Why is a physical maturity assessment necessary?
Medical research shows that 95% of boys have reached physical maturity by the age of 16. This means that a boy of 15 who plays Under-17 or Under-18 rugby will be mainly competing with physically mature young men when he may not yet be physically mature, and as a result are exposed to a greater risk of serious injury.

Scottish Rugby will only permit exceptional 15 year old players who have reached physical maturity and have the appropriate level of playing experience and skill levels to play in a higher age band, if this is considered to be in the player’s best interests by his coach and parents.

What does a physical maturity assessment consist of?
Physical maturity assessments are designed to assess the stage of development of the player’s skeleton, a key factor in avoidance of serious injury.

The assessment consists of measuring the players’ height and weight, and assessing their hand grip strength (both hands) via a grip dynamometer. Research shows that this set of measurements can be correlated and considered against the parameters devised by the Scottish Committee of Orthopaedic and Trauma surgeons (SCOT group) to give a reliable indication of the stage of development of an individual's skeleton.

What are the parameters?
To ensure complete impartiality and to remove the chance of players/parents or coaches putting undue pressure on testers or players, the parameters which must be met, are not known by those carrying out the tests or those being tested.

You cannot pass or fail a physical maturity assessment and it is not possible to affect the player’s level of physical maturity through physical training techniques. It is important that a young player is not put under pressure to move up an age grade before they are physically mature enough to do so.

Can players be reassessed?
Player’s whose results indicate that they are close to physical maturity may apply to be re-tested after 3 months. No other players will be retested.

For further information on the male under-16 into under-18 policy, please visit the age banding policies page of www.scottishrugby.org.uk

In addition, please contact Shona Stott, Are You Ready to Play Rugby? Administrator:

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