



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) Premiership

(Men's) National League Division 1

(Men's) National League Division 2

(Men's) National League Division 3

(Men's) National League Division 4



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Scottish Rugby National Competition Rules

DEFINITIONS

‘Board’	means the Scottish Rugby Club Rugby Board, or any sub-committee of the Board operating under the specific authority of the Board.
‘Best Playing Record Calculation (“BPRC”)	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 = $34/15 \times 22 = 49.86$).
‘Championship Committee’	means the Scottish Rugby Championship Committee.
‘Championship Secretary’	means the person who deals with the day-to-day running of the Scottish Rugby Competitions.
‘Club’	means any club, team or other body (as the context may require) which participates in a Scottish Rugby Competition.
‘Club Investment Fund Standards’ (“CIF”)	means the minimum standards and requirements issued by Scottish Rugby from time to time.
‘Competitions’	means the Scottish Rugby league and knock-out competitions designated by the Board from time to time.
‘Competitions Committee’	means a committee elected or appointed to assist in the organisation of an individual Scottish Rugby Competition.
‘Competitions Secretary’	means the person appointed by Scottish Rugby to act as Secretary to a Scottish Rugby Competitions Committee.
‘Cup’ and ‘Women’s Cup’	means such knock-out competitions as are designated as Scottish Rugby Competitions by the Board and as the context may require.
‘Emergency Loan Player’	means a player permitted to participate for a club by virtue of Rules 5.20-5.22 .
‘Game On’	means the Law variations approved for use in certain Scottish Rugby Competitions, as further detailed on the Scottish Rugby website .
‘International Clearance’	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.
‘Laws of the Game’	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.
‘Match’	means a match played or to be played in a Competition.
‘Player’	means any person who is named by a Club to participate in a Match.
‘Playing Enclosure’	means the Field of Play and the Perimeter Area as set out in Law 1.
‘Primary League Club’	means the Club which currently holds the Player’s registration and is responsible for maintaining all aspects of the Player’s registration details.
Pro Player	means a player contracted to Glasgow Warriors or Edinburgh Rugby
Pro Team Academy Player	means a player contracted to either Glasgow Warriors or Edinburgh Rugby Academy
‘Regulations’	means any supplementary regulations provided or approved by the Board in respect of individual Competitions, or generally.
‘Rules’	means the Scottish Rugby Competition Rules approved by the Club Rugby Board from time to time.
‘Scottish Rugby’	means Scottish Rugby Union Limited.

'Secondary League Club'	means the one additional Club for which a Player is formally registered to play.
'World Rugby'	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

- 3.1 The Premiership and the National Leagues shall comprise:
 - 3.1.1 a Premiership, to be contested by ten teams in one division;
 - 3.1.2 National League Division 1, to be contested by ten teams;
 - 3.1.3 National League Division 2, to be contested by ten teams;
 - 3.1.4 National League Division 3, to be contested by ten teams; and
 - 3.1.5 National League Division 4, to be contested by ten teams.
- 3.2 The Premiership shall be played in two stages:
 - 3.2.1 Stage 1: the Teams shall play each other on a home-and-away basis.
 - 3.2.2 Stage 2: The top four Teams from Stage 1 will compete in a knock-out competition to determine the Premiership winner. The team ranked 1st will play at home against 4th, and 2nd will play at home against 3rd. The winners will contest the Premiership Final, hosted by the higher-ranked team from Stage 1. If a Match is level at full time, the Knock-Out Match Extra Time Rules ([Rule 10.2](#)) apply.
- 3.3 In National League divisions 1, 2, 3 and 4 the Teams shall play each other on a home-and-away basis.
- 3.4 The structure of the Premiership and National Leagues (including the number of Teams in each division) will normally only be changed with one full season’s notice from Scottish Rugby. A shorter notice period may be

applied if approved by the Board. Any notice must include details of how the changes will be implemented, including revised promotion and relegation.

