be submitted in writing to the Championship Committee or relevant Competitions Committee;
- 5.22.2 include supporting evidence; and
- 5.22.3 be received no later than three days prior to the scheduled Match.

The granting of any dispensation shall be at the absolute discretion of the Championship Committee or relevant Competitions Committee.

## THE TEAMS

### Team Colours

- 6.1 Clubs must avoid clashes of team colours (jersey and/or socks), with the referee deciding if a clash exists. The home Club must change if required. Any Club intending to play in colours other than those recorded in SCRUMS must notify the opposition and the referee at least 72 hours before kick-off.

### Team Sheets

- 6.2 Clubs must provide a completed team sheet to the referee and opposition at least 30 minutes before kick-off. Changes may be made up to kick-off. Only players named on the team sheet are eligible to play.
- 6.3 The team sheet must include each Players name, registration number and unique identifier (e.g. jersey number). It must also identify front-row Players (LH, H, TH), dual-registered Players, and any emergency loan Players.
- 6.4 Any alternative identification system (other than jersey numbers) must be approved by the Championship Committee or Competitions Committee at least 10 days before a fixture.
- 6.5 Team sheets must be submitted to Scottish Rugby within 48 hours of kick-off in accordance with its procedures.
- 6.6 It is an offence to fail to submit a team sheet or to submit one that is incomplete or inaccurate. The following automatic penalties apply.
  - 6.6.1 First offence (in season): £25 of the Clubs 'CIF' payment;
  - 6.6.2 Second offence: £50 of the Clubs 'CIF' payment;
  - 6.6.3 Third and subsequent offences: £50 per instance. After five or more offences the Competition Secretary may raise a Complaint under **Rule 10.1**.
- 6.7 A Club may request a review of a penalty only where the failure was due to exceptional and unforeseen circumstances beyond its control. Requests must be within 14 days. The Competitions Committee may cancel, reduce, uphold, or increase the penalty.

### Number of Starting Players

- 6.1 In Scottish Cup, National League Cup and National Shield Matches, both Teams must start the Match with 15 Players, including a suitably trained front row.
- 6.2 In the Bowl competition:
  - 6.2.1 A Team may start a Match with fewer than 15 Players, but not fewer than 12, provided it fields at least five Players in the scrum at all times.
  - 6.2.2 A Match may start with uncontested scrums, provided:
    - 6.2.2.1 at least five Players are available for the scrum at all times; and

6.2.2.2 the Team requesting uncontested scrums does not include any replacements in its matchday squad.

6.2.3 The Team must notify the opposition and the referee as soon as reasonably practicable and, except in exceptional circumstances, no later than 30 minutes before kick-off. The Team must also notify the relevant Competitions Committee within 48 hours of the Match.

6.3 Any Match not complying with these requirements shall be deemed unfulfilled and treated as a Non-Fulfilled Fixture.

## Replacements / Substitutes

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

**Scottish Cup & National League Cup:** Up to Seven.

**National Shield:** Up to Seven.

**Bowl:** Up to Seven.

6.5 There is no requirement for both teams to have the same number of replacements, but the front-row requirements in Law 3.8 must be met.

6.6 A maximum of 12 rolling substitutions may be used in a Match. The 15-minute limit on temporary Blood Replacements in Law 3 does not apply to rolling substitutions.

6.7 No Player may be included in squads for Matches which are being played either concurrently or are overlapping

## Late Arrival

6.8 If Players are unavoidably delayed, a Club may ask the referee to delay kick-off to allow it to field a full team. Any delay must still allow the Match to be completed on time, as determined by the referee.

## THE GROUND

### The Pitch

7.1 The home Club must provide a suitable pitch that complies with Law 1 with dimensions as close as practicable to the maximum permitted and meeting any Scottish Rugby requirements. Goalpost padding must also comply with Law 1.7. If these requirements are not met, the referee may postpone the Match.

### Fitness of Ground or Conditions for Play

7.2 If there is doubt about pitch fitness before Match day:

7.2.1 the home Club must, where practicable, give at least 72 hours' notice to the visiting Club and referee, including any contingency plans;

7.2.2 the visiting Club must provide a contact and its intended departure time;

7.2.3 the home Club must arrange an independent pitch inspection (normally by the referee, or otherwise a suitably qualified independent person) and;

7.2.4 the inspection must take place at least 60 minutes before the visiting Club's departure time, with the outcome communicated at least 30 minutes before the departure and to the referee.

