



REGULATIONS GOVERNING ULSTER BRANCH ADULT MALE LEAGUE AND CUP COMPETITIONS 2026-2027

1. INTERPRETATION

In these Regulations:

"Branch" means the Ulster Branch of the Union.

"Branch Byelaws and Regulations" means the Byelaws and Regulations made by the Branch.

"Branch Committee" means the Committee of the Branch provided for in Byelaw 7 of the Branch Byelaws and Regulations.

"Clubs Committee" means the Clubs Committee established as a sub-committee of the Branch Committee as provided for in Byelaw 14 of the Branch Byelaws and Regulations.

"Competitions Management Committee" means the Competitions Management Committee established as a sub-committee of the Clubs Committee as provided for in Regulation 2 below.

"Game" means rugby football played in accordance with the Laws of the Game.

"IRFU Regulations" means the Regulations made by the Union.

"Laws of the Game" means the Laws of the Game as laid down by World Rugby.

"Union" means the Irish Rugby Football Union.

"Cup Competition" means the main competition and any subsidiary competition(s)

2. COMPETITIONS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- (a) The Clubs Committee shall appoint a sub-committee called the Competitions Management Committee ("the CMC") to perform the functions assigned to it under the provisions of these Regulations.
- (b) The CMC shall decide: -
 - i. the dates on which matches, including replays, shall be played.
 - ii. the venues of matches
 - iii. whether or not extra time, if necessary, shall be played.
- (c) The CMC shall arrange to make the draws for all knock-out competitions.
- (d) The CMC may at any time scrutinise team lists, reinstatements, referees' reports, or other relevant material, and apply competition regulations as appropriate.
- (e) The CMC may refer matters of conduct and responsibility, or of discipline, to the Honorary Secretary of the Branch.

3. SETTING OF FIXTURES

- (a) Fixtures for the season shall be either set by CMC for specified leagues, or arranged between Club representatives and shall be placed before the CMC for its approval. In case the representatives of any 2 Clubs cannot agree in regard to the date on which any match shall be played, the CMC shall decide the same.
- (b) When the date and time of any match has been approved by the CMC the same shall not be changed without the prior permission of the CMC, other than under the provisions of Regulations 5(b) or 20, and any Club or Clubs contravening this Regulation shall be deemed to have forfeited the match unless the CMC rules



otherwise.

- (c) A Club may agree with an opposing Club to play a fixture, scheduled for a Saturday, on the following Sunday provided that: -
 - (i) by the Friday of the preceding week (8 days prior to the fixture) both Clubs have sought the permission of the CMC, and the CMC approves the request.
 - (ii) a referee is available; and
 - (iii) women's fixtures on that Sunday take precedence over the re-arranged fixture.

4. DURATION OF GAME

- (a) The duration of a match shall normally be 80 minutes subject to the Laws of the Game.
- (b) The knock-out stages of all cup competitions and all play-off matches for promotion or relegation will be concluded as follows:
 - (i) If Clubs are tied at full time, extra time of 10 minutes each way shall be played.
 - (ii) If still tied, the Club who has scored the most tries shall be the winner
 - (iii) If still tied, the team who scored the first try shall be the winner.
 - (iv) If no tries have been scored, the team that scored the first points in the match shall be the winner.
 - (v) If the match is scoreless, penalty kicks shall be taken to decide the winner.
- (c) In the finals of Cup Competitions where, after extra time, the match still stands in a draw, the Cup will be shared.

5. REFEREES

- (a) The Ulster Society of Rugby Football Referees shall (whenever possible) appoint referees for all league and cup matches.
- (b) In relation to Law 6 of the Laws of the Game if a referee, having been duly appointed for a cup or league game, is not in attendance, or if such appointment was not made, or if a referee who was appointed for a cup or league game is unable to officiate for the whole period of a match, the game as scheduled may be postponed or in the latter case may be abandoned and reported to the CMC.
- (c) If either Club offers an alternative person to referee (including a referee spectating at the ground) in circumstances covered by (b) to enable the match to be played or concluded, agreement to the arrangements should be confirmed by both captains signing the team lists submitted to the referee before the game or before the game is concluded.
- (d) Save as provided in (c) above, changes to a referee's appointment after arrival at a ground can only take place with the approval of a Referee's Selector.
- (e) Referees may refuse to permit players to take part in a game if not wearing the registered Club jersey. If the registered colours of teams in a match are of such similarity as would present playing or refereeing difficulties, it is the responsibility of the home team to make the necessary change and to notify the Branch and opponents of such change.

