

RFU REGULATIONS

RFU REGULATION 14 – REGISTRATION OF ADULT MALE PLAYERS

14.1 General

14.1.1 This RFU Regulation 14 applies to all Clubs and to all male Players seeking to be registered to play adult male rugby in RFU Competitions for a Club on or after 1 August 2021.

14.1.2 The definitions set out in Regulation 1 (RFU Definitions) shall apply to this RFU Regulation 14. For ease of reference, the definitions of ‘Transfer Deadline’ and ‘Waiting Period’ are also repeated at 14.1.3 below and unless otherwise expressly referred to in this RFU Regulation 14 **“Player”** shall include an England Academy Player.

14.1.3 **“Transfer Deadline”** means:

- (a) For Clubs at Level 3 and below: 18 February 2022, the Waiting Period (if applicable) having been completed before the Transfer Deadline is reached.
- (b) For Clubs at Level 2 (Championship): 4 February 2022, the Waiting Period (if applicable) having been completed before the Transfer Deadline is reached.
- (c) For Clubs at Level 1 (Premiership): 1 April 2022, the Waiting Period (if applicable) having been completed before the Transfer Deadline is reached.

“Waiting Period” means the period of time between the Registration Date and the Effective Date, as decided by the Registrar save in the circumstances set out below when the waiting period shall be as stated:

- (a) The Waiting Period will be 7 clear days where a Player has Effective Registration with another Club on the Registration Date, unless the expedited registration process is followed, as set out in Regulations 14.5.8 to 14.5.10.
- (b) The Waiting Period will be 24 hours or less providing correct papers are lodged with the Registrar by 12 noon on a Friday (or the day of the match in respect of mid-week matches) where:
 - (i) an Age Grade player is transferring to become an adult player, either in the same Club or to a different Club;
 - (ii) a Player has not previously been Effectively Registered with any other Club during the current Season.

14.2 Eligibility of Players

14.2.1 A Player must be resident in the United Kingdom, the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands and must hold Effective Registration in accordance with these Regulations with a Club in order to play for that Club in a RFU Competition, unless otherwise permitted to play by the RFU Regulations.

14.2.2 A Club may only be represented in a match in any RFU Competition by Players who

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are Effectively Registered with that Club or who are otherwise permitted to play by the RFU Regulations.

- 14.2.3 Effective Registration of a Player aged 17 does not mean they are automatically eligible to play adult rugby for the Club and other relevant RFU Regulations (e.g. RFU Regulation 15) must still be observed.

14.3 Effective Registration

- 14.3.1 A Player will have Effective Registration in accordance with these Regulations with a Club if:

- (a) they were Effectively Registered with that Club at the beginning of the Season; or
- (b) their application for Registration has been accepted either by the Registrar or through the online application process and the Waiting Period has elapsed;

in each case subject to any subsequent loss or invalidity of such registration pursuant to the other provisions of these Regulations and save in the case of such registration having been made as a result of inaccurate, false or misleading information having been provided (in which case the Effective Registration will be void and invalid from the date of initial registration).

- 14.3.2 A Club may apply for a Player to become Effectively Registered by following the process set out in Regulation 14.5 and 14.6.

- 14.3.3 Other than as set out in Regulation 14.3.4 below, a Club must apply for a Player to become Effectively Registered before the Transfer Deadline.

- 14.3.4 A Club may only apply for a Player to become Effectively Registered after the Transfer Deadline if they are either:

- (a) a Permitted Player (as defined in RFU Regulation 1); or
- (b) an England Academy Player, and subject to RFU Regulation 13.4.4(c); or
- (c) a Loan Player seeking Effective Registration to return to the Club which loaned them or loaned pursuant to the provisions of Regulation 14.3.5(e) below (but in each case excluding players loaned to a club in any other Union); or
- (d) sixteen years old prior to the Transfer Deadline and turns seventeen after the Transfer Deadline and is entitled to register for the first time; or
- (e) a Player who the Club in exceptional circumstances needs to be Effectively Registered after the Transfer Deadline to enable the Club to comply with its Competition's requirements in relation to the provision of Front Row forwards and the RFU (or person to whom it has delegated this) is satisfied that the Player's Registration is necessary; or
- (f) Student Pass Players and Services Pass Players, provided they comply with the RFU's Student and Services Pass process in all respects and are approved by the RFU for a Student or Services pass prior to the Transfer Deadline; or
- (g) approved by the Committee to be Effectively Registered following the resolution of a dispute pursuant to Regulation 14.10.3.