3.5 Subject to the **Rule 11.1**:

- 3.5.1 The Team winning the Premiership Final shall be the Scottish Champions.
- 3.5.2 The Team finishing tenth in the Premiership shall be relegated to National League Division 1.
- 3.5.3 The Team finishing first in National League Division 1 shall be promoted to the Premiership.
- 3.5.4 The Team finishing in first place in each of National League Division 2, Division 3 and Division 4 shall be promoted to National League Division 1, Division 2 and Division 3 respectively.
- 3.5.5 The Team finishing in tenth place in National League Division 1 shall be relegated to National League Division 2.
- 3.5.6 The Team finishing in tenth place in National League Division 2 shall be relegated to National League Division 3.
- 3.5.7 The Team finishing in tenth place in National League Division 3 shall be relegated to National League Division 4.
- 3.5.8 The Teams finishing in eighth, ninth and tenth places in National League Division 4 shall be relegated to their respective Regional League Division 1.

FIXTURES

Date and Kick-Off Time

- 4.1 The date, time and home/away status are set by the relevant Competitions Secretary.
- 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 normally be granted unless there is a demonstrably negative impact on the completion of the league or integrity of the 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.

Postponed and Cancelled Matches

- 4.7 If a Match cannot be played due to national or local government restrictions, the Club must notify the Competitions Secretary immediately. The Match will be postponed.
- 4.8 Postponed Matches will normally be rescheduled before the end of the season. If not played by then, league positions will be determined using the Best Playing Record Calculation, subject to **Rule 12.1**.
- 4.9 If a rearranged knock-out or play-off Match cannot be played, the Championship Committee may declare the higher-ranked team in the final league table as the winner.
- 4.10 If a Match is likely to be postponed for any other reason, the home Club should seek an alternative venue or, in the first half of the season, may request to reverse the fixture with the opposition's consent. Any postponement must be promptly notified to the opposition, referee, and Competitions Secretary. Failure to make reasonable efforts may result in sanctions, including a warning or deduction of Competition Points.
- 4.11 If further postponement is likely, the Competitions Committee may direct when and where the Match is played. Postponed Matches will normally be rescheduled to the next available date (at least 7 days later), and other fixtures may be rearranged as required.
- 4.12 A Club may request rescheduling where exceptional and unforeseen circumstances beyond its control prevent it from fielding a suitably trained front row (e.g. due to injury or concussion protocols). Requests must be submitted by the Tuesday before the fixture. The Competitions Committee may approve rescheduling at its discretion.

Abandoned Matches

- 4.13 If a Match is abandoned before 20 minutes of the second half has elapsed or postponed, it will normally be rescheduled to the next available date without Competition fixtures. The Competitions Committee may require a midweek fixture and rearrange other Matches as needed. 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.
- 4.14 The Competitions Committee may investigate the cause of any abandonment and take appropriate action. Disciplinary procedures (including cards, citing, and misconduct) will apply as if the Match had been completed.

Inter-District Championship Fixture Conflict

- 4.15 Where three or more Players from a Club are selected in the final published matchday squad for an Inter-District Championship fixture scheduled on the same weekend as that Club's National League Division 1 fixture, the Club may apply in writing to the Championship Committee within 24 hours of squad publication for the fixture to be rescheduled.
- 4.16 Only Players who are registered and eligible for the Club and who have been materially involved in the Club's recent National League Division 1 matchday squads shall be taken into account for the purposes of [Rule 4.15](#).
- 4.17 The Championship Committee shall consult the opposing Club before determining any application and may approve a rescheduling request only where it is satisfied that:
- 4.17.1 the loss of the Players materially affects the Club's ability to compete in the fixture;
 - 4.17.2 a suitable alternative date is available; and
 - 4.17.3 rescheduling would not adversely affect the integrity, sustainability or orderly administration of the Competition.
- 4.18 The selection of three or more Players shall not automatically entitle a Club to a postponement, and where no suitable alternative date is available the fixture shall proceed as scheduled.
- 4.19 Any fixture rescheduled under this Rule shall not result in a Competition Points deduction, financial sanction or other penalty being imposed on either Club.
- 4.20 This Rule shall apply during Season 2026/27 only and shall be reviewed at the conclusion of that Season.

