

# RFU REGULATIONS

## RFU REGULATION 15 – AGE GRADE RUGBY

Regulation 15 is supplemented by the following documents:

- (a) Online Playing Out of Age Grade and Rugby Camps, Competitions & Events Approval forms, available at <https://www.englandrugby.com/governance/rules-and-regulations/regulations>
- (b) Competition Menu and Competitive Playing Calendar, available at <https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/coaching/age-grade-rugby/playing-calendar>
- (c) Age Grade Codes of Practice, available at [www.englandrugby.com/participation/coaching/age-grade-rugby/codes-of-practice](http://www.englandrugby.com/participation/coaching/age-grade-rugby/codes-of-practice)
- (d) Half Game Rule FAQs, available at [www.englandrugby.com/participation/coaching/age-grade-rugby/half-game](http://www.englandrugby.com/participation/coaching/age-grade-rugby/half-game)
- (e) RFU Regulation 21 (Safeguarding), available at [www.englandrugby.com/governance/rules-and-regulations/regulations](http://www.englandrugby.com/governance/rules-and-regulations/regulations)
- (f) RFU Safeguarding Policy, available at [www.englandrugby.com/governance/safeguarding](http://www.englandrugby.com/governance/safeguarding)

### 15.1 General Regulation and Playing Principles

- 15.1.1 Regulation 15 applies to the playing, training and coaching of all variations of rugby for all age groups up until and including Under 18s, including Under 19s playing down into Under 18s rugby (**‘Age Grade Rugby’**). This Regulation 15 applies to both genders unless indicated otherwise.
- 15.1.2 A player’s age grade is determined by their age at midnight on 31st August at the beginning of each Season and that age grade applies for the whole Season. Players must play in their own age grade unless permitted to play outside their age grade in the limited circumstances set out in these regulations. Players move to their new age grade from 1 August each Season. Age grades and corresponding school years are shown in the first column in the table at 15.5 below.
- 15.1.3 Players and Match Officials must comply with the World Rugby Laws of the Games, subject to any permitted Law Variations set out in Appendices of Regulation 15 and such other Law trials and variations as the RFU may

adopt.

- 15.1.4 All Age Grade Club Players must be registered annually on the RFU's online registration platform: (a) for new Age Grade Players at a Club, within 45 days of them first joining the Club; and (b) for existing Age Grade Players at a Club, within 45 days of them starting a new Season at the Club.
- 15.1.5 Constituent Bodies and/or event organisers may require registration cards and copies of any special dispensations issued to be taken to each match or festival. Team managers must produce these documents for inspection by the opposition if requested.
- 15.1.6 Disciplinary matters relating to Age Grade rugby shall follow the procedures set out in Appendix 6 of RFU Regulation 19.
- 15.1.7 All applications for playing out of age grade in clubs, schools and colleges (Combining, Playing Up, Playing Down and U17s Playing Adult Rugby) must be made on the RFU online forms provided.

## **15.2 Combining of Age Grades**

- 15.2.1 Certain age grades are permitted to be combined together for training and playing as set out in the table at Regulation 15.5, save in respect of the combining of the male age grades from Under 14s to Under 18s which shall be permitted in respect of the 2024/25 Season.
- 15.2.2 If age grades are being combined, the following conditions must be met:
  - (a) the school or club does not have a sufficient number of players to make up a team in the single age grade;
  - (b) the school or club completes the online Combining Out of Age Grade Form and process;
  - (c) the school's headteacher or the club's Constituent Body provides written approval (such approval to be valid for up to one season only);
  - (d) no more than a third of the players of each team on the pitch at any time can be from the older age grade (as shown in Regulation 15.5);
  - (e) the team plays to the rules of the younger age grade;
  - (f) the provisions of Regulation 15.5 are followed in relation to U11 girls and the girls U12, 14, 16 and 18 age bands; and
  - (g) if approval is given, the club/college/school must notify the opposing team at least 24 hours in advance of the game although an opposition's objection shall not prevent the player from playing.