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The Registrar may process an application for Registration of a Player after the Transfer Deadline as long as it is supported by evidence that the Player falls within Regulation 14.3.4 (a) to (g). In such a case, the Registrar may apply the Waiting Period which would have applied if the application had been made before the Transfer Deadline.

14.3.5 A Player (but excluding an England Academy Player), may:

- (a) not hold Effective Registration with more than one Club at any one time; and
- (b) not hold Effective Registration with more than three (3) Clubs in any Season; and
- (c) in respect of Loan Players loaned between Clubs at Level 2 and below, not hold Effective Registration with the same Club more than three (3) times after the opening day of the Season. When counting the number of consecutive Effective Registrations a Loan Player has held, the Player's Effective Registration with that Club on the first day of the Season shall not count providing the player has not been subject of a transfer during the Season; and
- (d) in respect of Loan Players loaned between Clubs at Level 1 (Premiership) and Level 2 (Championship), move freely between Clubs until the Transfer Deadline but once the Transfer Deadline has passed a Player may not hold Effective Registration with the same Club more than three (3) times. When counting the number of consecutive Effective Registrations a Loan Player has held, the Player's Effective Registration with that Club on the Transfer Deadline day shall not count providing the player has not been subject of a transfer during the Season.

14.3.6 An England Academy Player is permitted to simultaneously hold at any one time Effective Registration with up to four different clubs as follows: one Club at Level 1 (Premiership), two Clubs at Level 2 (Championship) where one of the Championship Clubs is also an Academy (otherwise just one Club at Level 2), one Club at Level 3, and subject to Regulation 14.6.4(b) one Club at Level 4, one Club at Level 5 or one Club at Level 6.

14.3.7 An Age Grade player will not automatically assume Effective Registration as an adult Player until that Player completes an Adult Registration form and serves the relevant Waiting Period.

14.3.8 A Student Pass Player and Service Pass Player is permitted to simultaneously hold at any one time Effective Registration with two clubs provided they comply with the RFU's Student and Service Pass process in all respects and are approved by the RFU for a Student or Service Pass prior to the Transfer Deadline.

14.4 Requirement to Register Players and Principles applicable to Registration

14.4.1 The Player Register shall be maintained by the RFU and is the only and conclusive evidence of a Player's Effective Registration on any particular date.

14.4.2 A Premiership Club may register up to 70 Players. A Club playing at or below Level 2 in the League may register up to 100 Players. Where a Club has reached its limit, no further applications will be accepted until the Club has de-registered sufficient Players and those Players have completed their 24 hour de-registration period.

14.4.3 A Club must apply for Registration of all Players it wishes to represent it in RFU

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Competitions. A Club may not assume that any application for registration will be accepted. A Player is not Effectively Registered until the Effective Date.

14.4.4 The Player's current Club may object to the Player being Effectively Registered with another Club where:

- (a) the Player has a Contract with the current Club;
- (b) the Player is being disciplined under RFU Rule 5.12;
- (c) the Player owes money to the current Club.

Any such objection must be submitted in writing to the Registrar stating all the grounds upon which the objection is made within 7 days of being notified of the proposed transfer.

14.4.5 A Loan Player shall automatically be Effectively Registered with their loaning/parent Club at the end of the Season and shall cease to be a Loan Player.

14.4.6 A Club must ensure that the information held on the Player Register about its Effectively Registered Players is accurate and up to date. A Club which has obtained Effective Registration of a Player must notify the RFU of any changes to the information originally supplied in connection with that Player within 14 days of becoming aware of such change and, where appropriate, must apply for de-registration of Players in accordance with Regulation 14.8.