Non-Fulfilment of Fixtures

- 4.21 Clubs must fulfil their fixtures unless there is just cause, as determined by the Competitions Committee
- 4.22 If a Club fails to fulfil a fixture on the date notified it shall receive the following automatic penalty:
- 4.22.1 First default (in season): a three Competition Point deduction;
 - 4.22.2 Second default: a four Competition Point deduction; and
 - 4.22.3 Third default and subsequent defaults: a five Competition Point deduction.
- 4.23 If a Club fails to fulfil a fixture on the date notified and provides less than 48 hours' notice to their opponents, the Competitions Committee may consider further sanctions.
- 4.24 A Club, penalised under [Rule 4.22](#) and/or [Rule 4.23](#), or Scottish Rugby may request a review by the Competitions Committee only where the breach was due to exceptional and unforeseen circumstances beyond its control. Requests must be submitted within 7 days of the scheduled kick-off. The Committee may cancel, reduce, uphold, or increase the penalty.
- 4.25 Where a Club is penalised under [Rule 4.22.3](#), the Competitions Committee may also relegate or disqualify the Club if it considers this necessary or appropriate.
- 4.26 Where a fixture is not fulfilled and the opposition incurs unnecessary expense, the Competitions Committee may order the defaulting Club to reimburse the reasonable costs of the non-offending Club and Match Officials, subject to proof.
- 4.27 If a Club fails to fulfil three or more Competition fixtures in consecutive seasons the Championship Committee may suspend the Club from Competitions for such period as it considers appropriate.

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.

Dual Registration

- 5.10 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.
- 5.11 A dual-registered Player may not play for the first team of their lower Club in its final four Matches if more than 50% of their competition appearances that season have been in the higher Club's 1XV team starting XV, or they have prior written permission from the Competitions Committee.
- 5.12 A Player may not be named in the squads for Matches that are played at the same time or overlap.
- 5.13 No more than five secondary registered Players may be included in the Match squad of their lower placed Club.

Transfer Deadline

- 5.14 The Transfer Deadline date is **Monday 14 December 2026**.
- 5.15 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:
 - 5.15.1 the competition rules allow it;
 - 5.15.2 the Player turns 18 after the deadline; or
 - 5.15.3 the Player has written permission from the Championship Committee.
- 5.16 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).

Pro Team Contract Players

- 5.17 Players contracted to Edinburgh Rugby or Glasgow Warriors may only play in the Premiership and are not eligible for other National Competition Matches.
- 5.18 No more than two Pro Team Contracted Players may be included in any match day squad.

Pro Team Academy Players

- 5.19 Scottish Rugby Pro Team Academy Players may play only in the Premiership and are not eligible for other National League 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 division as their Primary Club; or
 - 5.21.2 for a Club in a lower division in its final four Matches or play-offs; or
 - 5.21.3 where doing so would compromise their Primary Club's ability to meet its competition obligations.

5.22 Without prior approval of the Championship Committee:

- 5.22.1 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
- 5.22.2 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.

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 can play in a match.
- 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 13.1](#).
- 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

- 6.8 Both teams must start a Match with 15 players, including a suitably experienced front-row. Any Match that does not comply with these requirements will be treated as unfulfilled ([Rule 4.21](#))

Replacements / Substitutes

- 6.9 The number of replacements shall be as follows:
 - Premiership:** Four, five, six or seven
 - National League Division 1:** Four or five.
 - National League Divisions 2, 3 and 4:** Two, three or four.
- 6.10 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.
- 6.11 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.
- 6.12 No Player may be included in squads for Matches which are being played either concurrently or are overlapping

Late Arrival

- 6.13 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 competitions, four points are awarded for a win and two points for a draw ("Match Points"). A bonus point is awarded for scoring four or more tries, and to a losing team that finishes within seven points ("Bonus Points").