## **15.3 Playing Up**

- 15.3.1 Certain age grades are permitted to play up one or two age grades for training and playing if recommended by the player's club, school or college as set out in the table at Regulation 15.5.
- 15.3.2 If players are playing up, the following conditions must be met:
  - (a) in each case an appropriate assessment is carried out (and documented)

- by the club/school/college. Best practice on carrying out an appropriate assessment is set out in the [Age Grade Codes of Practice](#);
- (b) the club/school/college completes the online 'Playing Up' Out of Age Grade Form and process;
  - (c) in clubs, approval is obtained from an individual who has parental responsibility for the player, the club's Age Grade Chair and from the club's Constituent Body;
  - (d) in colleges (and irrespective of whether that college plays against other institutions), approval is obtained from an individual who has parental responsibility for the player (who may be the college principal in loco parentis), from the college's principal, and from England Colleges RFU;
  - (e) in schools (and irrespective of whether that school plays against other institutions), approval is obtained from an individual who has parental responsibility for the player (who may be the school's headteacher in loco parentis) and from the school's headteacher;
  - (f) in respect of school or college rugby for U16s and above, the individual who has parental responsibility for the player (who may be the principal/headteacher in loco parentis) and the school headteacher or college principal is informed that it is possible that this dispensation may result in the player playing with and/or against one or more U19 players who are playing down in accordance with Regulation 15, and the assessment by the school or college includes reference to this age imbalance; and
  - (g) if approval is given, the club/college/school must notify the opposing team at least 24 hours in advance of the game although an opposition's objection shall not prevent the player from playing.

#### **15.4 Playing Down**

15.4.1 Certain age grades are permitted to play down one or two age grades for training and playing if recommended by the player's club, college or school as set out in the table at Regulation 15.5 and only in the following circumstances:

- (a) the player must be in a younger academic year at school/college than the player's academic birth year; or
- (b) the player's safety may be compromised due to their small stature in comparison to other players in the same age grade or due to a developmental or a behavioural issue; or
- (c) for intra and inter-school/college matches only, the player is an Under 19 (Year 14) and must be in at least their third year of study at the school/college and in their second year of their first full level 3 qualification. They must not have previously completed a full level 3 qualification or embarked on an 'additional' one year programme post 16 at any level.

15.4.2 If players are playing down an age grade, the following additional conditions must be met:

- (a) in each case an assessment of risk to the individual and the potential players they will play with and against is carried out by the club/college/school. In respect of U19s playing down, the assessment must take into account the *possibility* of the U19 playing with and against 15-, 16- and 17-year old players. Best practice as to how to

carry out an assessment is set out in the [Age Grade Codes of Practice](#);

- (b) the club/school/college completes the online ‘Playing Down’ Out of Age Grade Form and process;
- (c) in clubs, the approval of an individual who has parental responsibility for the player and the club’s Age Grade Chair, and for all ages, the approval of the club’s Constituent Body is obtained;
- (d) in colleges (and irrespective of whether that college plays against other institutions), the approval of an individual who has parental responsibility for the player (who may be the principal in loco parentis) and the college principal, and the approval of England Colleges RFU is obtained;
- (e) in schools (and irrespective of whether that school plays against other institutions), the approval of an individual who has parental responsibility for the player (who may be the headteacher in loco parentis) and the approval of the school headteacher is obtained, and for U19s playing down, the approval of England Rugby Football Schools Union is obtained;
- (f) if approval is given, the club/college/school must notify the opposing team at least 24 hours in advance of the game although an opposition’s objection may not prevent the player from playing;
- (g) any permission to play down is valid for up to one season only and the player must remain in that lower age grade for the entire Season; and
- (h) For U18s and younger and if playing down two age grades, the written approval of the RFU Legal & Governance Director must also be obtained by sending a completed copy of the ‘Playing Down’ Out of Age Grade Form to [regulations@rfu.com](mailto:regulations@rfu.com).