14.4.7 The RFU:

(a) shall not grant its consent to the issue of a Clearance for a Player where that Player is under suspension on disciplinary grounds (which, for the avoidance of doubt, includes any offence under RFU Regulation 20), unless such suspension is for a period of five weeks or less and the new Union has confirmed in writing that a suspension for an equal period of the balance of the suspension will be imposed on the Player in the competition(s) for which the new Union is to register them; and

(b) may refuse to grant its consent to the issue of a Clearance for a Player where that Player has not fulfilled any of their obligations under the terms of their contract with their Club, the RFU and/or a Constituent Body.

14.5 Registration Process

Process for Registration

14.5.1 To apply for Effective Registration, a Club must submit the completed Player Registration Form with the requisite Application Documents described at Regulation 14.6 to the relevant Registrar within 28 days of the signature of the Registration Form by the Player. Clubs at Level 5 and below may use the online process within the same 28 days.

14.5.2 Only one application for registration of a Player may be operative at any one time. If any application is received from a different Club for registration of the same Player during their Waiting Period for Effective Registration with another Club, the subsequent application shall be invalid.

14.5.3 A Club applying for registration of a Player already Effectively Registered for another

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Club must on the same day as submitting its application serve on that Club a Notification of Transfer Form unless the Player's current Club has provided a release. The Registrar/League official may request evidence of the Notification of Transfer Form being served on the current Club and failure to produce such evidence forthwith and in any event within 72 hours of it being requested will result in the withdrawal of the application for registration.

- 14.5.4 For all applications (regardless of how they are submitted), the Registration Form and Application Documents must be fully and accurately completed and dated. The Club must retain the original signed Registration Form, copies of such other Application Documents (to include any Notification of Transfer form) for at least one year (including evidence of posting or, if sent electronically, evidence of dispatch).
- 14.5.5 On receipt of the Registration Form and the Application Documents the Registrar will:
- (a) check the Registration Form, and the Application Documents to ensure that they are properly signed, submitted within 28 days of signature, complete and that all requisite registration requirements (as set out in Regulation 14.6) have been met;
 - (b) check that no other application for registration is pending for the Player and that there is no other reason that the Player should not be registered; and
 - (c) carry out any necessary checks with the RFU.
- 14.5.6 Provided that the checks outlined in Regulation 14.5.5 are completed to the satisfaction of the Registrar, the Registrar will accept the application for registration (the Registration Date) and calculate the Waiting Period and the Effective Date. The Registrar shall enter the pending registration on the Player Register, including the status of the Player as "pending", the Effective Date and the Application Documents received.
- 14.5.7 Where the Registrar is unable to accept the Registration Form or the Application Documents the Registrar will either return the documents to the Club in the stamped addressed envelope provided (or in the absence of such envelope, the Registrar will endeavour to notify the Club by other means) or notify the Club that the application is incomplete and request the further information needed to progress the application.

Expedited Registration

- 14.5.8 Where a Club wants to achieve Effective Registration for a Player in a period of less than 7 days, it must provide the Registrar with the following by no later than 12 noon on a Friday (in respect of Saturday and Sunday matches) or no later than 12 noon on the day before the match (in respect of mid-week matches):
- (a) a copy of the Registration Form and the relevant Application Documents; and
 - (b) confirmation of payment to the RFU of the non-refundable amount of £45 and copies of the Registration Form and Application Documents as soon as possible and no later than 7 days from the Effective Date (if such application is accepted); and
 - (c) where a Player is Effectively Registered with one Club and transferring to another Club, written confirmation from the former Club to the applicant Club that they consent to the Player being released with immediate effect.

14.5.9 Subject to the Registrar's agreement, a Club may use any medium to provide the documents to the Registrar.

14.5.10 Provided that the Registrar accepts the application in line with Regulation 14.5.6 above, the Effective Registration will take place at such time as the Registrar may agree and advise by no later than 4pm on the day before the match.