6. ENTRY TO COMPETITIONS



- (a) Applications for all competitions must be made to the Branch on the appropriate form in accordance with Branch regulations.
- (b) In the Regional Leagues a team deemed to have completed less than four of its fixtures by the end of November shall not be eligible to enter the McCambley Cup competition in that season.

7. **COMPETITION PROVISIONS**

(a)(i) All Competitive matches should have 15 players and must start with a fully trained front subject to the provisions in (b) and (c) below.

- (ii) The team winning a league match shall be awarded four points. In the case of a drawn league game, each team shall receive two points. One bonus point will be awarded to a team scoring four or more tries in a league match, and one bonus point will be awarded to a team losing by seven points or less. Subject as further provided in (b) and (c) below, any team failing to fulfil a league fixture shall have five points deducted from its league points scored, and their opponents shall receive five points.

(b) In the UPL, Championship and Provincial Premier leagues, where a team is unable to field sufficient players or a suitably trained and experienced front row, they shall forfeit the fixture; and the following provisions apply:

- (i) If both teams have at least 12 players, a friendly game with uncontested scrums and/or equally matched player numbers SHALL take place.
- (ii) Where such a friendly takes place, the team forfeiting the game will not be deducted any points or be subject to a fine, and their opposition will be awarded 5 points.
- (iii) For the avoidance of doubt, for the team not in default to be awarded 5 points, they must agree to play the game as a friendly. If they decline, and no friendly takes place, both sides will be awarded 0 points.
- (iv) If the team forfeiting has fewer than 12 players no friendly game can take place. They will be deducted 5 points and the opposition awarded 5 points.

(c) In the Provincial Regional and Regional Leagues where a team is unable to field either sufficient numbers, or a suitably trained and experienced front row, but chooses to fulfil the fixture, the following provisions will apply:

- (i) Providing each side has at least 12 players, and there is no violation of the provisions of Regulation 18(a), the fixture shall be played in modified format (Game On) as a competitive fixture for league points.
- (ii) If the team requesting Game On wins the fixture they are unable to gain a 4-try bonus point.
- (iii) If either team has fewer than 12 players or refuses to play in a modified format (Game On) they will be deemed to have forfeited the fixture, be deducted 5 points and the opposition awarded 5 points.
- (iv) The modified format (Game On) with uncontested scrums, which count as competitive fixtures, is only permitted in Provincial, Regional and Regional League matches. In all other competitions, including cups, matches starting with uncontested scrums will be played as friendlies. The team responsible for uncontested scrums will be deemed to have lost the fixture and will be subject



to the provisions of Regulation 7(b)(ii) above. The format for 'Game On' is set out in Annex C.

- (d) Where, pursuant to the provisions of Regulation 19 below, a protest is made by a Club to the CMC on behalf of a team in relation to a fixture, and that protest is upheld, the result of the match shall be declared null and void and that team shall:
- (i) in the case of a league fixture, be awarded 5 points, and
 - (ii) in the case of a cup fixture, be awarded the match.
- For the avoidance of doubt, if both teams are found to be playing an "ineligible player" each team:-
- (aa) in the case of a cup fixture will forfeit the game
 - (bb) in the case of a league fixture will forfeit the game and be liable for any relevant sanctions pursuant to these regulations.
- (b) Where, on completion of a league, two or more teams have an equal number of points, the winner shall be determined in accordance with the provisions of Annex A hereto.
- (c) Any team scratching an away league fixture will forfeit home advantage in the return fixture. If circumstances permit, this may be carried forward to the next season at the discretion of the CMC.
- (d) Any team scratching more than 2 league matches in a season may, at the discretion of the CMC, be debarred from entering a particular league competition in the following season.
- (e) Any team scratching from a cup competition, for which it has entered, may, **AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CMC**, be debarred from entering that competition in the following season.
- (f) Once a margin of 60 points between teams in a League or Cup fixture is reached, the match shall end. Where, in such circumstances, a match is ended early, teams are encouraged to play out the remaining time as a friendly, but no further points scored by either team shall be counted in the result.
- (g) Under 19 scrum variations, as set out in the laws of the game, shall apply to all Provincial Regional and Regional league and cup competitions

