



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:

(Women's) Premiership

(Women's) National League Division 1

(Women's) Regional Play-off Series

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

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

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



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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 = $34/15 \times 22 = 49.86$).
'Central Programme'	means the Scottish Rugby High Performance programme
'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 Women's 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 Women's Competitions.
'Competitions Secretary'	means the person appointed by Scottish Rugby to act as Secretary to a Scottish Rugby Competitions Committee.
'Contracted Players'	means players contracted to Scottish Rugby as part of the Central or National Academy programmes.
'Cup'	means such Women's 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 5.29-5.31
'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.
'National Academy'	means the Scottish Rugby High Performance National Academy
'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.

'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.
'Secondary League Club'	means the one additional Club for which a Player is formally registered to play.
'Transfer Deadline'	means the deadline date after which player transfers within specified competitions are no longer permitted.
'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 and the Championship Committee is supported in organising the Competitions by the Competitions Committee comprising:
 - 2.3.1 a Convenor (appointed by the Board);
 - 2.3.2 one representative elected from the Clubs participating in the Premiership;
 - 2.3.3 one representative elected from the Clubs participating in the National League;
 - 2.3.4 two representatives elected from the Clubs participating in each of the Caledonia North, Caledonia Midlands/East and West Regional Leagues; and
 - 2.3.5 such other individuals as may be co-opted to the Committee (in a non-voting capacity).
 - 2.3.6 Scottish Rugby shall appoint a Competitions Secretary to assist in the administration of the Competitions.
- 2.4 Subject to the Appeals Process, the Competitions Committee may decide all matters relating to the organisation, control, and management of the Competitions (including eligibility and qualification). Its decisions are final and binding on all participants in the Competitions.
- 2.5 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

- 2.6 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.
- 2.7 Clubs shall ensure that their Players and officials comply with all applicable Rules and Regulations.
- 2.8 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.
- 2.9 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 Women's Leagues shall comprise:
 - 3.1.1 a Premiership, to be contested by eight teams in one division;
 - 3.1.2 A National League, to be contested by six teams in one division;
 - 3.1.3 the Caledonia North Regional Leagues, contested by Clubs in the Region in a league format to be decided by the Competitions Committee;
 - 3.1.4 the Caledonia Midlands/East Regional Leagues, contested by Clubs in the both the Caledonia Midlands and East Regions in a league format to be decided by the Competitions Committee; and
 - 3.1.5 the West Regional Leagues, contested by Clubs in the Region in a league format to be decided by the Competitions Committee.
- 3.2 The Premiership shall be played in three stages:
 - 3.2.1 Stage 1: the Teams shall play each other on a home-or-away basis.
 - 3.2.2 Stage 2: the Teams finishing Stage 1 in positions 1 to 4 shall play each other on a home and away basis in Stage 2 Division 1 and teams finishing Stage 1 in positions 5 to 8 shall play each other on a home and away basis in Stage 2 Division 2. League points gained in Stage 1 will be carried forward to Stage 2.
 - 3.2.3 Stage 3: at the end of Stage 2 the Teams in places one and two in Division 1 shall contest a final match to decide the Women's Premiership winners. The Team ranked first shall play at home against the Team ranked second. If the scores are level at full-time the Knock-Out Match Extra Time Rules (**Rule 11.1-11.3**) shall apply.
 - 3.2.4 Subject to **Rule 11**, the Team winning the Premiership Final shall be the Scottish Champions.
 - 3.2.5 The Team finishing eighth in the Premiership shall be relegated to the National League ~~Division 1~~.