### 15.5 Playing Out of Age Grade Table

AGE GRADE (SCHOOL YEAR)	COMBINING AGE GRADES	PLAYING UP	PLAYING DOWN
<b>MALE AND FEMALE PLAYERS</b>			
U6s (Yr1)	U6s are not permitted to play matches, competitions, tournaments or festivals with any older age grades.		
U7s (Yr2)	U7s and U8s can play and train together	Yes, with U8s only	U7s and U8s can play and train together
U8s (Yr3)		No playing up permitted	
U9s (Yr4)	U9s are permitted to be combined with U10s in accordance with 15.2.2 (max 3 U10s on the pitch)	No playing up is permitted	Playing down is permitted in limited circumstances in accordance with 15.4

U10s (Yr5)	U10s are permitted to be combined with U9s or with U11s in accordance with 15.2.2 (max 3 U11s on the pitch)	No playing up is permitted	Playing down is permitted in limited circumstances in accordance with 15.4
U11s (Yr6)	U11s are permitted to be combined with U10s or with U12s in accordance with 15.2.2 (max 3 U12s on the pitch)	U11 girls are permitted to play with U12 girls in accordance with 15.3.2.  U11s boys are not permitted to play up.	Playing down is permitted in limited circumstances in accordance with 15.4
From U12s and above, mixed rugby is no longer permitted and different regulations apply to male and female players as below			
<b>FEMALE PLAYERS</b>			
U12s (Yr7)	No combining is permitted	No playing up is permitted	Playing down is permitted in limited circumstances in accordance with 15.4
U13s (Yr8)	U13s are permitted to play with U14s	No playing up permitted	Playing down is permitted in limited circumstances in accordance with 15.4
U14s (Yr9)	U14s are permitted to play with U13s	No playing up permitted	Playing down is permitted in limited circumstances in accordance with 15.4
U15s (Yr10)	U15s are permitted to play with U16s	No playing up permitted	Playing down is permitted in limited circumstances in accordance with 15.4
U16s (Yr11)	U16s are permitted to play with U15s	No playing up permitted	Playing down is permitted in limited circumstances in accordance with 15.4

U17s (Yr12)	U17s are permitted to play with U18s	17 year olds are permitted to play up in accordance with 15.6 & 15.7	Playing down is permitted in limited circumstances in accordance with 15.4
U18s (Yr13)	U18s are permitted to play with U17s	18 year olds are permitted to play up in accordance with 15.6 & 15.7	Playing down is permitted in limited circumstances in accordance with 15.4
U19s	No combining permitted	Not applicable as U19s are adult players	Playing down is permitted in limited circumstances in accordance with 15.4
<b>MALE PLAYERS</b>			
U12s (Yr7)	U12s are permitted to be combined with U11s or with U13s in accordance with 15.2.2 (max 4 U13s in a team on the pitch)	Yes, playing up one grade is permitted in accordance with 15.3.2	Playing down is permitted in limited circumstances in accordance with 15.4
U13s (Yr8)	U13s are permitted to be combined with U12s in accordance with 15.2.2 (max 4 U13s in a team on the pitch)  Combining with U14s is permitted (max 4 U14s in a team on the pitch)	Yes, playing up one age grade is permitted in accordance with 15.3.2	Playing down is permitted in limited circumstances in accordance with 15.4
U14s (Yr9)	Combining with U15s is permitted (max 5 U15s in a team on the pitch)	Yes, playing up one age grade is permitted in accordance with 15.3.2	Playing down is permitted in limited circumstances in accordance with 15.4
U15s (Yr10)	Combining with U16s is permitted (max 5 U16s in a team on the pitch)	Yes, playing up one age grade is permitted in accordance with 15.3.2	Playing down is permitted in limited circumstances in accordance with 15.4

U16s (Yr11)	Combining with U17s is permitted (max 5 U17s in a team on the pitch)	Yes, in accordance with 15.3.2 and below:  - playing up one age grade is permitted, including playing in the front row;  - playing up two age grades is permitted but not including in the front row of contested scrums in 15 a-side rugby	Playing down is permitted in limited circumstances in accordance with 15.4
U17s (Yr12)	U17s are permitted to play with U18s  Combining with U16s is permitted (max 5 U17s in a team on the pitch)	U17s are permitted to play with U18s, and 17 year olds are permitted to play up in accordance with 15.6 & 15.7	Playing down is permitted in limited circumstances in accordance with 15.4
U18s (Yr13)	U18s are permitted to play with U17s	18 year olds are permitted to play up in accordance with 15.6 & 15.7	U18s are permitted to play with U17s  Playing down two age grades is permitted in limited circumstances in accordance with 15.4
U19s	No combining permitted	Not applicable as U19s are adult players	Playing down is permitted in limited circumstances in accordance with 15.4