8 TEAM SHEETS AND NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

- (a) Prior to the start of a match each team must give to the referee: -
- (i) the full names of all their players, and the number of their playing position, and
 - (ii) in the case of their front row players, and possible front row replacements (where front row replacements are required), the position or positions in the front row in which they can play, and the referee shall retain this information and forward it to the Branch if requested.
- (b) The referee shall submit the result and number of tries scored by each team by text to the Branch immediately following the end of the game.
- (c) The referee shall within 24 hours of the end of the game notify the Branch on-line of any of the following: -
- (i) any red cards issued during the match and the nature of the offence in each case, and
 - (ii) any matter of importance affecting a match, including serious injury, or referee abuse.
- (d) No later than 96 hours from the end of a game, each Club shall submit to the



Branch an electronic team sheet setting out the names and registration numbers of the players who played or were named as substitutes.

9 REGISTRATION, ELIGIBILITY AND MOVEMENT OF PLAYERS, AND PAYMENTS TO PLAYERS

- (a) All Clubs are subject to the provisions of Regulation 6 of the IRFU Regulations.
- (b) A player shall only be eligible to play for a Club in any given season if their registration status is 'Active' on the IRFU registration system (Rugby Connect) and in line with regulations below.
- (c) In addition, the following provisions shall apply: -
 - (i) Clubs playing in UPL, Senior Cup and all divisions of the Championship Leagues are subject to the provisions regarding the registration and eligibility of players set down in Annex B hereto.
 - (ii) Save as provided in (iii) below: -
 - player shall not be eligible to play for a Club in knock-out cup competitions unless he shall have been registered with that Club prior to the start of the competition.
 - (iii) Any player, which would include a school-leaver, entering adult rugby for the first time, or a player enrolling in university and joining the university Club, shall be eligible to **play in league and / or knock-out cup competitions** after the commencement of any such competition provided such a player is registered with his new Club by 31 January at the latest.
 - (iv) A player may not transfer as a playing member from one Club to another unless he is free from any financial obligation with the Club he is leaving.
 - (v) A player whose transfer has not been completed in accordance with the provisions of Regulation 6.4.4 of the IRFU Regulations by the 31 January in any year will not be eligible to play for his new Club in Branch league or cup competitions.
- (d) **A Player may only play Adult Rugby once he has attained the age of 18 years.**

10 REINSTATEMENTS

- (a) The CMC shall have the power to reinstate: -
 - (i) players who have become disqualified from league competitions, and
 - (ii) players (other than players cup-tied under the provisions of Regulation 14(a), and players selected by a Club in breach of Regulation 14(b), below) who have become disqualified from cup competition, provided that: -
 - (A) the Club making the application for reinstatement has submitted to the Branch, under the provisions of Regulation 8 above, electronic team sheets in respect of 95%, or more, of the fixtures played by that Club in the season up to the date of such application.
 - (B) the application is made on an electronic team sheet submitted under Regulation 8 above, and
 - (C) such application must be received by the Branch by 10am 3 working days before the match in which the player seeks to play. A 'late request' to reinstate one player to a team playing in Regional rugby must be made by 10am on the day before a game.