- 3.3 In the National League the Teams shall play each other on a home-and-away basis.
 - 3.3.1 The Team finishing first in the National League shall be promoted to the Premiership.
 - 3.3.2 The team finishing sixth in the National League, together with the winners of each Regional League Division 1, shall qualify for the Women's Regional Play-Off Series. The competition will consist of semi-finals and a final contested by the four qualifying teams. The winner of the Play-Off Series shall secure a place in the National League for the following season. If a Match is level at full time, the Knock-Out Match Extra Time Rules (**Rule 11.211.1-11.3**) apply.
- 3.4 The format and competition structure of each Regional League Division 1 and below shall be defined by the Competitions Committee.
- 3.5 Clubs seeking entry to the Women's Competitions must submit a written application to the Competitions Secretary. Admission will be subject to any conditions determined by the Competitions Committee, which shall also have sole discretion to place successful applicants in the appropriate league or division.
- 3.6 A Club may not have more than one team in any division.
- 3.7 A Club's second and lower XVs may play in the National and Regional Leagues but cannot be promoted to the Women's Premiership.
- 3.8 In exceptional or emergency circumstances (including where the playing season is delayed or suspended) the Competitions Committee may temporarily revise the format of the Women's Competitions.
- 3.9 All promotions shall be subject to the promoted club being able to demonstrate that it is able to meet the published criteria for membership of the relevant league and:
 - 3.9.1 The first-placed Team in each Regional League Division 2 shall be promoted to the relevant Regional League Division 1.
 - 3.9.2 The team finishing bottom of each Regional League Division 1 shall be relegated to the relevant Regional League Division 2.
 - 3.9.3 The first-placed Team in each Regional League Division 3 shall be promoted to the relevant Regional League Division 2.
- 3.10 The team finishing bottom of each Regional League Division 2 shall be relegated to the relevant Regional League Division 3.
- 3.11 The Competitions Committee may amend the promotion and relegation arrangements where required for operational reasons.

FIXTURES

Date and Kick-Off Time

- 4.1 The date, time and home and away status of Teams in any Match are set by the Competitions Secretary.
- 4.2 Matches must be played on the scheduled date and at the scheduled time. Where both Clubs agree, the home Club may submit a written request to the Competitions Secretary to amend the date or kick-off time, including to an evening or weekday fixture. Such requests must be received no later than 7 days before the scheduled kick-off and must include evidence of the visiting Club's consent. Requests submitted within 7 days of the scheduled kick-off may not be considered. Approval will only be granted where the proposed change does not adversely affect the completion of the league or competition programme.
- 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 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 by such agreements:
 - 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 13.2**.
- 4.9 If a rearranged knock-out or play-off Match cannot be played, the Competition 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 must 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 the Competitions Secretary. Failure to make reasonable efforts to find an alternative venue 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 Where a Match is postponed or abandoned before 20 minutes of the second half have elapsed, it shall normally be rescheduled for the next available date on which no Competition fixtures are scheduled. The Competitions Committee may, at its discretion, require the Match to be played midweek and may rearrange other fixtures as necessary to facilitate its completion. Where a Match is abandoned after 20 minutes or more of the second half have elapsed, the Match shall be deemed complete and the score at the time of abandonment shall stand as the final result. Any red cards, yellow cards, citations, or misconduct complaints arising during an abandoned Match shall be dealt with in the same manner as if the Match had been completed.
- 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.

Non-Fulfilment of Fixtures

- 4.15 Clubs must fulfil their fixtures unless there is just cause, as determined by the Competitions Committee
- 4.16 If a Club fails to fulfil a fixture on the date notified it shall receive the following automatic penalty:
 - 4.16.1 First default (in season): a three Competition Point deduction;
 - 4.16.2 Second default: a four Competition Point deduction; and
 - 4.16.3 Third default and subsequent defaults: a five Competition Point deduction.
- 4.17 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.
- 4.18 A Club, penalised under **Rule 4.16** and/or **Rule 4.17**, 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.
- 4.19 Where the Competitions Committee determines that a default resulted from the wilful actions of a Club, it may, in addition to any other sanction:
 - 4.19.1 impose 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 the withholding of up to the full amount of any participation funding or prize money to which the Club may otherwise be entitled; and/or
 - 4.19.2 award the Competition Points to either Club, apportion them between the Clubs as it considers appropriate, determine that no Competition Points shall be awarded, or order that the Match be replayed.
- 4.20 Where a Club is penalised under **Rule 4.16.3** or **Rule 4.17**, the Competitions Committee may also relegate or disqualify the Club if it considers this necessary or appropriate.
- 4.21 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.
- 4.22 If a Club fails to fulfil three or more Competition fixtures in consecutive seasons the Competition 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 or attempt to register a Player without their consent;
 - 5.8.2 to field an ineligible Player;
 - 5.8.3 for a Player or Club to breach Player payment provisions of SDR 4.1 Player Status and Player Contracts.
 - 5.8.4 mislead Scottish Rugby or any Competitions Committee regarding 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 including a formal reprimand and warning as to future conduct and/or deduction of up to an additional five Competition Points and/or disqualification from the relevant competition. The Player shall also be liable to such additional penalty or suspension as the Competitions Committee considers appropriate.
- 5.10 In the Women's Premiership, National League, each Regional League Division 1 and the Regional Play Off Series:
 - 5.10.1 All Players participating in the Competition (other than those playing under the Emergency Player Loan Scheme) must be properly registered as an active Player with the Club that they are representing.
 - 5.10.2 A Player may not be initially registered with a Secondary League Club where that Club has three or fewer league matches remaining.
 - 5.10.3 A Player may not participate in Matches for more than two Clubs in any season, unless prior written approval has been obtained from the Competitions Committee.
- 5.11 In Regional League 2 and below, a Player may play for a Club to which the player is not registered, provided they are registered with a Club on the Scottish Rugby registration system. Participation as a loan Player does not constitute registration with that Club and does not count towards the limit of playing for two Clubs (as set out in [Rule 5.10.3](#)) However, Players who have made more than three Premiership appearances during the season are not eligible to play as borrowed Players in Regional League Division 2 or below.
- 5.12 The number of borrowed Players permitted per Match shall be:
 - 5.12.1 up to five in Regional League Division 2; and
 - 5.12.2 unrestricted in Regional League Division 3.

