

## **RETURN TO PLAYING COMPETITIVE RUGBY**

**30 JUNE 2020**

### **AGE GRADE**

#### **When will the RFU ask for competition entries for knockout rugby?**

This will be dependent on progression through the phases of the RFU Return to Rugby Roadmap and on competition restart date (if Roadmap Phase F is put in place after 18th October 2020 then all National Competitions will be cancelled). Entries can reasonably be turned around in a 6 week period.

#### **Where does Regulation 15 fit in for the Age Grade game?**

Regulation 15 is the basis for Age Grade Rugby and remains in place and must be applied. In the current circumstances, this is overlaid with the latest guidance on appropriate activity and social distancing in the Return to Rugby Roadmap.

#### **Why are there no National Age Grade Competitions planned if the season doesn't start until after October 18<sup>th</sup>?**

By this point in the season early rounds of the largest national competitions will have been lost already (including Schools Cups, Champions Trophy, ACE League and Clubs U18 Cup). Rearrangement of such large numbers of matches will not be possible and with the focus on maximising playing opportunities for all players after Covid-19, this should be prioritised above competitions that can leave out many players. The date is also the last day before the October half term period begins.

#### **Can a club, school or college arrange a local Age Grade competition?**

Yes so long as they are in line with the Age Grade Playing Calendar and the correct permissions in Regulation 15.9 have been obtained in advance. The RFU will also support competition organisers with advice and models on how to implement activity against a Covid-19 recovery backdrop.

#### **When will the Age Grade fixture exchange guides and online engagement and preparation tools be ready?**

Work on this will commence over the summer and we will update the Game in due course.

#### **Will the Age Grade Playing Calendar allow clubs, schools and colleges to arrange fixtures at different times of the season?**

Yes, this principle stays in place as in any other season. It is why we will look to promote friendly fixture exchanges/pools as outlined. Dialogue and joint focus based on the motivations of players of all levels by clubs, schools, colleges, CBs and academies is absolutely critical.

**Will an extension to the end of the Age Grade season not conflict with summer sports and exam periods?**

Yes, it will potentially. The extension of the season is to ensure that the playing and preparation time potentially lost at the start of the season CAN be added to the end of the season; but players must always come first. In the event of an extension, activity in May 2021 should consider players who do other sports and those who are in Year 11 and 13 particularly.

**What is allowed this summer in the off-season before rugby activity can restart?**

Regulation 15.4 covers Out of Season activity and as mentioned above the latest guidance related to the Return to Rugby Roadmap needs to be overlaid. All ages are permitted to do non-contact training in the off-season which aligns to the Roadmap Phases A to E.

**Where can I find further guidance and advice on keeping players engaged and applying Regulation 15?**

The Age Grade Codes of Practice are a great tool and provide a checklist for everyone running Age Grade Rugby. These are easy to follow and can be found here.

<https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/coaching/age-grade-rugby/codes-of-practice>

In addition, there is also information on EnglandRugby.com here.

<https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/coaching/age-grade-rugby>

And you can follow information and see ideas shared by the age grade rugby community on Twitter @AgeGradeRugby, @QKidsFirst, @EngRugbySchools and @RFU\_Colleges.

**Does this all apply to BUCS and AoC Sport competitions in universities and colleges respectively?**

All rugby competition activity provided by BUCs/AoC will align to the current Phase on the RFU Return to Rugby Roadmap and not get ahead of the timings for the rest of community rugby. Specific models for delivery of BUCS and AoC competitions will be developed by these organisations (whom we work closely with).