



England
Rugby

Age Grade
Rugby
Discipline

August 2019

- Discipline Overview
- Age – Grade Discipline
- Regulation Changes
- Escalation Policy
- Half Game Rule
- Other Regulatory Changes
- Questions

AGE GRADE RUGBY DISCIPLINE OVERVIEW

- RFU REGULATION 19

RFU Regulation 19.1.5

The overriding objective of RFU Regulation 19 is to **maintain and promote fair play, protect the health and welfare of Players** (and others involved in the Game), **ensure that acts of Foul Play and Misconduct (on and off the field of play) are dealt with expeditiously and fairly by independent means** within the Game and that the image/reputation of the Game is not adversely affected. Furthermore, to achieve consistency in the way in which discipline is administered and uniformity in the manner in which the assessment of seriousness of Foul Play is conducted and sanctions imposed.

ALL REGULATIONS CAN BE FOUND AT

<https://www.englandrugby.com/governance/rules-and-regulations/regulations>



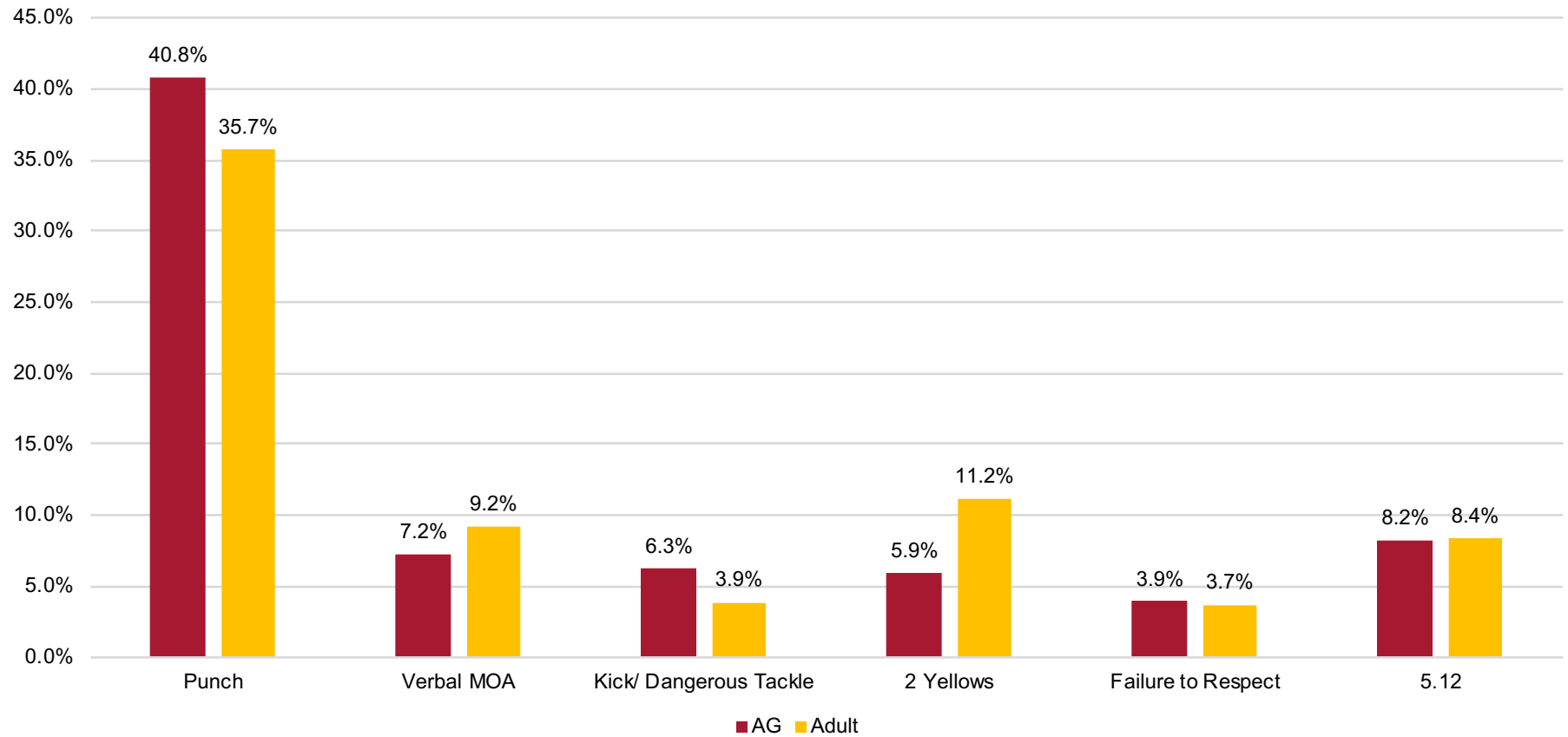
RFU REGULATION 19 OVERVIEW

The key elements of World Rugby Regulation 17 are as follows:-

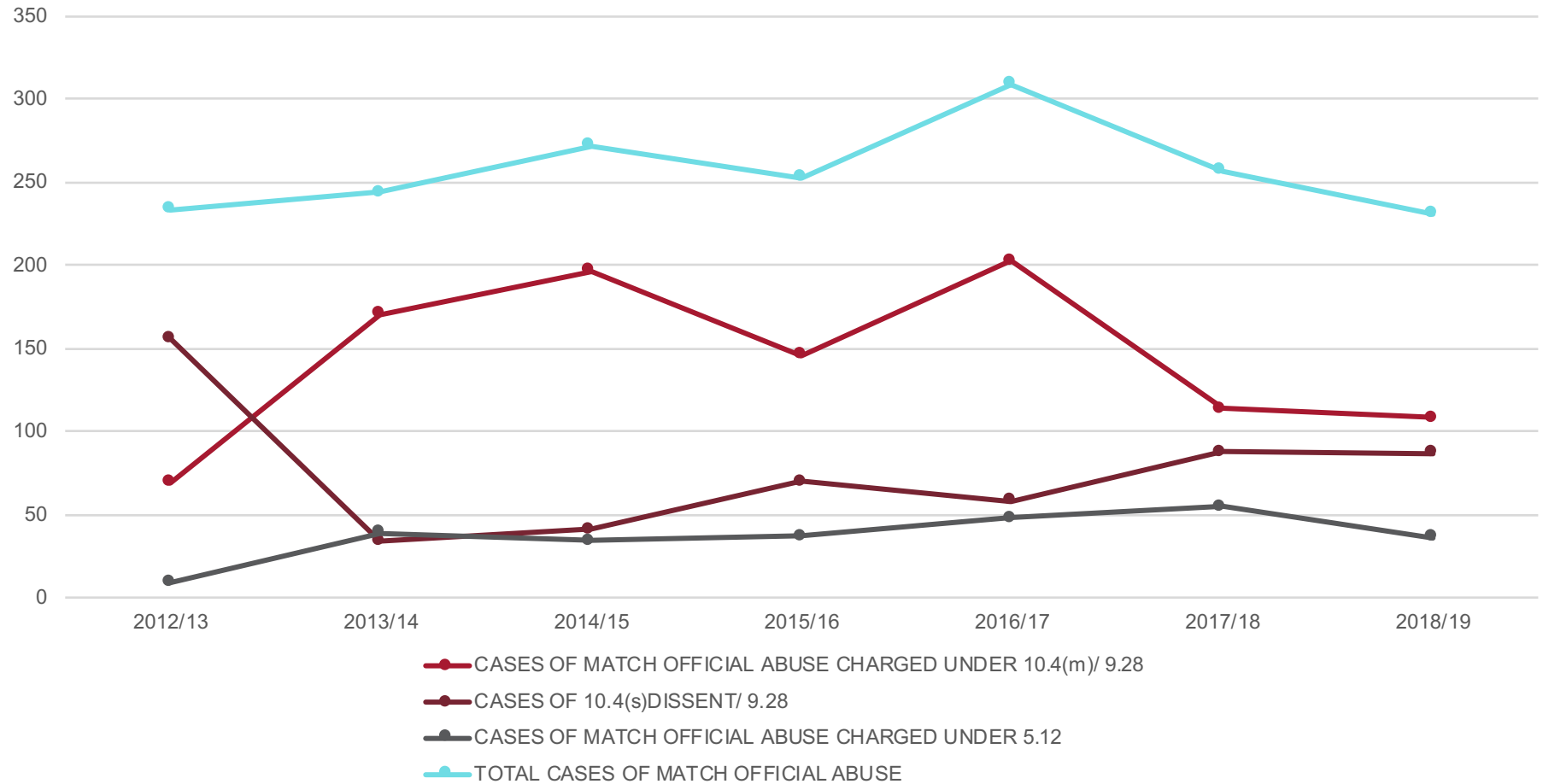
- (a) The sanctions applicable to Foul Play shall be the same throughout the Game.
- (b) All Matches are equal (i.e. a match is a match)
- (c) The core sanctioning process set out by the WR shall be applied to all disciplinary cases involving Foul Play at all levels of the Game.
- (d) The principles of natural justice shall be adhered to in all disciplinary proceedings.
- (k) Players Ordered-Off shall be provisionally suspended pending the determination of the case.
- (l) Suspended Players who appeal shall remain under suspension until their case is ultimately resolved by Appeal panel

