POLICY

ON

MALE UNDER-18s PLAYING ADULT RUGBY

Policies and Procedures

Section: Rugby Operations
Title: U18s (Male) Playing Adult Rugby Version No: 1
Launched: May 2013 Reviewed: June 2018
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 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 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. The player has to have completed the World Rugby online RugbyReady course (see [http://rugbyready.worldrugby.org](http://rugbyready.worldrugby.org)) and the coach has to have done their online RugbyRight and is qualified to a minimum standard of UKCC level 2; **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:
   - a squat assessment
   - press-up assessment
   - 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:
   - Provide information on the player’s front row experience, ability and front row specific coaching received
   - 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 2017-18

- Applications open on Wednesday 1st August 2018 and close on Wednesday 1st May 2019.
- All 17 year old players must apply for dispensation to play adult rugby during the 2018-19 season, even if dispensation has been granted in the previous 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 done their online RugbyRight. 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 World Rugby online Rugby Ready course (http://rugbyready.worldrugby.org) and a copy of the certificate must be attached to the application form.

3. Coach* completes an application form, 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 emailed to ayrtpr@sru.org.uk

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 two weeks of the appropriately completed paperwork being sent to the panel, 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.

APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED BETWEEN WEDNESDAY 1ST AUGUST 2018 AND WEDNESDAY 1ST MAY 2019

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 2018-19, please ensure you start preparing them to undertake the pre-application assessments during the summer period.

Clubs are responsible for getting players cleared to play for their club, even if they have already been cleared to play Regional or National rugby by the Academies.