- (b) A player becomes disqualified if, during the current season, he has played, in aggregate, six or more cup and league matches for **a team/teams in his club playing in the next highest grade in which that club has a team, or twice for a team in a grade higher than the next highest grade in which that club has a team. Any games played by dual status players for other clubs will also be included.**
- (c) For the avoidance of doubt, the power of the CMC to reinstate a player under the provision of (a) above shall only arise after that player has become disqualified in accordance with the provisions of (b) above.
- (d) A Club applying to reinstate a player shall: -
 - (i) provide the reason for such reinstatement.
 - (ii) state the league sections from, and to, which the player is to be reinstated.
 - (iii) provide the full playing record of the player for that season; and
 - (iv) include details of any previous reinstatements in respect of the player during that season.
- (e) Save in exceptional circumstances and with the agreement of the CMC: -
 - (i) a player may be reinstated a maximum of twice in a season.
 - (ii) a player who has played in aggregate five or more cup and league matches for a team in his Club playing in the next highest grade in which that Club has a team can only be reinstated to the section below that for which he played such matches.
 - (iii) a player cannot be reinstated from a Championship League Division 1 team after 16 March in any season.
- (f) A Club applying to reinstate a player in exceptional circumstances, as provided in (e) above, shall provide full and detailed reasons in writing in support of its application.
- (g) A player cannot be reinstated on the grounds that he is returning from injury unless he has been unable, by virtue of that injury, to play for at least the previous two weeks.
- (h) A player who has not played in last 8 weeks due will be eligible to return playing for the club's lowest team.
- (i)
 - (i) Save as provided in (ii) and (iii) below, a Club may not apply, in any one week, to reinstate more than 4 players to each section in which it participates.
 - (ii) An AIL/Ulster Premiership League Club may not apply, in any one week, to reinstate more than 5 players to each section in which it participates.
 - (iii) In the week immediately following participation in an All-Ireland Junior Cup fixture, a Championship 1 Club may apply to reinstate up to 5 players to each section in which it participates
- (j) A dual status player, returning to play for his Championship League Club, shall be subject to the provisions of paragraphs (a) to (h) above.
- (k) For the purposes of this regulation the grades of League shall be AIL/Ulster Premiership League, 2nd XV/ Championship Provincial Premier, Provincial Regional and Regional.

11 UNQUALIFIED PLAYERS

If any Club includes in its team, any player who is not duly qualified to represent it, the team shall be deemed to have lost the match, and in the case of a league match will



have two points deducted from its league total to date.

12 FALSIFYING TEAM SHEETS

If any Club includes in its team any player who is not duly qualified to represent it, and includes that player in the electronic team sheet under a name or registration number other than his own, **or omits to include any player in the electronic team sheet**, the team shall, in addition to any sanctions which may be applied under the provisions of Regulation 11 above: -

- (a) in the case of a league match, have sixteen points deducted from its league total to date;
- (b) in the case of a match in a cup competition, be debarred from entering that competition in the following season, and the Club may be subject to further sanction by the Disciplinary Committee of the Branch if its conduct is held to be detrimental to the best interests of the Game.



13 THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS AND THE REPLACEMENT AND SUBSTITUTION OF PLAYERS

- (a) Teams participating in the following competitions must comply with Law 3 of the Laws of the Game in respect of the nomination and replacement/substitution of players.

	COMPETITION	NOMINATED SUBS OR REPLACEMENTS	FRONT ROW REQUIREMENT
(i)	Ulster Premiership League	5	2
(ii)	Championship League 1	3	1
(iii)	Championship League 2	3	1
(iv)	Championship League 3	3	1
(v)	Second Fifteen League	3	1
(vi)	Senior Cup/Shield (up to semi-final)	5	2
(vii)	Senior Cup/Shield (semi-final and final)	7	2
(viii)	Junior Cup/Shield (up to quarter-final)	3	1
(ix)	Junior Cup/Shield (semi-final and final)	5	2
(x)	Towns Cup (up to quarter-final)	3	1
(xi)	Towns Cup (semi-final and final)	5	2
(xii)	McCrea Cup (to quarter-final)	3	1
(xiii)	McCrea Cup (semi-final and final)	5	2
(xiv)	Gordon West Cup/Plate (to quarter-final)	3	1
(xv)	Gordon West Cup/Plate (semi-final and final)	5	2

- (b) Teams participating in the following competitions are not required to comply with Law 3 of the Laws of the Game in respect of the nomination and replacement/substitution of players.