7.3 If the home Club fails to arrange an inspection, the visiting Club may do so. If the pitch is deemed playable but the Match is postponed, the Competitions Committee may investigate.

7.4 If there is doubt about pitch fitness before kick-off the referee and both captains must inspect the pitch. If any one of them considers it unplayable, the Match will be postponed. The decision is final, and captains must inform their Clubs.

7.5 Within 48 hours of a postponed Match, the home Club must notify the Competitions Secretary of the reasons. Further information may be requested to determine whether a Complaint should be raised against either or both Clubs.

7.6 If a Club does not control its ground and it is declared unplayable by the rights holder, written evidence must be provided to the Competitions Secretary. Failure to do so may result in investigation by the Competitions Committee.

## THE MATCH

### Match Organisation

8.1 Unless otherwise directed by the Competitions Committee, the home Club is responsible for staging of the Match and all related logistics.

- 8.2 The home Club must ensure that the venue is suitable and compliant with all applicable laws, regulations, and local authority requirements, and is safe for Players, officials, and spectators. It must also maintain appropriate insurance cover for all liabilities arising from the Match.
- 8.3 The visiting Club must be informed of all relevant health and safety and associated requirements. Spectators must be kept at a safe distance and must not enter or interfere with the Player Enclosure, Match officials, or Players.

### Gate receipts

- 8.4 For knock-out Matches, gate receipts (net of any VAT) will be shared equally between the Clubs. The visiting Club's share will be paid after deducting the home Club's agreed match expenses (including programmes/tickets, reasonable advertising, policing or emergency services, post-match catering, and any other agreed costs).
- 8.5 For knock-out Matches, free admission (including season tickets or membership) does not apply. All spectators must pay the same entry fee for equivalent access, where a charge is made.

### Match Ball

- 8.6 The home Club will provide at least three match balls compliant with the Laws.

### Half-Time Interval

- 8.7 The half-time interval is normally five minutes but may be varied by agreement between the Clubs, provided it does not exceed 15 minutes and the referee is notified before kick-off.
- 8.8 Teams may leave the Playing Enclosure and use covered accommodation during half-time.

### Competition Points

- 8.9 In all League and Pool stage Matches, four points shall be awarded for a win and two points 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 finishing within seven points or fewer of the winning Club ("Bonus Points").

### Method for deciding qualifying placings in the event of equality in league format competitions

- 8.10 If two or more Teams are level on Competition Points, their placings will be determined by points difference (points scored minus points conceded).
- 8.11 If **Rule 8.10** does not separate the Teams, the result of the Match between the tied Teams shall determine their placing. Where that Match was drawn, the away Team shall be ranked higher.

### Methods for deciding qualifying placings in Knock-Out Matches

- 8.12 If a play-off or knock-out Match is level at full time, extra time will be played (two periods of 10 minutes, with a one-minute interval). The referee will toss a coin to decide the direction of play. If still level after extra time, the winner will be determined (include scores in extra time) by:
- 8.12.1 the team scoring more tries;
  - 8.12.2 the team scoring more conversions;
  - 8.12.3 the team scoring more drop goals;
  - 8.12.4 the team receiving fewer red cards; and
  - 8.12.5 the team receiving fewer yellow cards.
- 8.13 If still tied further extra time will be played on a sudden-death basis, with the first team to score declared the winner.

### Notification of Results

- 8.14 The home Club must report the Match result to the Competitions Secretary in accordance with Scottish Rugby procedures.

## REFEREES AND TOUCH JUDGES

- 9.1 Scottish Rugby will appoint referees and assistant referees for each of the Finals matches.
- 9.2 In respect of earlier rounds:
- 9.2.1 Scottish Rugby shall appoint a referee and, where available, assistant referees for all Scottish Cup and National League Cup Matches. Where assistant referees are not appointed, each Club shall provide a touch judge.

- 9.2.2 The home Club's referee society shall appoint a referee for each Shield and Bowl Match. Assistant referees shall be appointed by the home Club's local society for National semi-finals. In all other Matches, each Team shall provide a touch judge.
- 9.3 The home Club shall be responsible for confirming the appointment of the referee and, where applicable, assistant referees.