## 15.6 Playing Adult Rugby

15.6.1 Subject to 15.7, players can play and train in adult contact rugby when they reach their seventeenth birthday provided the following conditions are met:

- (a) the player does not train or play in the front row of the contested scrum. Once a player has reached the age of 18, the player may play in any position;
- (b) the RFU Safeguarding Policy and RFU Regulation 21 are complied with;

- (c) the Club has an appointed Safeguarding Officer and is approved by its Constituent Body to play 17 year old males and/or females in adult rugby for the Season by completing the online Playing Adult Rugby – Club Approval Form and process;  
<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/08311987b26f4e7dbdd3c5a55ac8bb91>
- (d) the player has been assessed as capable of playing with adults and the school/college/ club’s assessment has been countersigned and approved by the adult club’s Constituent Body to play adult rugby until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday by completing the online Playing Adult Rugby – Player Approval Form and process;  
<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/odfda3b353b74227aecc0774b3081287>
- (e) approval is required as follows:

England Academy Players, Player Development Group players and EPS players playing in any level of male adult or female adult rugby	Approval in accordance with 15.7 by completing the online England Pathway Player – Out of Age Grade Approval Form and process <a href="#">here</a> .
All other players	Approval by applicable Constituent Body

- (f) subject to 15.7, no player in the U18 age grade or below is permitted to play in the following competitions:
  - i. Men’s Premiership League
  - ii. Men’s Premiership Cup
  - iii. Men’s Premiership Shield
  - iv. Men’s Championship League
  - v. Men’s Championship Cup
  - vi. Women’s Premiership Women’s Rugby
  - vii. Women’s PWR Cup,

unless, in exceptional circumstances for Premiership Rugby Club Players, approved by the Club, the RFU and PRL, and for Player Development Group Players, approved by the Club and the RFU;

- (g) U16 age grade players, regardless of whether they are an England Academy Player or Player Development Group Player or England U18 Player, can only play in the U18 Academy and Player Development Group Competitions with the prior written approval of the RFU Executive Director of Performance Rugby (or their delegate).

15.6.2 Players of all ages and both sexes may train and play together in non-competitive, non-contact rugby provided the following conditions are met:

- (a) Regulation 15.8 is applied;
- (b) the organiser and/or coach has assessed the session and/or match to be safe for all players; and
- (c) under no circumstances is any element of contact rugby permitted and the training session and/or match should be conducted in accordance with specific best practice principles set out in the [Age Grade Codes of Practice](#).



## **15.7 England Academy, Player Development Group, England U18 Players and Representative Rugby**

- 15.7.1 With the prior written approval of the RFU Executive Director of Performance Rugby (or their delegate) and by completing the online England Pathway Player – Out of Age Grade Approval Form and applicable process ([here](#)), England Academy Players (as defined in RFU Regulation 1), Player Development Group Players and England U18 Players can:
- (a) in the U16 age grade, play up in the U17 and U18 age grades including in the front row of the scrum;
  - (b) at 16 years old, play and train with adults, except in the front row; and
  - (c) in the U17 and U18 age grades, play and train with adults, including in the front row.
- 15.7.2 Subject to applicable competition regulations, a player may qualify to represent an Age Grade representative team in a Constituent Body for that Season if the player meets one of the following criteria:
- (a) they attend a school affiliated to that Constituent Body Schools' Union;
  - (b) they reside in that Constituent Body for any part of that Season;
  - (c) they were born in that Constituent Body;
  - (d) they are a registered playing member of a club affiliated to that Constituent Body;
  - (e) they played for that Constituent Body in a representative fixture the previous season.
- 15.7.3 Membership of a Constituent Body's Developing Player Programme (DPP)/Elite Player Development Group (EPDG), Premiership Women's Rugby Squad, Player Development Group (including the Foundation Phase) or an Academy does not entitle a Player to play for that Constituent Body if the Player does not satisfy one of the criteria set out in 15.7.2.
- 15.7.4 Where a player has not been selected for a Constituent Body the Divisional Chair of Selectors may allow the Player to play for another Constituent Body for which the Player is not qualified if it is in the interests of the Player's development.