Dual Registration

- 5.13 A Player's Primary and Secondary Clubs must be in different league divisions. If, through promotion or relegation, both Clubs come to compete in the same division, the Player must be deregistered from their Secondary Club. Where a Player is registered with two Clubs at the same Regional League level, the Primary Club shall be deemed the higher Club.
- 5.14 A dual-registered Player may not play for their lower-placed Club in the same weekend where they have played more than 40 minutes for their higher-placed Club.

- 5.15 A dual-registered Player may not play for the first team of their lower-placed Club in its final three League Matches, or the Regional Play-Off Series, unless at least 50% of their previous competition matches (league and cup) that season have been for the lower placed team or where prior written approval has been granted by the Competitions Committee.
- 5.16 A Player who has been selected for Scotland Women, or the senior national team of another Union, within the preceding 12 months shall not be eligible for dual registration unless dispensation is granted by the Competitions Committee.
- 5.17 The number of secondary registered Players permitted to participate for their lower-placed Club in a matchday squad shall be, other than as permitted in **Rule 5.25**:
 - 5.17.1 In the National League: a maximum of three Players.
 - 5.17.2 In Regional League Division 1: a maximum of three Players.
 - 5.17.3 In Regional League Division 2 and below: no limit shall apply.
- 5.18 In the Women's Premiership Stage 2 and Regional Play-Off Series:
 - 5.18.1 a maximum of three dual-registered Players may be included in a matchday squad for their higher-placed Club and any such Player must have played in at least two Matches during the season for that higher-placed Club.
- 5.19 No Player may be named in matchday squads for Matches that are played concurrently or are overlapping other than as permitted in **Rule 5.25**.

Central Programme Players

- 5.20 Contracted Players to the Central Programme may only play in the Women's Premiership and are not eligible to play in any other Women's Competitions.
- 5.21 No more than four Contracted Players may play in any match day squad.

National Academy Players

- 5.22 Contracted Players to the National Academy programme may only play in the Women's Premiership and are not eligible to play in any other Women's Competitions.

Ineligible First XV Players

- 5.23 Where a Club has a second XV or lower team competing in a Competition, a Player who has started a first XV Match shall not be eligible to play for a lower XV in a Competition Match during the same season unless:
 - 5.23.1 the first and second XV Matches are concurrent;
 - 5.23.2 fewer than 50% of the Player's appearances that season have been as a first XV starter; or
 - 5.23.3 prior dispensation has been granted by the Competitions Committee.
- 5.24 First XV and second XV fixtures played over the same weekend shall be deemed to be concurrent Matches for the purposes of **Rule 5.23.1**
- 5.25 A Player who has played fewer than 40 minutes for the first XV may play for the second XV in the same weekend, subject to **Rule 5.23.2**.

Transfer Deadline

- 5.26 The Transfer Deadline date is **Monday 14 December 2026**. The Transfer Deadline shall not apply below Regional League Division 1.
- 5.27 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:
 - 5.27.1 the competition rules allow it;
 - 5.27.2 the Player turns 18 after the Transfer Deadline; or
 - 5.27.3 the Player has written permission from the Competitions Committee.
- 5.28 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).