2018/19 CB Returns

Top 5 offences 2018/19



Match Official Abuse Statistics 2012/13 - 2018/19



AGE GRADE RUGBY DISCIPLINE

- Appendix 6 to RFU Regulation 19 covers discipline in age grade rugby
- The Age Grade sanction table provides entry points for each offence in matches rather than weeks
- There is also a helpful document on the RFU website.
- The most important feature of age grade disciplinary cases is ensuring that the whole process is child-centric

RFU Regulation 16, Appendix 6, 1.3

- People who know the player should be involved
- Process should be simple and easy to understand
- Minimal Delay
- Welfare of the player is paramount
- Cases should not be publicised
- Sanctions should not discourage players
- No financial penalties
- Any non Rugby sanctions are in addition to Rugby sanction

Who deals with Age Grade cases?

- U12 & below – Club Coach/Manager to deal with any issues
This should be focused on education rather than sanction
There is no citing at U12 and below
- U13 – U18 – Club Discipline Officer or Panel
- Certain Offences must be sent to RFU (Reg. 19.1.4)
- Incidents in School/College matches are dealt with by the School
- Guidance is available from CBAGDS/ ERFSU DS/ RFU

Sanction Entry Points

Note: Any act of foul play which results in contact with the head and/or neck shall result in at least a mid-range sanction

9.11. Players must not do anything that is reckless or dangerous to others.

Up to U15s Sanction	Low-end: 1 match	Mid-range: 2 matches	Top-end: 4+ matches
U16 to U18 Sanction	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches	Top-end: 6+ matches

9.12. A player must not physically abuse anyone. Physical abuse includes, but is not limited to:

Biting	Up to U15s Sanction	Low-end: 4 matches	Mid-range: 8 matches	Top-end: 12 + matches
	U16 to U18 Sanction	Low-end: 8 matches	Mid-range: 10 matches	Top-end: 14+ matches
Intentional Contact with Eye(s)¹	Up to U15s Sanction	Low-end: 4 matches	Mid-range: 8 matches	Top-end: 12+ matches
	U16 to U18 Sanction	Low-end: 8 matches	Mid-range: 10 matches	Top-end: 14+ matches
Reckless Contact with Eye(s)³	Up to U15s Sanction	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches	Top-end: 8+ matches
	U16 to U18 Sanction	Low-end: 4 matches	Mid-range: 6 matches	Top-end: 12+ matches
Contact with Eye Area⁴	Up to U15s Sanction	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches	Top-end: 6+ matches
	U16 to U18 Sanction	Low-end: 4 matches	Mid-range: 6 matches	Top-end: 10+ matches
Punching or striking with hand or arm (including stiff-arm tackle)	Up to U15s Sanction	Low-end: 1 match	Mid-range: 2 matches	Top-end: 4+ matches
	U16 to U18 Sanction	Low-end: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches	Top-end: 6+ matches

^{1, 3 & 4} The "eye" involves all tissues including the eye lids within and covering the orbital cavity and the "eye area" is anywhere in close proximity to the eye.