## **15.8 Season and Out of Season Activity**

- 15.8.1 In Age Grade Rugby the Season shall be as set out below:
- Season 2024-25 will run from Saturday 7 September 2024 until Monday 5 May 2025.
  - Season 2025-26 will run from Saturday 6 September 2025 until Monday 4 May 2026.
- 15.8.2 Rugby activity is permitted during the Season as set out below (and summarised in the table at Regulation 15.8.3).
- 15.8.3 In the U13s and younger age grades (but excluding the girls dual U14/13 age band), all rugby activity is permitted during the Season as specifically set out in the table below:

AGE GRADE /BAND	IN SEASON ACTIVITY				
	NON-CONTACT		CONTACT		OUTGOING & INCOMING TOURS
	Training	Matches & Competitions	Training	Matches & Competitions	
U5s & U6s	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES
U7s & U8s	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES
U9s to U18s (incl.)	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

15.8.4 Rugby training and playing activity is permitted out of Season as specified in the RFU Summer Activity Framework as summarised in the table at 15.8.6.

15.8.5 In addition to the RFU Summer Activity Framework, the following activity is permitted out of Season:

- (a) Outgoing Tours and preparations for such tours in the U14s to U18s age grades (including girls U14/U13 age band) only, as long as Regulation 15.9 is complied with;
- (b) at U15 and U17, CB Representative Rugby activity as per the Age Grade Playing Calendar up to and including the last May Bank Holiday Monday;
- (c) if a competition match scheduled to be played within the Season is abandoned or postponed due to adverse weather conditions, such match may be replayed up to and including the last May Bank Holiday Monday, at all times in accordance with Regulation 15.9 which requires prior written approval; and
- (d) Academy or Player Development Group activity is permitted if pre-approved by the RFU Executive Director of Performance Rugby (or their delegate).

15.8.6 An overview of the RFU Summer Activity Framework is set out below:

*Note: Best practice principles on out of season activity can be found in the [Age Grade Codes of Practice](#).*



# AGE GRADE OUT-OF-SEASON SUMMER ACTIVITY GUIDE

APRIL 2024

		MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST
TRAINING	FREQUENCY	1-2 SESSIONS PER WEEK (INC GAME FOR U11-18)	1-2 SESSIONS PER WEEK (INC GAME)	1-2 SESSIONS PER WEEK (INC GAME)	1-3 SESSIONS PER WEEK (INC GAME)
	INTENSITY	LOW	LOW - MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM - HIGH
	TYPE	GENERAL FITNESS AND SKILLS NON-CONTACT TRAINING FOR U13 & BELOW MAX 20 MINS CONTACT FOR U14-18 PER WEEK	GENERAL FITNESS AND SKILLS- MAX 20 MINS CONTACT PER WEEK	GENERAL FITNESS AND SKILLS MAX 30 MINS CONTACT PER WEEK	POSITION/GAME SPECIFIC SKILLS MAX 40 MINS CONTACT PER WEEK MAX 20 MINS CONTACT PER WEEK
	TIME	MAX 45 - 60 MINUTES + ACTIVATE	MAX 45 - 60 MINUTES + ACTIVATE	MAX 45 - 75 MINUTE + ACTIVATE	MAX 45 - 90 MINUTE + ACTIVATE
FIXTURES	TAG	U11 - U18 BOYS & GIRLS	U7 - U18 BOYS & GIRLS	U7 - U18 BOYS & GIRLS	U7 - U18 BOYS & GIRLS
	NON-CONTACT/T1 RUGBY	U11 - U18 BOYS & GIRLS	U9 - U18 BOYS & GIRLS	U9 - U18 BOYS & GIRLS	U9 - U18 BOYS & GIRLS
	X RUGBY	U14-18 BOYS & GIRLS	U14-18 BOYS & GIRLS	U14-18 BOYS & GIRLS	U12 - 18 BOYS U12, 14, 16, 18 GIRLS BANDS
	GAME ON ADAPTED CONTACT FORMAT	X	X	X	U14 - 18 BOYS U14, 16, 18 GIRLS BANDS
	FIXTURES/FESTIVALS	1 X FIXTURE/FESTIVAL FOR U11-18 BOYS & GIRLS PER FORTNIGHT	1 X FIXTURE/FESTIVAL PER FORTNIGHT	1 X FIXTURE/FESTIVAL PER FORTNIGHT	3 X FIXTURES/FESTIVALS