Emergency Loan Scheme

- 5.29 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.
- 5.30 A Player may not play on loan:
 - 5.30.1 for a Club in the same division as their Primary Club; or
 - 5.30.2 for a Club in a lower division in its final three Matches or play-offs; or
 - 5.30.3 where doing so would compromise their Primary Club's ability to meet its competition obligations
- 5.31 Without prior approval of the Competitions Committee:

- 5.31.1 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
- 5.31.2 A Player who has started in more than eight Premiership or National League Matches for their Primary Club 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 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 on time 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 14**.
- 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 In the Premiership, National League ~~Division 1~~ and each Regional League Division 1:
 - 6.8.1 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; and
 - 6.8.2 if a Club is reduced (through injury or the dismissal of Players) to less than 12 Players then the Match shall be abandoned at that point.
- 6.9 In all other Regional Divisions:
- 6.10 A team may start a match with fewer than 15 players, but not fewer than 10 provided it fields at least five Players in the scrum at all times. If a Club starts the Match with less than 15 Players both Clubs must start with an equal number of Players ("Player Matching").
- 6.11 Irrespective of how many players are in the starting team, Player Matching must be maintained throughout the Match other than where a player has been permanently or temporarily dismissed from the field.
- 6.12 A Match may start with uncontested scrums, provided
 - 6.12.1 at least five Players are available for the scrum at all times; and
 - 6.12.2 the Team requesting uncontested scrums does not include any replacements in its matchday squad. A Team requiring to start a Match with uncontested scrums must notify the opposition and 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 Competition Secretary within 48 hours of after Kick-Off.
- 6.13 If a Club is reduced (through injury or the dismissal of Players) to less than 10 Players then the Match shall be abandoned at that point.
- 6.14 Any Match that does not comply with these requirements will be investigated as a Non-Fulfilled fixture.

Replacements / Substitutes

- 6.15 The number of replacements shall be as follows:
 - Premiership:** Up to seven
 - National League:** Up to seven
 - Regional League Division 1:** Up to seven
 - Regional League Divisions 2 and lower:** Up to seven.

- 6.16 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.
- 6.17 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.
- 6.18 No Player may be included in squads for Matches which are being played either concurrently or are overlapping.

Dispensation for International Players

- 6.19 Where five or more Players from a Club are selected for the Scotland Senior National Representative Teams on a scheduled Competition date, that Club may:
 - 6.19.1 fulfill the fixture in accordance with the competition rules;
 - 6.19.2 apply for approval to play the Match using Player Matching (to a minimum of 12-a-side), or
 - 6.19.3 on one occasion during the season only, apply to reschedule the fixture to the next available stand-by date.

Late Arrival

- 6.20 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 independent 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 an 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.

THE MATCH: LAW VARIATIONS

- 9.1 In each Regional Division 2 and below, the Game On Law Variations may be applied (see [Scottish Rugby website](#)).
- 9.2 The U19 Scrummage Law Variations may be applied in competitions below Regional Division 1 at the discretion of the Competitions Committee.

REFEREES AND TOUCH JUDGES

- 10.1 Scottish Rugby shall appoint a referee and assistant referees for each Match in the Women's Premiership.
- 10.2 In National League Division 1, all Regional Leagues and the Women's Regional Play Off Series The match referee shall be appointed by the home Club's local referee society, with the home Club responsible for confirming the appointment. Each Club shall provide a touch judge

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

Tied League Placings

- 11.1 If two or more Teams are level on Competition Points, 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 different from those head-to-head Matches will be used. If teams remain tied and ranking affect qualification, promotion, relegation, or the title:
- 11.1.1 a play-off Match will normally be arranged at a neutral venue; or
 - 11.1.2 if a play-off match cannot be played, the Competition Committee may apply the criteria in [Rules 11.2.1-11.2.5](#), 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

- 11.2 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:
- 11.2.1 the team scoring more tries;
 - 11.2.2 the team scoring more conversions;
 - 11.2.3 the team scoring more drop goals;
 - 11.2.4 the team receiving fewer red cards; and

- 11.2.5 the team receiving fewer yellow cards.
- 11.3 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

- 12.1 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.
- 12.2 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

- 13.1 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.
- 13.2 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.
- 13.3 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.
- 13.4 A Club may apply for exemption from promotion, subject to:
 - 13.4.1 no more than one application in any two-year period;
 - 13.4.2 submission by 1 April in that season; and
 - 13.4.3 demonstrating that promotion would be materially detrimental to player welfare, finances, or infrastructure.
- 13.5 If an exemption is granted and the Club was in a play-off position, the other play-off team will be promoted.
- 13.6 A Club may apply for voluntary relegation, subject to:
 - 13.6.1 submission by 1 April in that season; and
 - 13.6.2 demonstrating that remaining in the higher league would be materially detrimental to player welfare, finances, or infrastructure.
- 13.7 All decisions on promotion and relegation by the ~~Competitions Committee~~ or Championship Committee are final and binding.