	COMPETITION	NOMINATED SUBS OR REPLACE- MENTS	FRONT ROW REQUIRE- MENT
(i)	Provincial League	3	0
(ii)	Regional League	3	0
(iii)	Crawford Cup/ Plate (all rounds)	3	0
(iv)	Forster Cup/ Plate (all rounds)	3	0
(v)	McCambley Cup/Butler Shield (all rounds)	3	0

- (c) In all competitions in which substitutions are permitted such substitutions shall be



rolling subject to limits as per World Rugby Laws

- (d) Only the front row players, and their possible replacements, named in the team sheet under the provisions of Regulation 8(a) above, may play in the front row when the scrum is contested and only then in their designated positions.
- (e) (i) Where a referee orders uncontested scrums during a match, as a result of injury to a front row player and the team not having suitably trained and experienced front row players to replace him: -
 - (A) the injured front row player must leave the field and cannot be otherwise replaced; and
 - (B) the match shall continue with that team a man short, unless the player causing uncontested scrums has left the field with the authority of the referee due to an injury caused by foul play or a suspected concussion or a blood injury.
- (ii) A team in default under the provisions of (a) above shall forfeit the match.

14 CUP TIED PLAYERS

- (a) A player may not play for more than one team in the same cup competition.
- (b) A Club may not select a player from a higher team to play in the semi-final or final of any cup unless the player has played in a previous round of the competition or in exceptional circumstances permission is granted by the CMC. For the purposes of this provision a player from a higher team shall be deemed to be a player who, during the current season, has played six or more matches in aggregate for a higher team or teams in cup and league competitions.

15 STARTING TIMES OF MATCHES

- (a) Normal kick-off time for all Saturday matches whether league, cup or friendly will be 2.30pm. **Fixtures can start at 2.00pm, or earlier, subject to referee availability, agreement between the clubs and with prior permission from CMC.**
- (b) Application to vary these kick-off times must be made in writing to the CMC **5** days before the date of the match.

16 REFUSAL TO PLAY

- (a) League and cup matches must be completed by the date specified by the CMC.
- (b) In the event of a Club failing to play a match or replay on the stipulated date or refusing to play extra time if ordered to do so by the CMC, it shall be adjudged to have forfeited the match unless the CMC considers there was a reasonable and proper cause for the refusal and, if the match is a cup match, shall be liable to a fine as provided in Regulation 17.

17 POSTPONEMENT OR CANCELLATION OF MATCHES

- (a) Any Club postponing a match (with the permission of the CMC in accordance with Regulation 3(b) above), or cancelling a match, for any reason, must immediately notify: -
 - (i) the Honorary Secretary or an authorised official of the opposing Club.



- (ii) the Branch in writing or e-mail and the Branch will notify the referee if cancellation is more than 24 hours before kick-off; and
- (iii) the referee if postponement or cancellation is within 24 hours of kick-off.
- (b) Any Club failing to comply with (a) above shall be liable to a fine of £100 in respect of the expenses of a referee who travels, and may, at the discretion of the CMC, be held liable to pay the travelling expenses of the visiting Club.
- (c) Any Club failing to fulfil a fixture in the following competitions will be fined as follows:

	COMPETITION	FINE
(i)	Ulster Premiership League	£400 per match
(ii)	Second XV League	£400 per match
(iii)	Championship League 1	£400 per match
(iv)	Championship League 2	£300 per match
(v)	Championship League 3	£200 per match
(vi)	Senior Cup/Shield	£1000
(vii)	Towns Cup	£750
(viii)	McCrea Cup	£750
(ix)	Junior Cup/Shield	£400
(x)	Provincial Leagues	£100
(xi)	Regional Leagues	£100

- (d) A Club failing to fulfil a cup fixture in a competition other than those referred to in (c) above shall be subject to a fine of £100.
- (e) A Club wishing to appeal against the imposition of any fine payable under this Regulation must do so in writing on Club notepaper or by email on electronic Club letterhead signed by the Honorary Secretary or the President of the Club to reach the Honorary Secretary of the Branch within 96 hours of notification of the fine.
- (f) Where a match is postponed (with the permission of the CMC in accordance with the provisions of Regulation 3(b) above), or cancelled, both Clubs must within 48 hours of the scheduled match notify the CMC by e-mail of the circumstances, and
 - (i) where the match is postponed, both Clubs should within 7 days of the original date seek the approval of the CMC to a mutually agreed revised date and venue for the fixture. In exceptional circumstances CMC may, within this 7 day period, set a date for the replay in order that competition deadlines are met;
 - (ii) where the match is cancelled, the offending Club should confirm forfeiture of points, or fixture, as appropriate.
 - (iii) where agreement cannot be reached within 7 days on rearrangement or forfeiture, the matter shall be referred to the CMC for decision.
 - (iv) the offending Club must immediately inform the CMC of the reasons why it failed to fulfil the fixture and why the CMC should not award the match to the non-offending side.
- (g) Any team which is unable to stage a home fixture at the knock-out stage of a competition on two successive occasions will forfeit home advantage.
- (h) All fines shall be paid to the Ulster Branch and forwarded to the IRFU (Ulster) Charitable Trust.