THE FRAMEWORK IS A MENU TO CHOOSE FROM, YOU DON'T HAVE TO PLAY/TRAIN IN THE OFF SEASON. FOR THOSE THAT CHOOSE TO, THIS SHOWS THE MAXIMUM ACTIVITY PERMITTED EACH MONTH. ALL MATCHES ARE FRIENDLIES DUE TO BEING OUT OF SEASON.  
PLEASE REMEMBER PLAYERS MOVE TO THEIR NEW AGE GROUPS/BANDS ON 1st AUGUST

@AgeGradeRugby 
 @ERugbycoach 
 @englandrugbycoach

## 15.9 Approval of Competitive Activity, Rugby Camps and Tours

Competitions, Tournaments, Festivals, Rugby Camps and Tours are permitted but the following conditions must be met:

- Regulation 15 is complied with in full;
- they are in line with the Age Grade Playing Calendar and competition format of the specific age grade; and
- written prior approval is obtained as set out in the table below by completing the online Approval of Activity form and process to be found under Regulation 15 at <https://www.englandrugby.com/governance/rules-and-regulations/regulations>.

ACTIVITY	ORGANISED FOR	APPROVED BY
In Season & Out of Season Competitions, Locally organised Festivals, Tournaments and Competitions	Clubs	CB
	Schools	CSU
	Colleges	ECRFU
National Festivals, Competitions and Camps if participating teams are from more than just neighbouring CBs and there are more than six entrants	Clubs	CB
	Schools	ERFSU
	Colleges	ECRFU
Rugby Camps - Local/County	All	CB
Rugby Camps - Regional/National	All	RFU

Annual activity beyond club and school/college level (incl domestic Unions), to be included and approved in AG Playing Calendars and published on CB websites	All	CB Executive
Outgoing and Incoming Tours	See RFU Regulation 10 and Guidance at <a href="https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/running-your-club/rugby-tours">https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/running-your-club/rugby-tours</a>	

### 15.10 Clothing and Goggles

15.10.1 Age grade players are permitted to wear base layers (including both long and short sleeve tops and full length tights) provided they comply with the World Rugby Regulatory requirements set out in World Rugby Regulation 12 and Law 14 which are available on [www.worldrugby.org](http://www.worldrugby.org). The Rugby Safe Essential Guide provides guidance on base layers in the frequently asked questions: <https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/playing/player-welfare-rugby-safe>

15.10.2 Players of all age grades are permitted to wear spectacles, glasses or specifically designed sports goggles in all forms of non-contact rugby. Players are permitted to wear specifically designed sports goggles in any form of contact rugby only where the following conditions are satisfied:

- (a) the sports goggles must be dispensed by a General Optical Council (“GOC”) registered dispensing optician or an optometrist registered with the GOC; and
- (b) the player must have written confirmation from the registered dispensing optician or optometrist that:
  - i. the goggles are required to correct the vision of the player or are required to protect the player’s eyes due to a medical or optical condition, to enable the playing of rugby union; and
  - ii. the goggles do not substantially restrict any normal field of vision and are suitable for use in evasion contact sports; and
  - iii. the goggles do not constitute a physical danger to the player or other players; and
  - iv. the player is not capable of wearing contact lenses and why this is the case; and
- (c) the player must have the consent of their parents or guardian to the wearing of the sports goggles.

15.10.3 Clubs/schools must report any injuries caused as a result of the sports goggles to the RFU Community Medical Team by emailing [sportsinjuriesadmin@rfu.com](mailto:sportsinjuriesadmin@rfu.com) and the player’s parents or guardian must report the injury to the dispensing optician or optometrist who prescribed the goggles.