COMPLAINTS

- 14.1 A complaint of an alleged breach of the Rules or Regulations (a "Complaint") may be made by:
 - 14.1.1 the Championship Secretary (for any Competition);
 - 14.1.2 a Competition Secretary (for their competitions only); or
 - 14.1.3 a Club where it is directly affected and has suffered significant disadvantage or material prejudice.
- 14.2 All Complaints must:
 - 14.2.1 set out the alleged breach and relevant Rule/Regulation;
 - 14.2.2 explain the disadvantage or prejudice suffered; and
 - 14.2.3 be signed by the complainant (for Clubs, by the President, Secretary or in the absence of either of these another authorised Club Official).
- 14.3 Complaints must be submitted within 14 days of the alleged breach.
- 14.4 The subject of the Complaint will be provided with a copy as soon as practicable.

Complaint Process

- 14.5 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.
- 14.6 The Complaints Committee may:
 - 14.6.1 determine its own procedures, including holding hearings in person or by electronic means;
 - 14.6.2 decide timescales and expedite matters where necessary, and waive the 14-day limit where appropriate;
 - 14.6.3 request and consider any relevant evidence;

- 14.6.4 request attendance of any Club, team, or person. Failure to cooperate may result in the matter proceeding in their absence and/or disciplinary action.
- 14.7 The subject of the Complaint has the right to:
 - 14.7.1 be represented (up to two representatives, one of whom must be a Club member if applicable);
 - 14.7.2 submit evidence, call witnesses and make representations; and
 - 14.7.3 receive written notice of the decision.
- 14.8 The burden of proof lies with the complainant and is on the balance of probabilities.
- 14.9 Written reasons will be provided if requested and upon any appeal.

Sanctions

- 14.10 If a Complaint is upheld, the Complaints Committee may impose one or more of the following:
 - 14.10.1 a formal reprimand and warning;
 - 14.10.2 a deduction of up to the full amount of any participation money which the Club may be entitled to;
 - 14.10.3 an award of costs;
 - 14.10.4 require any Match to be replayed;
 - 14.10.5 the deduction of up to five Competition Points per breach;
 - 14.10.6 forfeiture or reallocation of Match points (including Bonus Points);
 - 14.10.7 the suspension or expulsion of a Club, team, Player or person from a Competition;
 - 14.10.8 any other appropriate sanction (including educational based sanctions where applicable).

Acts of Misconduct

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

NOTICES

- 15.1 Any notice served 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

- 16.1 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.
- 16.2 With prior approval of the Board, the Championship Committee or Competition Committee may:
 - 16.2.1 decide matters not covered by the Rules and Regulations and take appropriate action;
 - 16.2.2 interpret the Rules and Regulations in line with their purpose and the interests of the game; and
 - 16.2.3 resolve inconsistencies and correct administrative errors.
- 16.3 Decisions made under **Rule 16.2** are final and binding, subject to any right of appeal under these Rules.

APPEALS

- 17.1 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 and Regional League Division 1	Regional League Division 2 and 3
The U19 Scrummage Law Variations may apply	No		Yes
Minimum number of starting players	A team may start a Match with fewer than 15 Players (but not less than 12 Players)		A team may start a Match with fewer than 15 Players (but not less than 10 Players) unless Game On is agreed.
Uncontested scrums	No. A Team must start the Match with a suitably experienced front row.		Yes. A Match may start with uncontested scrums, subject to there being at least five Players in the scrum at all times
Transfer Deadline	Monday 19 14 December 2026		The Transfer Deadline shall not apply in Regional Leagues Division 2 and 3.
A Player must be registered with the club they are representing	Yes		Not applicable. Note: In Regional League Division 2, a Club may include up to five Players who are not registered with that Club in any Match. In Regional League Division 3, no such limit applies
No of Dual Registered	No restrictions for league. See Rules Error! Reference source not found. re play-off matches.	Up to three allowed to play for their lower club in league. See Rules Error! Reference source not found. re play-off matches.	No restrictions