

2017-18 RFU Head Injury Assessment Review Process

The HIA Review process is an education, training and compliance support process developed to underpin player welfare and safety in elite adult rugby with respect to head injuries. This process will monitor adherence to the latest World Rugby HIA Protocols. The HIA Review process will replace the Concussion Management Monitoring Process (CMMP) from September 1 2017 for all tournaments and competitions for which the RFU obtains World Rugby approval to apply the Head Injury Assessment set out in World Rugby Law 3.12.

This process is in line with and reflects the key features of the World Rugby HIA Review Process which have been provided to all Unions. In the event of any inconsistency between the World Rugby HIA Review Process and the RFU HIA Review Process, the RFU process set out in herein will take precedence.

Please note that this process does not seek to intervene or influence the medical management of any individual player, which shall remain the responsibility of the Club/Team doctor.

The RFU HIA Review Process will apply in the following tournaments/competitions:

- Aviva Premiership
- England Senior Summer and Autumn Home Internationals (men and women)
- England U20 Home Internationals (men and women)
- A-League *Post Game Video Review upon referral only
- Championship *Post Game Video Review upon referral only

* It is acknowledged and approved by World Rugby that for certain competitions, a post-game video review process upon referral will be necessary rather than this process applying to all HIA events.

The RFU Head Injury Assessment Review process will consist of two discrete elements which are:

- The Post Game Video Review process and
- The Head Injury Assessment Review process.

POST GAME VIDEO REVIEW PROCESS (PGVR)

1. The PGVR process shall be agreed by the PGB Medical Advisory Group and notified to each Club and England Team in writing.
2. The deadlines set out in this document may be amended with the written agreement of the RFU Professional Rugby Director (or his/her designee) or in the case of any match involving a Premiership Club, the PRL Rugby Director (or his/her designee).
3. The PGVR will be instigated either by an independent video reviewer (IVR) reviewing the match footage: (a) of his/her own accord; or (b) in response to a referral from a club, citing officer or referee involved in the match or by the RFU Professional Rugby Director

or PRL Rugby Director (or his/her designated nominees), provided such referral is made within 48 hours from the end of the match.

4. The IVR will review the match footage and within 12 hours of the footage being uploaded onto the Review Portal for review, the IVR will:
 - (a) Submit comments onto the Review Portal ; and
 - (b) Write to the Club or England medical team should the IVR have further enquiries of the club/team.
5. In the event the IVR makes further enquiries from the Club or England medical team, the Club or England medical team must respond to the IVR within 48 hours of receipt of the written enquiries by uploading their responses onto the Review Portal.
6. All written enquiries and responses shall be done via the online Review Portal.
7. In the event of a disagreement between the IVR and the team doctor on the interpretation of a video, the IVR shall inform the RFU Chief Medical Officer (CMO) who may consult with the World Rugby Independent Video Interpretation Expert Group. If consulted, the World Rugby Independent Video Interpretation Expert Group must provide its written report within 24 hours of receipt of the review request. Notwithstanding any referral to or report from the World Rugby Independent Video Interpretation Expert Group, the IVR still has the ability to refer a case in accordance with paragraph 9 below.
8. If the IVR or CMO concludes that there is a justifiable medical reason or explanation for an incident, no further referral will be required and the CMO will decide whether further action, education and/or training is required.
9. If the IVR or CMO concludes anything other than a justifiable medical reason or explanation for an incident, the IVR or CMO must refer the case to the HIA Review Group set out in paragraph 10 below. By way of guidance only, below is a non-exhaustive list of examples which should result in a referral to the HIA Review Group:
 - a. A deliberate or reckless failure to comply with the HIA Protocols is evident for example off-field assessment completed in time that compromises quality of assessment, potential tactical manipulation of HIA Protocol
 - b. A failure of the delivery of video viewing is identified e.g. no side-line video link
 - c. A deliberate attempt by any team member to influence a medic in relation to HIA is noted
 - d. Repeated errors (more than 2 in a 2-year period) in application of HIA Protocols
 - e. Evidence of a deliberate obstruction of the HIA Protocol or HIA Process Review
 - f. Any other act or omission in relation to the HIA Protocol that significantly jeopardises player welfare

HEAD INJURY ASSESSMENT REVIEW

10. The HIA Review Group shall be appointed by the RFU Head of Judiciary and composed of an:
 - a. Independent Lawyer (who must be eligible to sit as a Judicial Officer under World Rugby Regulations) who shall chair the HIA Review Group
 - b. Union CMO
 - c. A member of World Rugby's independent Concussion Advisory Group (who is independent of the World Rugby Independent Video Interpretation Expert Group)
11. The chair of the HIA Review Group may, if he/she wishes:
 - a. invite a competition representative and a RFU representative to sit as additional members of the HIA Review Group; and/or
 - b. consult with other third parties such as competition representatives/tournament organisers.
12. The HIA Review Group will preferably meet in person (or via conference call if absolutely necessary) within 36 hours of a referral by the IVR or CMO.
13. The HIA Review Group may at any point make further enquiries of the club, England team, the independent reviewer and/or the World Rugby Video Interpretation Expert Group and such individuals or group must provide responses to such enquires by the deadline set by the HIA Review Group.
14. The HIA Review Group has the power to investigate all matters referred to it and all clubs/teams must cooperate in full with such investigation, including providing requested information within the timeframes provided. Provided all timeframes set by the Group are complied with, the Group will issue its findings within 14 days of the referral.
15. Following conclusion of an investigation, the HIA Review Group may in its absolute discretion:
 - (a) Make recommendations for further education and training for the club/team personnel, including the club/team doctor;
 - (b) Make recommendations for the World Rugby HIA Working Group to consider an alteration in the process, education and/or training; and/or
 - (c) Make a referral to the RFU Head of Discipline to consider further disciplinary action.
16. The HIA Review Group must send a written report to the Club, Union and relevant competition organiser setting out its recommendations.
17. There is no power to appeal any decision of the HIA Review Group.
18. Any referral to the RFU Head of Discipline will be conducted in accordance with the process set out in RFU Regulation 19. Nothing in this document will be affect the ability of the RFU Head of Discipline to use any powers he/she may have under RFU Regulation 19, including the power to bring disciplinary action at any stage.