- (i) Any decision to postpone or cancel a game due to adverse weather MUST take into account the Adverse Weather Match Day Protocol.
- (j) Fines are not applicable to a team for their first cancellation in Regional or Provincial Regional leagues.

AMENDMENTS TO (c) and (j) ARE SUBJECT TO FINAL RATIFICATION AT BRANCH COMMITTEE IN SEPTEMBER

18 ORDER OF CANCELLATION

- (a) Clubs must cancel or postpone league and cup matches from the lowest team upwards.
- (b) Cup games within their designated sections take precedence over league games.
- (c) The penalty for violation of the above is:
 - (i) If a team plays a cup or league match on the same day as the Club has cancelled a cup or league match of a higher team, then the result will be declared null and void and its opponents will be declared the winners.
 - (ii) In the case of a league match, the offending team shall be deducted 5 points and their opponents shall receive 5 points.
- (d) Where a match commences with less than 15 players on a team, that team may be deemed by the CMC, for the purposes of this Regulation only, to have cancelled the fixture and, if such cancellation is in breach of the order prescribed above, the CMC may impose the above penalty.
- (e) When cancellation in the order prescribed above is impracticable (e.g. because of late cancellation or difficulties arising from an assigned pitch being declared unplayable) full details must be sent to the CMC in writing by the Club responsible for the cancellation within 72 hours of the cancellation. The CMC will then decide whether or not the above penalty will be imposed.

19 PROTESTS OR APPEALS

A Club wishing to make an official protest or appeal to the CMC in relation to a fixture must do so in writing on Club note paper or by email on electronic Club letterhead signed by the Honorary Secretary or President of the Club to reach the CMC within 96 hours after the end of the match to which it relates.

20 FITNESS OF GROUND

Once the Referee arrives he/she shall be the sole judge on the fitness of the ground for the playing of a League or Cup match. Any such decision by a referee should be made as soon as possible and prior to the scheduled kick off time. Prior to the arrival of the referee, the home Club shall judge the fitness of the ground; and, in the case of a public ground, the decision shall lie with the grounds person in charge.

21 TROPHY OWNERSHIP & RESPONSIBILITY

- (a) The Trustees of the Branch for the time being shall be for all intents and purposes the legal owners of all cups and shields in trust for the Branch.
- (b) Cups and shields shall be presented to winning Clubs at the final or conclusion of the competitions, where practicable. Clubs winning a cup or shield must ensure its



safe custody and care and return it to the Branch when so directed.

22 APPEALS AGAINST DECISIONS OF THE CMC

A club seeking to dispute a decision of the CMC may appeal such decision direct to the Branch Committee in writing on Club notepaper or by email on electronic Club letterhead signed by the Honorary Secretary or President of the Club and addressed to the Honorary Secretary of the Branch.

Any such appeal must be lodged within 96 hours of the Club receiving official notification of the CMC decision and must be accompanied by a sum of £250 which may, at the discretion of the Branch Committee be refunded in whole or in part.



ANNEX A

DETERMINATION OF LEAGUE WINNER UNDER REGULATION 7

If, on completion of a league, two or more teams have equal points the following will be applied to determine the final league positions:

- (i) The winner will be the team which has the most league points in the fixtures between the teams in question.
- (ii) If (i) above fails to produce a result, then the winner between the teams still tying will be the team which has the highest differential between points scored and conceded in the league fixtures between those teams.
- (iii) If (ii) above fails to produce a result, then the winner between the teams still tying will be the team with the highest average difference between points scored and points conceded in the games actually played in their entire league section.
- (iv) If (iii) fails to produce a result, then the winner between the teams still tying will be the team scoring the highest average number of points in the games actually played in their entire league section.
- (v) If (iv) fails to produce a result then the CMC, at its discretion, may order one or more play-off matches to determine the winner.