- Matches not weeks

- Sanctions apply to all matches

- Mitigation / aggravation covered in Regulation 19.11



- **Mandatory Mid-Range Sanctions**

ANY ACT OF FOUL PLAY WHICH RESULTS IN CONTACT WITH THE HEAD **AND/OR**
NECK SHALL RESULT IN AT LEAST A MID-RANGE SANCTION

AGE GRADE RUGBY DISCIPLINE REPORTING

- Clubs are required to report any incidents/sending offs to the CB Age-Grade Discipline Secretary (CBAGDS) within **48 Hours**
- The CBAGDS / NAGDS/ ERFSU DS can provide advice and guidance on how to approach youth cases
- Any finding/ Sanction should be reported to the CBAGDS within **48 Hours**
- The CBAGDS or the RFU Head of Discipline have the ability to review any finding.

DISCIPLINE WITHIN SCHOOLS

- Discipline in Schools/ Colleges shall be dealt with by the Head Teach /Principle
- A number of CB's have a CSU DS who can advise schools
- The ERFSU DS is also available to advise
- Non Rugby sanctions are **in addition** to the agreed Sanction table
- Red Cards / Sanctions should be reported to the CSU DS within 48 hours
- Sanctions can be reviewed

AGE GRADE CITING PROCESS

- Incidents where a Red Card should have been awarded
- Only applies to U13-U18 and there will be no costs
- Chairman/ Secretary* have 14 days to inform CBAGDS and include specific details
- Panel convened for contested cases

DISCIPLINE OR SAFEGUARDING

- Has there been on-field foul play (WR Law 9)
- Is the conduct prejudicial to the interests of the game (5.12)

- Has the RFU Safeguarding Policy been breached?
- Is the conduct or behaviour poor practice?
- What is the impact on the Child?

DISCIPLINE OR SAFEGUARDING

- Serious Injury
- Police Investigation
- Racial Abuse
- Abuse of a YMO
- Breach of Reg 15

- Support the Child
- Possible Referral to Children's services
- RFU Liaison with police

- Offender is in position of trust in Rugby
- Offender has a position of trust outside of Rugby

Referral to LADO as per statutory guidance

If in doubt notify the RFU /CBAGDS/ CBSM

MATCH ABANDONMENT

- The CBAGDS should be notified immediately (will notify NAGDS)
 - Identify individuals responsible
 - Request as much evidence as possible (Video/ Photo's)
 - Ask Clubs to assist with statement / evidence collection
- If Police are involved, the case must be referred to the RFU
- Regulation 19 allows the NGADS to provisionally suspend teams whilst an investigation is ongoing
- 5.12 charges likely to be issued against the club
 - Match abandonment
 - Failure to control players/ Spectators

RULE 5.12

5.12 The Union shall have power to discipline any

- (a) Member;
- (b) Rugby Body;
- (c) non-voting member of the Union;
- (d) any player, official, member or employee of a Member or a Rugby Body; or
- (e) any other person or body that submits to Union's jurisdiction to discipline them;

for any infringement of these Rules, the RFU Regulations, the Laws of the Game or the World Rugby Regulations and/or for any conduct which is prejudicial to the interests of the Union or the Game or which amounts to cheating. The Union may terminate or suspend membership of the Union or impose any other appropriate punishment for any such offence.



POSSIBLE SANCTIONS

- Game values workshops
- Silent / Positive Sundays
- Discipline Roadmap
- Game Marshalls
- Respect Barriers
- Points deduction

RFU Age-Grade Regulations Update

***This details the process of Age Grade complaint and regulation
15 breaches relating to: Half game, competition calendar, playing
up/down, grouping of players, competitive menu, rules of play.***

If further
action
needed

**RFU Head of Discipline
(+ National Age Grade Discipline
Secretary)**

Age Grade
Rugby
Manager

Age Grade
Governance

**Adjudication /
advice
(if needed).**

Investigate
and action if
needed by

CB –
Discipline
Sec / Hon
Sec

CSU →
ERFSU

ECRFU

RFU Area
Manager

PPO /
RPDG /
Head of
Regional
Academy

Complaint at
/ with

Clubs

Schools

College

CB

Academy /
DPP / CB
Rep Rugby



Subject to 15.7 a male and female player can play and train in adult contact rugby when they reach their seventeenth birthday provided the following conditions are met:

- a) the player does not train or play in the front row of the contested scrum.
- b) the RFU Safeguarding Policy and RFU Regulation 21 are complied with;
- c) the Club has an appointed Officer and is approved by its Constituent Body to play 17 year olds in adult rugby for the season by completing the **Playing Adult Rugby – Club Approval Form and process**;
- d) the player has been assessed, as capable of playing with adults and the assessment has been countersigned and approved by the Constituent Body to play adult rugby until their 18th birthday by completing the Playing Adult Rugby – Player Approval Form and process;

Classification of Breach	Description of Classification	Entry Point for Sanction
Low level breach	A player under the age of 18 trains with adults without required permission. No injury	Suspension of coach/person responsible for training for 4 weeks; and Club reprimanded
Mid-level breach	A player under the age of 18 plays with adults without required permission. No injury A player under the age of 18 trains with adults without required permission. Injury occurs	Suspension of coach/person responsible for team selection for 3 months; and Team suspended from playing for 4 weeks; and Points deducted from club 1st XV equating to 2 wins (possibly suspended); and Club reprimanded
High level breach	A player under the age of 18 plays with adults without required permission. Injury occurs or no injury but player plays in the front row	Suspension of coach/person responsible for team selection for 6 months; and Team suspended from playing for 3 months; and Points deducted from club 1st XV equating to 4 wins; and Club reprimanded

Half Game Rule

15.12.1 Other than set out in Regulation 15.12.2, all clubs, teams, schools and colleges must ensure that each player selected in every match day squad plays at least half of the Available Playing Time. This requirement is mandatory across the entire age grade game and in respect of all contact and non-contact age grade matches, including 7 a-side matches and festivals/tournament matches.

15.12.3 'Available Playing Time' means the total amount of playing time available to a team on any particular day. Where a team is participating in multiple matches in one day, the total available playing time will be the total number of minutes across all matches played by the team on that day; and in all cases (a) includes playing time spent off the pitch due to a temporary injury or yellow card and (b) excludes playing time that would have been available had a match not be abandoned or shortened due to bona fide reasons or in accordance with Regulation 15.11.3.

15.12.4 Regulation 15.12.1 will not apply in the event that a player is permanently removed from the match:

- (a) due to an injury incurred during the match;
- (b) as a result of a bona fide risk of injury; or
- (c) as a result of a red card or in the event of the referee requesting that a player be permanently removed from the match.

Proposed Half Game Rule Sanction Framework

Classification of Breach	Description of Classification	Sanction
Warning	The first instance in the current season that at least 1 player has not played half a game	<p>Formal warning issued to the Club and Coach/ person responsible for the team.</p> <p>Requirement to keep accurate records for all future Age-grade matches.</p> <p>Warning recorded by the CDAGDS.</p>
Low Level Breach	The second instance in the current season that at least 1 player has not played half a game	<p>Formal warning issued to the Club and Coach/ person responsible for the team.</p> <p>Suspension of the coach/ person responsible for the team. (possibly suspended)</p> <p>Warning recorded by the CDAGDS. NAGDS notified.</p>
Mid Level Breach	The third instance in the current season that at least 1 player has not played half a game	<p>Suspension of the Coach/ person responsible for the team.</p> <p>Points deducted from the 1st Team (possibly suspended)</p> <p>Age Grade Rugby Manager Notified</p>
Top End Breach	<p>The 4th instance in the current season that at least 1 player has not played half a game.</p> <p>Evidence that a coach/ person responsible have deliberately colluded to</p>	<p>Suspension of the coach/ person responsible for the team. Points deducted from the 1st Team equating to 4 wins.</p> <p>RFU Discipline Department notified</p>
Cup competition Breach	At least 1 player does not play at least a half of a match in a knock out cup competition.	<p>If the team won the match, team removed from the Cup competition for the current season.</p> <p>If the team lost the match, sanction guidelines aggravated by at least 1 level.</p> <p>Age Grade Rugby Manager Notified</p>

Playing Out of Age Grade (Up)

15.3.1 Certain age grades are permitted to play up one or two age grades for training and playing if recommended by the player's club, school or college as set out in the table at Regulation 15.5.