## COMPLAINTS

- 10.1 A complaint of an alleged breach of the Rules or Regulations (a "Complaint") may be made by:
- 10.1.1 the Championship Secretary (for any Competition);
  - 10.1.2 a Competition Secretary (for their competitions only); or
  - 10.1.3 a Club where it is directly affected and has suffered significant disadvantage or material prejudice.
- 10.2 All Complaints must:
- 10.2.1 set out the alleged breach and relevant Rule/Regulation;
  - 10.2.2 explain the disadvantage or prejudice suffered; and
  - 10.2.3 be signed by the complainant (for Clubs, by the President, Secretary or in the absence of either of these another authorised Club Official).
- 10.3 Complaints must be submitted within 14 days of the alleged breach.
- 10.4 The subject of the Complaint will be provided with a copy as soon as practicable.

## Complaint Process

- 10.5 Complaints will be determined by the Competitions Committee or a sub-committee of at least three members (the "Complaints Committee"), with any conflicts of interest declared and managed.
- 10.6 The Complaints Committee may:
- 10.6.1 determine its own procedures, including holding hearings in person or by electronic means;
  - 10.6.2 decide timescales and expedite matters where necessary, and waive the 14-day limit where appropriate;
  - 10.6.3 request and consider any relevant evidence;
  - 10.6.4 request attendance of any Club, team, or person. Failure to cooperate may result in the matter proceeding in their absence and/or disciplinary action.
- 10.7 The subject of the Complaint has the right to:
- 10.7.1 be represented (up to two representatives, one of whom must be a Club member if applicable);
  - 10.7.2 submit evidence, call witnesses and make representations; and
  - 10.7.3 receive written notice of the decision.
- 10.8 The burden of proof lies with the complainant and is on the balance of probabilities.
- 10.9 Written reasons will be provided if requested and upon any appeal.

## Sanctions

- 10.10 If a Complaint is upheld, the Complaints Committee may impose one or more of the following:
- 10.10.1 a formal reprimand and warning;
  - 10.10.2 a deduction of up to the full amount of any participation money which the Club may be entitled to;
  - 10.10.3 an award of costs;
  - 10.10.4 require any Match to be replayed;
  - 10.10.5 the deduction of up to five Competition Points per breach;
  - 10.10.6 forfeiture or reallocation of Match points (including Bonus Points);
  - 10.10.7 the suspension or expulsion of a Club, team, Player or person from a Competition;
  - 10.10.8 any other appropriate sanction (including educational based sanctions where applicable).

## Acts of Misconduct

- 10.11 Any potential misconduct may be referred to the Discipline Manager under the Disciplinary Rules.

## NOTICES

- 11.1 Any notice under these Rules must be in writing and sent by email. Notices sent by email are deemed received on the date of sending, unless proven otherwise.

## OMMISSIONS, INTERPRETATION AND EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

- 12.1 A Competitions Committee, Championship Committee, or Complaints Committee may, where justified, excuse a failure to comply with the Rules if it is resulted from a mistake, oversight, or other reasonable cause, on such conditions it determines.
- 12.2 With prior approval of the Board, the Championship Committee or Competition Committee may:
  - 12.2.1 decide matters not covered by the Rules and Regulations and take appropriate action;
  - 12.2.2 interpret the Rules and Regulations in line with their purpose and the interests of the game; and
  - 12.2.3 resolve inconsistencies and correct administrative errors.
- 12.3 Decisions made under **Rule 12.2** are final and binding, subject to any right of appeal under these Rules.

# Appendix 1

## QUICK GUIDE TO SPECIFIC RULES AND REGULATIONS

This is not a complete list of all Rules and Regulations. Clubs are expected to read and comply with the full contents of this document.

Rule & Regulation	Scottish Cup & National League Cup	National Shield	National & Regional Bowl
The U19 Scrummage Law Variations may apply	No		
Minimum number of starting players	Both teams must start the Match with <b>15</b> Players, including a suitably experienced front-row.		Teams can start with less than 15 players but not less than 12.
Start with Uncontested scrums	Not applicable		Yes
Transfer Deadline	Monday 14 December 2026	Monday 14 December 2026 for Regional League Division 1 Clubs.  The Transfer Deadline shall not apply to Clubs in Regional League Division 2. However, Players registered under this exemption shall not be eligible to participate in a national semi-final or final of the Shield or Bowl without prior written approval from the Championship Committee.	The Transfer Deadline shall not apply to Clubs in Regional League Division 2. However, Players registered under this exemption shall not be eligible to participate in a national semi-final or final of the Shield or Bowl without prior written approval from the Championship Committee.
A Player must be registered with the club they are representing	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.		
No of Dual Registered players permitted	No more than five dual registered Players may be included in the Match squad of their lower placed Club.		

<b>No. of replacements permitted</b>	Up to Seven.
<b>Player matching required</b>	No
<b>Game On permitted</b>	No