Notification of Results

- 8.10 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 Premiership matches and referees for all National League matches. Assistant Referees may also be appointed for National League Division 1.
- 9.2 Where assistant referees are not appointed, each team must provide a touch judge (including all Matches in National League Divisions 2,3 and 4).
- 9.3 The home Club is responsible for confirming the appointment.

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

Tied League Placings

- 10.1 If two or more Teams are level on Competition Points, their rankings will be determined by points difference (points scored minus points conceded). If they remain tied, rankings will then be based on the total Competition Points earned in the head-to-head Matches between those teams. If still unresolved, the aggregate points difference from those head-to-head Matches will be used. If teams remain tied and ranking affect qualification, promotion, relegation, or the title:
 - 10.1.1 a play-off Match will normally be arranged at a neutral venue; or
 - 10.1.2 if a play-off match cannot be played, the Championship Committee may apply the criteria in [Rules 10.2.1-10.2.5](#), first to head-to-head Matches and then to all Matches in the Competition. If still unresolved the outcome may be decided by a coin toss.

Play-Off and Knock-Out Matches: Extra Time

- 10.2 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:
 - 10.2.1 the team scoring more tries;
 - 10.2.2 the team scoring more conversions;
 - 10.2.3 the team scoring more drop goals;
 - 10.2.4 the team receiving fewer red cards; and
 - 10.2.5 the team receiving fewer yellow cards.
- 10.3 If still tied further extra time will be played on a sudden-death basis, with the first team to score declared the winner.

CLUBS DISQUALIFIED, SUSPENDED OR WITHDRAWING

- 11.1 If a Club is disqualified, suspended or voluntarily withdraws from a league or pool after the competition has started, all of its Match results will be removed and standings recalculated based on the remaining Clubs.
- 11.2 If the removal of a Club's results and recalculation of standings affects qualification for the next stage of competition (including where a team has already completed its fixtures), the Competitions Committee may take any action it considers appropriate to resolve the issue.

PROMOTION AND RELEGATION IN LEAGUE COMPETITIONS

- 12.1 Promotion and relegation will be determined in accordance with the regulations for each National Competition, subject to applicable Scottish Rugby rules and policies. Vacancies will normally be filled by promoting an additional Club rather than reducing relegation. Where applicable, additional promotion from regional competitions will normally be from the same Region as the withdrawing Club.
- 12.2 If fewer than 65% of Matches in a competition structure (Premiership; National and Regional Leagues; Reserve Leagues; Women's Premiership and National Leagues) are completed, or are unlikely to be completed by the end of the season, the Championship Committee may declare the season null and void, with no promotion or relegation.
- 12.3 Final league positions, titles, promotion/relegation, and division structures for the following season will be confirmed by the Competition Secretary at the end of the season.
- 12.4 A Club may apply for exemption from promotion, subject to:
 - 12.4.1 no more than one application in any two-year period;
 - 12.4.2 submission by 1 April in that season; and
 - 12.4.3 demonstrating that promotion would be materially detrimental to player welfare, finances, or infrastructure.
- 12.5 If an exemption is granted and the Club was in a play-off position, the other play-off team will be promoted.

- 12.6 A Club may apply for voluntary relegation, subject to:
- 12.6.1 submission by 1 April in that season; and
 - 12.6.2 demonstrating that remaining in the higher league would be materially detrimental to player welfare, finances, or infrastructure.
- 12.7 All decisions on promotion and relegation by the Competitions Committee or Championship Committee are final and binding.