Online applications for Clubs at Level 5 or below

14.5.11 Only Clubs at Level 5 or below may use the online application process to register Players. The Registration Form and Application Documents must be fully and accurately completed and dated before the online process can be utilised. The online process may be used for all Players other than:

- (a) England Academy Players;
- (b) Contracted Players;
- (c) Contracted Overseas Players;
- (d) a Player applying for Effective Registration with a Club with which they have previously been Effectively Registered during the Season;
- (e) a Player for whom the Club is making an Expedited Application; or
- (f) a Player for whom the Club is making an application during the period between the Transfer Deadline and the end of the Season.

14.5.12 When requested by the Registrar the Club must forthwith, and in any event within 72 hours of such request, provide to the Registrar hard copies of the fully completed application form and such other supporting documents as may be requested.

Returning Players

14.5.13 Where a Club is applying for registration of a Player who has during the Season previously been Effectively Registered with that Club, the Club shall pay a re-registration fee of £500 (by such method as the Registrar shall require) unless:

- (a) the Club is seeking Effective Registration for a Loan Player who has a Contract with the Club or who is seeking to be registered as a Loan Player with the Club;
- (b) the Player has not been Effectively Registered at another Club since their last Effective Registration with the Club; or
- (c) the Registrar is satisfied (after appropriate consultation with the Committee) that it would be inappropriate to charge a fee as there is a bona fide reason for the Player wishing to re-register with the Club.

General

14.5.14 Notices or other communications may be given under this RFU Regulation 14 by any medium using the contact details for the RFU, Registrar, Clubs (as appropriate) published in the RFU Club Directory. Where no email address is included within the RFU Club Directory, the Club must provide before the start of the Season a valid email address for a Club Official to whom the Registrar may give notice or otherwise

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communicate on matters arising under this RFU Regulation 14.

14.5.15 All information supplied in connection with an application for Registration must be true and accurate. The provision of false, misleading or inaccurate information may lead to the Committee reporting the matter to the RFU's Head of Discipline for further action.

14.6 Registration Documents and Application Documents

All Players

14.6.1 A Club must provide the following Application Documents:

- (a) completed Registration Form (including the certificate of the Player's residence, passport and visa if applicable) signed within the 28 days prior to submission to the Registrar;
- (b) the Notification of Transfer Form (if any);
- (c) the documents set out below in this Regulation 14.6 for the Player in respect of each applicable category of Player into which they fall;
- (d) any proof of residence subsequently requested by the Registrar;
- (e) a large stamped addressed envelope addressed to the Club making the application (for Clubs at Level 5 and below unless stated otherwise);
- (f) where a Player is under Contract with one Club and transferring to another Club, written confirmation from the former Club that they consent to the Player being released;
- (g) in respect of all Overseas Players at Level 4 and above and for all contracted Overseas Players at any level, a Clearance from the player's Current Union;
- (h) Such other documentation as may be requested by the RFU in relation to a Student or Service Pass application.

Amateur Players

14.6.2 The Amateur Declaration section within the Registration Form must be completed in respect of an application for registration of a Player who is not a Contracted Player at the time of registration.

Contracted Players at any Level

14.6.3 The following documents must be submitted to the Registrar in respect of an application for registration of a Contracted Player (including a Contracted Overseas Player) or a Player who will be contracted to the Club upon Effective Registration:

- (a) evidence that the Player may be Effectively Registered with the applicant Club (i.e. evidence that any previous Contract has expired or that the other party to it consents to the application for Registration or other evidence satisfactory to the Registrar);
- (b) the Contract and/or the Contract Information Form, as stipulated by the

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Registrar; and

- (c) when a Player enters into or is renewing an agreement with a Club (or if centrally contracted, with a Home Union) and an Agent has been acting for either the Player or the Club/Union, all parties including the Player, the Club and the Agent (where applicable) must sign the separate agent declaration form that accompanies the Player's agreement and must submit to the RFU, Premiership Rugby Limited or Registrar together with the Application Documents.