ANNEX B

REGISTRATION AND ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS

1. Player Registration

- (a) A person may be registered as a playing member with only one Club at any one time
- (b) Only a player whose registration status is 'Active' on the IRFU registration system (Rugby Connect) is eligible to play in Branch league or cup competitions.
- (c) The following registration deadlines shall apply:
 - i. Ulster Premiership, Senior Cup and Shield – only players eligible to play in the AIL are eligible
 - ii. Division One of the Championship League – on or before 1 October (unless regulation 9(c) (iii) applies)
 - iii. Championship 2 and Championship 3 – on or before 31 January
 - iv. A player who is registered with a Club prior to 1 October and who attains the age of 18 during the season shall be eligible to play in Championship 1 after he has attained his 18th birthday, unless he is a schoolboy who is eligible for the relevant school's competition.

2. Eligibility of Players

- (a) The following players, if correctly registered on the IRFU player registration system (Rugby Connect), are eligible to play in League and Cup competitions:
 - i. A Player who qualifies to play for Ireland under World Rugby Regulations and/or holds a European Union or British passport., and is resident in Ireland or Northern Ireland by 1st September
 - ii. Any player not qualifying under (i) above visiting Ireland or Northern Ireland and in possession of a minimum one-year visa. This player must have obtained World Rugby clearance, and for the purposes of interpretation, is classified as an overseas player and shall be nominated as such to the CMC.
 - iii. In the Championship, Provincial and Regional Leagues, a club is permitted to register one overseas player, for their 1st XV, providing they take up and remain in residence on or before 30 September.
In the case of (ii) a player who has resided for a minimum of one year in Ireland or Northern Ireland, they may then apply to the CMC to be considered a Non Overseas player
- (b) For the purposes of this provision residency/resident is defined as "Permanent place of residence".

3. Dual Status Players

- (a) A player who is a bona fide playing member of a non All Ireland League Club may also play for an All-Ireland League Club in the same season subject to the provisions of IRFU Regulation 9.15. Such provisions shall, in addition to applying in relation to matches in the All-Ireland League and Cup, be deemed to apply in relation to matches in the Ulster Premiership League and the Ulster Senior Cup.



- (b) Where the provisions of IRFU Regulation 9.15 are applied in relation to matches in the Ulster Premiership League or the Ulster Senior Cup, application, under Regulation 9.15.2.1, must be made to the Branch office as if the reference therein to the Unions office was a reference to the Branch's office.

4 School Leavers

In accordance with IRFU AIL regulations, a school leaver, who is not a member of a club, and who transfers to an AIL club

between the end of the season and 1st October and who then changes their mind will be allowed to nominate a non-AIL club on the transfer form. They will be able to transfer to the non-AIL club by completing and submitting the Change of Mind form. Any Change of Mind form must be submitted to the Branch by 30th November of the year of joining the AIL club.



ANNEX C

Game On format

Game On allows competitive games, played for league points, to take place when either side has less than 15 players (a minimum of 12), or if there is a lack of suitably trained front row players.

Eligibility

Game On may only be used in the following leagues:

- Adult Male – Provincial Regional and Regional leagues
- Adult Women – Championship leagues
- Youth - U18 Division 4, U16 & U14 Division 3 and any lower leagues

The standard format of Game On is shown below, however both sides may agree an alternative using the Game Card for guidance.

Matched numbers

Teams must have the same number of players, except where a player receives a red or yellow card. If during the game either side is reduced to fewer than 12 players for any reason they shall be deemed to have forfeited the match. The opposition will be awarded 5 points and the side in default awarded 0 points. The match may continue to be played as a friendly.

Scrum

Both sides must agree to have either contested or uncontested scrums before starting the game. With reduced numbers the scrum formation should be 3-4 for 14 or 13 players and 3-2-1 for 12 players. If during the game either team requests uncontested scrums they must play on with one player fewer than the opposition

Match duration

If both teams agree the match duration may be reduced, with a suggested minimum of 30 minutes per half.

League Points

League points are awarded in the usual way, with one exception – the team requesting Game On gets a maximum of 4 points if they win.

NOTE

If either team has fewer than 12 players to start the game or refuses to play in the modified format (Game On) they will be deemed to have forfeited the fixture, be deducted 5 points and the opposition awarded 5 points.