COMPLAINTS

- 13.1 A complaint of an alleged breach of the Rules or Regulations (a “Complaint”) may be made by:
- 13.1.1 the Championship Secretary (for any Competition);
 - 13.1.2 a Competition Secretary (for their competitions only); or
 - 13.1.3 a Club where it is directly affected and has suffered significant disadvantage or material prejudice.
- 13.2 All Complaints must:
- 13.2.1 set out the alleged breach and relevant Rule/Regulation;
 - 13.2.2 explain the disadvantage or prejudice suffered; and
 - 13.2.3 be signed by the complainant (for Clubs, by the President, Secretary or in the absence of either of these another authorised Club Official).
- 13.3 Complaints must be submitted within 14 days of the alleged breach.
- 13.4 The subject of the Complaint will be provided with a copy of the complaint as soon as practicable.

Complaint Process

- 13.5 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.
- 13.6 The Complaints Committee may:
- 13.6.1 determine its own procedures, including holding hearings in person or by electronic means;
 - 13.6.2 decide timescales and expedite matters where necessary, and waive the 14-day limit where appropriate;
 - 13.6.3 request and consider any relevant evidence;
 - 13.6.4 request attendance of any Club, team, or person. Failure to cooperate may result in the matter proceeding in their absence and/or disciplinary action.
- 13.7 The subject of the Complaint has the right to:
- 13.7.1 be represented (up to two representatives, one of whom must be a Club member if applicable);
 - 13.7.2 submit evidence, call witnesses and make representations; and
 - 13.7.3 receive written notice of the decision.
- 13.8 The burden of proof lies with the complainant and is on the balance of probabilities.
- 13.9 Written reasons will be provided if requested and upon any appeal.

Sanctions

- 13.10 If a Complaint is upheld, the Complaints Committee may impose one or more of the following:
- 13.10.1 a formal reprimand and warning;
 - 13.10.2 a deduction of up to the full amount of any participation money which the Club may be entitled to;
 - 13.10.3 an award of costs;
 - 13.10.4 require any Match to be replayed;
 - 13.10.5 the deduction of up to five Competition Points per breach;
 - 13.10.6 forfeiture or reallocation of Match points (including Bonus Points);
 - 13.10.7 the suspension or expulsion of a Club, team, Player or person from a Competition;
 - 13.10.8 any other appropriate sanction (including educational based sanctions where applicable).

Acts of Misconduct

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

NOTICES

- 14.1 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

- 15.1 A Competitions Committee, Championship Committee, Complaints Committee or Appeals 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.
- 15.2 With prior approval of the Board, the Championship Committee or Competition Committee may:
 - 15.2.1 decide matters not covered by the Rules and Regulations and take appropriate action;
 - 15.2.2 interpret the Rules and Regulations in line with their purpose and the interests of the game; and
 - 15.2.3 resolve inconsistencies and correct administrative errors.
- 15.3 Decisions made under **Rule 15.2** are final and binding, subject to any right of appeal under these Rules.

APPEALS

- 16.1 Any appeal against a decision made under these Competition Rules shall be submitted and determined in accordance with the Scottish Rugby Competition Appeals Process, as amended from time to time. The Competition Appeals Process forms a separate document to these Rules and sets out the grounds of appeal, the procedure to be followed, applicable timescales, and the powers of the Appeal Panel.

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	Premiership	National League Division 1	National League Divisions 2, 3 and 4
U19 Scrummage Law Variations	Not applicable		
Minimum number of starting players	Both teams must start the Match with 15 Players, including a suitably experienced front-row.		
Uncontested scrums	Not applicable		
Transfer Deadline	Monday 14 December 2026		
A Player must be registered with the club they are representing	All Players taking part in the Competition (except Emergency Player Loan Scheme Players) must be registered as active with the Club they represent		
Dual Registered Players	No more than five dual registered Players may be named in a matchday squad for their lower placed Club.		
Replacements	Stage 1: Four, five, six or seven. Stage 2: Five, six or seven.	Four or five	Two, three or four.
Player matching required	No		
Game On permitted	No		
Close Time commences	Monday 17 May 2027		