England Academy Player

14.6.4 An application for registration of an England Academy Player must be accompanied by:

- (a) the written approval of the Academy Manager of the Club of whose Academy the player is a member; and
- (b) for Registration with a Club at Level 4 and below (or for a Club at Level 3 after the Transfer Deadline) written consent on the form prescribed by the RFU from the RFU Head of Academies and the Committee or person designated by the Committee.

Loan Players

14.6.5 An application for registration of a Loan Player will not be accepted where: (a) in respect of Clubs at Level 2 (Championship) and below, the applicant Club is more than two Levels below the level of the loaning/parent Club; and (b) in respect of Clubs at Level 1 (Premiership) the applicant Club is more than one Level below the level of the loaning/parent Club. This does not apply to Loan Players who are being loaned to a Club in the Levels above the loaning/parent Club, subject to Regulation 14.3.5.

14.6.6 An application for registration of a Loan Player must be accompanied by evidence in writing of the terms of the loan, including the start date and end date, if the Player is contracted with their parent Club, and signed by the Player and both clubs in a form approved by the RFU.

Upon expiry of the Loan, the Player will automatically be registered back with the loaning/parent Club. It is the responsibility of both clubs to inform the Registrar in writing if the loan arrangement is extended, at least two working days before the loan expiry date;

(unless the RFU Board of Directors decides that the Player's registration with the applicant Club is otherwise in the best interests of the Game and the requirements of this Regulation 14.6.6 can be waived).

Overseas Players

14.6.7 Applications for registration at a club at Level 1 to 4 or a contracted player at Level 5 and below, where the player last played in another Union, must be accompanied by Clearance from that Union. Non-contracted Players wishing to register for a club at Level 5 and below are not required to provide a copy of the Clearance when making an application for registration.

Registration with Clubs in Level 4 or above

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- 14.6.8 An application for registration of an Overseas Player with a Club in Level 4 or above who is leaving or proposing to leave their Current Union must be accompanied by clearance from their Current Union to participate in the Game under the jurisdiction of the RFU.
- 14.6.9 An application for registration with a Club in Level 4 or above of a person who was an Overseas Player at the time of:
- (a) previously been registered with a Club at Level 5 or below; or
 - (b) played for a Club or team which does not require registration;
- (“a former Overseas Player”) must be accompanied by clearance from that Player’s former Union to participate in the Game under the jurisdiction of the RFU.

Players who were not born in the UK

Registration with Clubs at Level 1 to 4

- 14.6.11 Evidence by way of a permit visa or other authority that such person is entitled to receive payment or other benefit from participating in or playing the Game must accompany an application for registration of a Player who was not born in the UK and who will either be contracted, receive a Material Benefit or will play at Levels 1 to 4. Visas or permits which give consent to play rugby football as an amateur are not sufficient.
- 14.6.12 In addition, where the Club is situated in the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man (and therefore subject to different immigration regulations) the application for registration must be accompanied by evidence satisfactory to the RFU that the Player meets the requirements for a permit, visa or other authority from the UK Home Office to play at the Level at which the Club participates.

Registration with Clubs in Level 5 and below

- 14.6.13 An application for registration by a Club at Level 5 or below for an amateur Player who was not born in the UK does not need to be accompanied by immigration documents unless specifically requested by the Registrar.
- 14.6.14 An application for registration by a Club at Level 5 or below for a Contracted Player who was not born in the UK needs to be accompanied by the evidence set out at 14.6.11 and 14.6.12 above.

14.7 List of Effectively Registered Players

- 14.7.1 Each Club’s registration list is available online or by request in writing to the relevant Registrar.

14.8 De-Registration

- 14.8.1 A Player (other than a contracted Player) or Club may request deregistration in accordance with the RFU deregistration process.
- 14.8.2 No application for de-registration may be withdrawn during the 24 hour de-registration period. For the avoidance of doubt, an application for Effective Registration may be made in respect of the Player by another Club during that period

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which, if accepted, will be effective at the end of the Waiting Period.