*Note: If an optician is registered with the GOC they will be listed on the GOC's list of registered members which is available at [www.optical.org](http://www.optical.org). Please check the list by inserting the name of the individual optician/optometrist.*

### **15.11 Duration of Matches, Coaching and Training Sessions**

15.11.1 All players, match officials, schools, colleges and clubs must ensure that no player plays more than 35 matches per Season and in respect of all matches and festivals, plays no more than the maximum playing times set out in the table below:\*

<b>AGE GRADE/ BAND</b>	<b>MAXIMUM MINUTES EACH HALF</b>	<b>MAXIMUM MINUTES PER DAY</b>
U7s & U8s	10	50
U9s & U10s	15	60
U11s & U12s	20	70
U13s & U14s	25	80
U15s	30	90
U16s and above (including the girls dual U16/15 age band)	35	90

*\* save that for each Age Grade group an additional 15 minutes per day shall be allowed for delivery of the RFU's injury prevention exercise programme, Activate. For example, U16s and above may engage in a total of 105 minutes of rugby activity on a match or festival day where 90 minutes is attributable to playing and 15 minutes is attributable to the delivery of Activate.*

Important guidance as to playing times and durations for single fixtures, festivals, tournaments and coaching and training sessions are set out in the [Age Grade Codes of Practice](#).

15.11.2 No extra time is permitted in any match except that added for injury time.

15.11.3 Matches must be brought to an end if:

- (a) at Under 7s to Under 13s the try difference rises to more than six; or
- (b) at Under 14s to Under 18s (including the girls dual U14/13 age band) the points difference is more than 50 points.

### **15.12 Half Game Rule**

15.12.1 Other than set out in Regulation 15.12.2, all clubs, teams, schools and colleges must ensure that each player selected in every match day squad plays at least half of the Available Playing Time. This requirement is mandatory across the entire age grade game and in respect of all contact and non-contact age grade matches, including 7 a-side matches and

festivals/tournament matches.

- 15.12.2 In respect of the U18 Academy Competition only, all clubs must ensure that each player selected in every match day squad plays at least 20% of the Available Playing Time.
- 15.12.3 'Available Playing Time' means the total amount of time allocated to a particular match (or matches) by RFU Regulations, any competition specific regulations or by the coaches of the playing teams (in circumstances where those coaches have agreed to play a shortened match). Any stoppages that may occur during a match are not to be taken into account when calculating the Available Playing Time. For example, where a match is 70 minutes long, the Available Playing Time is 70 minutes and each player must receive a minimum of 35 minutes playing time under the Half Game Rule. Where a team is participating in multiple matches in one day, the Total Available Playing Time will be the total number of minutes allocated to all matches played by the team on that day; and in all cases (a) includes playing time spent off the pitch due to a temporary injury or yellow card and (b) excludes playing time that would have been available had a match not be abandoned or shortened due to bona fide reasons or in accordance with Regulation 15.11.3.
- 15.12.4 Regulation 15.12.1 will not apply in the event that a player is permanently removed from the match:
- (a) due to an injury incurred during the match;
  - (b) as a result of a bona fide risk of injury; or
  - (c) as a result of a red card or in the event of the referee requesting that a player be permanently removed from the match.

### **15.13 Competition Regulations**

- 15.13.1 Regulation 15.2, 15.3, 15.4 and 15.5 will be applied to all RFU National Competitions and CBs/Organising Committees/third party organisers are strongly recommended to follow the same approach in anticipation of the introduction of a mandated regulation in the 25-26 season.
- 15.13.2 There are specific competition regulations relating to the following Age Grade competitions and these are available on the Competitions Regulations page of the RFU website:
- (a) U15s and U18s Schools Cup (Boys)
  - (b) ACE League (Boys)
  - (c) ACE League (Girls)
  - (d) National U18 Clubs Cup (Boys)
  - (e) U18 Academy Competition (Boys)
  - (f) National U16 Clubs Girls Cup
  - (g) National U18 Clubs Girls Cup