

POLICY

ON

MALE UNDER-18s PLAYING ADULT RUGBY

Policies and Procedures

Section: Rugby Operations

Title: U18s (Male) Playing Adult Rugby

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Policy on Male Under-18s playing Adult Rugby

Introduction

Scottish Rugby Union ("SRU") is the governing body for rugby football in Scotland and through its Board is responsible, among other things, for managing the game. This includes making and applying various policies and codes of practice.

SRU, while seeking to develop and foster the game at all levels in Scotland, also wishes to ensure that this is done safely and recognises that particular issues arise in relation to male players under the age of 18, who may wish to play in their clubs' games [including training sessions] at adult level.

SRU, through the Board, has adopted the policy set out below for players under the jurisdiction of SRU.

Policy Statement

With effect from the commencement of the 2013 – 2014 season, male players are only permitted to participate in adult rugby if they are at least 18 years old at the date of the game [or training activity] concerned, unless the exception below applies.

Exception

In exceptional cases, a player's physical development, skill level and experience may be such that the player may be allowed to participate in adult rugby at an age younger than 18.

Players younger than 18 are only permitted to participate in adult rugby if each of the following conditions has been satisfied before participation:

1. Where a player is 17 years old – i.e. no players under 17 years of age can play senior rugby; **AND**
2. Where the player and coach have completed the online IRB Rugby Ready course (see www.irbrugbyready.com) and the coach is qualified to a minimum standard of UKCC level 2 and has attended an SRU 'RugbyReady Practical Course' in the immediately preceding 18 months; **AND**
3. Where the coach undertakes the following physical and skill assessments on the player in accordance with SRU's Assessment Guidance, and the player successfully completes:
 - o a squat and press-up assessment
 - o a tackle assessment; **AND**
4. Where the coach gathers and presents information on the player's experience, injury history and indicates the level of rugby to be played; **AND**
5. For a prop or hooker aged 17 to be able to play adult rugby in the front row of the scrum the player would have to:
 - a. Provide information on the player's front row experience, ability and front row specific coaching received
 - b. Players who have satisfied a regional panel on the strength of the above information would then be invited to attend Murrayfield for an assessment of their neck strength; **AND**
6. Written approval is given on behalf of SRU.

Failure to comply - Failure to comply with this Policy may result in disciplinary action being taken against the club, coach and player involved (or any of them) in accordance with SRU's Disciplinary Procedures.

Application Process 2013-14

- Applications open on Monday 15th July 2013 – Application forms will be available in July.
- All 17 year old players must apply for dispensation to play adult rugby during the 2013-14 season, even if dispensation has been granted last season.

Any club (or school) who feels that they have a male player aged 17 whose physical maturity and development, skill level, experience and medical condition are sufficiently high that the player is capable of competing safely with players in the proposed adult rugby competition must follow the steps detailed below:

1. Coach* undertakes the pre-application assessments on the player (please see specific pre-application assessment documents for further info)
 - a. **Tackle assessment** – player must be able to successfully complete 4 out of 6 tackles AND;
 - b. **Overhead squat** – player must be able to competently perform min. 4 overhead squats AND;
 - c. **Press-up** – player must be able to competently perform min. 6 press-ups.

****Coach must be qualified to a minimum standard of UKCC level 2 and have attended an SRU 'RugbyReady Practical Course' in the immediately preceding 18 months. If you do not have a suitably qualified coach, please contact Scottish Rugby in the first instance at 0131 346 5155.***

2. The player completes online IRB Rugby Ready course (www.irbrugbyready.com) and takes note of the award date.
3. Coach* completes an application form (below), with signatures from the player and club president or other relevant club office bearer, and makes the player's parent/guardian aware of the application.
4. In addition to the above, front row player exemptions will also require the Front Row Exception form to be completed.
5. The application form and, if relevant, Front Row Exception form is sent to the Scottish Rugby *Are You Ready to Play Rugby?* Administrator, Murrayfield Stadium, EH12 5PJ.
6. On receipt of the application form Scottish Rugby will check that the form is complete and complies with the Male Under-18 Player in Adult Rugby policy, and acknowledge receipt via email to the coach.
 - a. Incomplete forms, or forms that do not comply with policy, will be returned to the club.
 - b. Completed forms will be forwarded to a Scottish Rugby Regional Panel.
7. The Scottish Rugby Regional Panel decides:
 - a. *Application meets criteria and they have no concerns: OR*
 - b. *Application does not meet criteria or areas of concern identified*
8. Scottish Rugby contacts club/school if required for further information on areas of concern.
9. Scottish Rugby will inform the club in writing of the outcome of the panel, and whether the player may or may not play adult rugby.
 - a. If a player wishes to change teams during the season (even within the same club), a new application form must be submitted to and approved by Scottish Rugby.
 - b. Scottish Rugby will aim to have applications turned around within three weeks of the receipt of the appropriately completed paperwork, where practicable.

FRONT ROW (Additional Process)

10. For 17 year old players who have been cleared by the regional panel, and whose application requests front row dispensation, an additional appointment will be made to attend a neck strength assessment..

11. 17 year old front row players will undergo a series of neck assessments to determine their neck strength and range of motion. They will be measured against criteria set by Scottish Rugby in collaboration with the Scottish Group of Orthopaedic and Trauma Surgeons.
12. Club will be informed of the clearance decision within 1 week of the neck assessment taking place.
13. Approved forms to be counter signed by the *Are You Ready to Play Rugby?* Project Manager.

APPLICATION PROCESS WILL OPEN FOR THE 2013-14 SEASON ON MONDAY 15TH JULY 2013

Applications will be processed throughout the season on an *ad hoc* basis.

NOTE – If you think that you have a 17-year-old player who is capable of playing adult rugby during season 2013-14, please ensure you start preparing them to undertake the pre-application assessments during the summer period.