14.9 Loss of Effective Registration

14.9.1 A Player will cease to have Effective Registration with a Club immediately:

- (a) upon being Effectively Registered with another Club;
- (b) upon expiry of 24 hours following a valid application for de-registration
- (c) following a valid application for formal consent, registration or other approval to play for any team in or under the control of a Union other than the RFU;
- (d) if their Effective Registration is cancelled or suspended by the relevant Organising Committee;
- (e) upon the expiry of any work permit visa or other permit or consent required by law unless they are an Overseas Player registered with a Club at level 5 and below who has a properly completed Amateur Declaration lodged with the Registrar on or before the date of the expiry of the said work permit visa or other permit or consent required by law.
- (f) where a Player enters a Contract or receives a Material Benefit and the terms of their permit or visa do not permit them to receive payment of other Material Benefit from participating in the Game;
- (g) where they are an Overseas Player seeking registration at a Club at Level 5 or below and their Current Union refuses to grant clearance or any consent or clearance is withdrawn or delayed;
- (h) where they are an Overseas Player registered with a Club at Level 5 or below and they enter a Contract or receive a Material Benefit without clearance from their Current Union;
- (i) where they are a former Overseas Player and their Club is promoted to Level 4 and they do not have the requisite clearance to play for such Club from their Current Union;
- (j) where a Player playing for a Club at Level 5 and below and the Club is promoted to Level 4 and the terms of their permit or visa do not permit them to play for a Club at Level 4;
- (k) where they were not born in the EU and are playing for a Club situated in the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man which is promoted to Level 4 or above and the Club has not produced evidence satisfactory to the RFU that the Player meets the requirements for a permit, visa or other authority from the UK Home Office to play at the Level at which the Club participates in RFU Competitions;
- (l) where a Club has failed to update the RFU with changes to the Player's details under Regulation 14.4.6;
- (m) pending the outcome of a disciplinary case and/or if subject to sanction in accordance with RFU Regulations.

14.9.2 A Player will cease to have Effective Registration with a Club at the end of the Season

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if they are a Loan Player who is returning to their loaning/parent Club.

- 14.9.3 A Player's Effective Registration will be void and invalid as at the Effective Date where the Club in making the Player's application for Effective Registration supplied false, inaccurate or misleading information or forged any signature on any Registration Form or Application Document.

14.10 Disputes

- 14.10.1 Any dispute on the application or interpretation of this RFU Regulation 14 must be referred to the relevant Registrar in writing stating the grounds for the objection or dispute.
- 14.10.2 If a dispute is not resolved within 7 days of receipt of the complaint under 14.10.1 above, the Club or Player may submit the original complaint in writing to the RFU Head of Discipline.
- 14.10.3 Any bona fide dispute regarding a Player's Effective Registration that is referred to the relevant Registrar before the applicable transfer deadline, and which is not resolved until after the applicable transfer deadline, may on request, be referred to the RFU Registrar and the Committee. The Committee may decide in exceptional circumstances to allow that Player to hold Effective Registration with another club after the Transfer Deadline has passed.

14.11 General

- 14.11.1 The Committee may delegate its powers under this Regulation (other than those under RFU Regulation 14.10, 14.11.2 and 14.11.3) to any Division, Constituent Body or other company, person, association, group, body or committee.
- 14.11.2 During the Season the Committee may in its sole discretion rectify any error or omission in this RFU Regulation 14 which comes to its attention.
- 14.11.3 The Committee shall have the discretion to decide upon any matter not provided for in this RFU Regulation 14 and upon its interpretation. The Committee's decision shall be final and binding.
- 14.11.4 In the event that any provision of this RFU Regulation 14 is found by any Court or competent authority to be illegal, invalid or unenforceable in whole or in part that provision shall be deemed not to form part of this Regulation and the legality, validity and enforceability of the remainder of this Regulation shall not be affected.