15.3.2 If players are playing up, the following conditions must be met:

- (a) in each case an appropriate assessment is carried out
- (b) in respect of club rugby, approval is obtained from an individual who has parental responsibility for the player;
- (c) in respect of school or college rugby, approval is obtained from an individual who has parental responsibility for the player (who may be the principal in loco parentis); and
- (d) in respect of school or college rugby for U16s and above, the individual who has parental responsibility for the player (who may be the principal in loco parentis) is informed that it is possible that this dispensation may result in the player playing with and/or against one or more U19 players who are playing down in accordance with Regulation 15.

Playing Out Of Age Grade

AGE GRADE (SCHOOL YEAR)	COMBINING	PLAYING UP	PLAYING DOWN
MALE AND FEMALE PLAYERS			
U6s (Yr1)	U6s are not permitted to play matches, competitions, tournaments or festivals with any older age grades.		
U7s (Yr2)	U7s and U8s can play and train together	Yes, with U8s only	U7s and U8s can play and train together
U8s (Yr3)		No playing up permitted	
U9s (Yr4)	U9s are permitted to be combined with U10s in accordance with 15.2.2	No playing up is permitted	Playing down is permitted in limited circumstances in accordance with 15.4
U10s (Yr5)	U10s are permitted to be combined with U9s or with U11s in accordance with 15.2.2	No playing up is permitted	Playing down is permitted in limited circumstances in accordance with 15.4
U11s (Yr6)	U11s are permitted to be combined with U10s or with U12s in accordance with 15.2.2	No playing up is permitted	Playing down is permitted in limited circumstances in accordance with 15.4
From U12s and above, mixed rugby is no longer permitted and different regulations apply to male and female players as below			

Permitted Activity

AGE GRADE	IN SEASON ACTIVITY				
	NON-CONTACT		CONTACT		OUTGOING TOURS
	Training	Matches & Competitions	Training	Matches & Competitions	
U5s & U6s	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES
U7s & U8s	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES
U9s, U10s & U11s	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
U12s & U13s	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
U14s, U15s & U16s	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
U17s & U18s	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

AGE GRADE	OUT OF SEASON ACTIVITY				
	NON-CONTACT		CONTACT		OUTGOING TOURS
	Training	Matches & Competitions	Training	Matches & Competitions	
U5s & U6s	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
U7s & U8s	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
U9s, U10s & U11s	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
U12s & U13s	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO
U14s, U15s & U16s	YES	YES	NO, SAVE AS PERMITTED IN 15.8.5	NO, SAVE AS PERMITTED IN 15.8.5	YES
U17s & U18s	YES	YES	NO, SAVE AS PERMITTED IN 15.8.5	NO, SAVE AS PERMITTED IN 15.8.5	YES

Out of Season Approval

ACTIVITY	ORGANISED FOR	APPROVED BY
In Season & Out of Season Competitions	Clubs	CB
Locally organised Festivals, Tournaments and Competitions	Schools	CSU
	Colleges	ECRFU
National Festivals, Competitions and Camps	Clubs	CB
If participating teams are from more than just neighbouring CBs and there are more than six entrants	Schools	ERFSU
	Colleges	ECRFU
Rugby Camps - Local/County	All & other providers	CB
Rugby Camps - Regional/National	All & other providers	RFU
CB & Regional Competitions and Rep Rugby	All	RFU
Annual activity beyond club and school/college level (incl domestic Unions), to be submitted in Age Grade Playing Calendars		
Rugby Tours	See Regulation 10	
Outgoing and Incoming tours in England and abroad		

Transgender Policy



- Position and background
- Signposting to further information
- Eligibility Criteria for transgender players

- Expecting Sport England Guidance document to be published soon.....
 - Will focus on facilities
 - Other guidance for sports clubs

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<https://www.englandrugby.com/about-rfu/rfu-policies/transgender-policy>



GMS CORE FUNCTIONS



Key Contacts

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General Inboxes

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- Agegradediscipline@rfu.com
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