July 2026 – England Rugby Colleges



Dear colleagues,

Well done on reaching the end of another academic year and what a very successful year for college rugby. It has been really encouraging to see the growth in the numbers participating in our festivals across the country with many students returning to the game as well as good numbers trying the game for the first time.

It was great to see so many of you at the recent conference held at Warwick University. The quality of the keynote speakers and the presenters of the various workshops was exceptional and to be in the presence of the Women's World Cup trophy was a real honour for the sector and it is certainly a very exciting time for the women's game and the colleges will be at the forefront of the growth of the game as well as securing the future players at the Elite level to ensure successful defences of the trophy moving forward.

On behalf of all members of the board can I thank everyone for your contributions this year I know that all your students are very appreciative of the time, effort and expertise that you all provide week after week. There is plenty to look forward to next year and I hope you all manage to have some quality time off over the summer.

Martin Tucker
Chair England Rugby Colleges

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England Colleges 7's Tournament 2027 – ENTRY FORM

Wednesday 24th March 2027

England Colleges will be running two rugby 7's Tournaments to cater for all colleges, offering both performance and development level competitions for both U18 Boy's and Girl's. Two tournaments will take place on the same Wednesday 24th March 2027 with one situated in the north and one in the south of England.

The two venues have been confirmed as the following:

North: **West Park Leeds RUFC**

South: **Trowbridge RFC**

Please put the date in your fixture diaries now for Wednesday 24th March 2027 and complete the entry registration for the competition below:

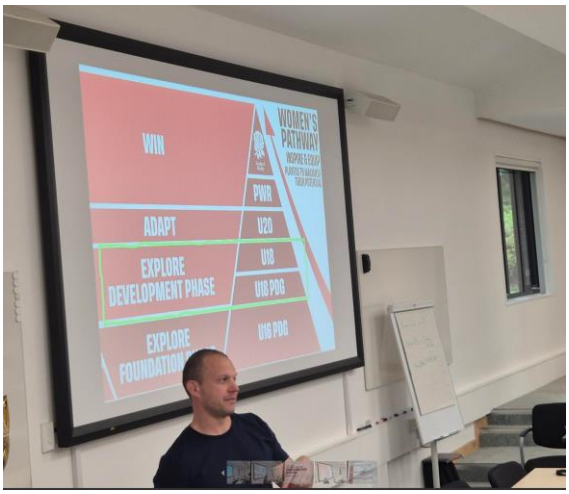
England Colleges U18 7's Tournament Wednesday 24th March 2027 – Fill in form

England Rugby Colleges Conference 3rd June 2026

'RWC Legacy: Enrichment to Performance - Women & Girls Rugby in Colleges'

70 delegates attended the national 'Women & Girls' Conference at The Scarman, Warwick University. The day was started with an excellent presentation from Alex Teasdale on the new Women & Girls development plan building on the legacy of the Women's Rugby World Cup success. This set the perfect tone for the whole day with James Cooper providing an in depth insight to the England U18 Girls pathway. While Ben Lowe and Mark Saltmarsh ran a session looking at the RFU 2030 Strategy and how colleges can support development of the game.





Workshops focussed on T1 Rugby, Girls ACE programme, Rugby Ambassadors, Playing Opportunities and Brave Mind. All were extremely informative and received excellent feedback from the delegates.

England Rugby Colleges wish to thank all presenters who supported the day and enabled such a positive conference to take place supporting the growth of the women and girls game across the college sector. We very much look forward to future such occasions to bring the sector together.

Roslyn Park 7's 2027 Update

The Rosslyn Park National Schools Sevens will take place from Monday 15 March to Friday 19 March 2027.

This is one week later than originally scheduled, due to concerns around pitch/infrastructure readiness and ensuring the best possible playing conditions for all 16,000+ participants.

As a result the Continental Tyres Schools U18 Plate & Bowl and all U15 Finals, along with the Girls ACE League Play-Offs will move a week earlier to w/c 8 March.

The Schools Cup Finals scheduled for Allianz Stadium will remain w/c 15 March.

This rebalances the Age Grade Playing Calendar for the benefit of the whole game at that time. This will ensure, as well as accessing great playing opportunities like these National competitions, we are supporting players to maintain their wider connections with all their rugby playing opportunities and on the talent pathway. With an earlier Easter in 2027, this period is again very congested.

We urge everyone to continue placing a strong emphasis on player welfare and carefully managing player load throughout. This is particularly the case for the many boys and girls who also play in clubs and the player pathway, as well as at school or college.

Thank you for your understanding as we continue to prioritise player welfare and the quality of playing opportunities, as well as maximise participation.

Regulation 15 Review & Schools Sevens

AGE GRADE RUGBY REGULATION 15 - WHAT'S CHANGING

Thank you to everyone who took part in the Regulation 15 Review during the last 9 months. With over 600 survey responses and many conversations with clubs, schools, colleges and partner organisations, the community game has been integral to the changes which the RFU Council have approved.

The approved changes fall into two categories - those coming in for 2026/7 and those that will be introduced in 2027/8.

Changes coming in 2026/27

These are the priority changes for next season. There was strong agreement across the game for these, and they can be put in place straight away. They include:

Playing Out of Age Grade (POOAG) - A standard risk assessment will apply to all POOAG applications, along with a 10-day approval window to reduce the burden on administrators.

Girls' rugby at Under 11/12 - A new dual girls' Under 11/12 age band is being introduced to help clubs retain more young female players who want to play girls-only rugby at that age. Mixed rugby at Under 11s will remain, giving clubs and girls greater flexibility and choice.

Simplified Language - Significant work is being undertaken to simplify the language used in the regulation, making it more accessible and easier to follow.

A full picture of the changes will be in the new-look Regulation 15, which we will publish in July, alongside some helpful guidance and resources.

Changes coming in 2027/28

This smaller set of changes have also been agreed but won't come in until 2027/8, to allow more time to put things in place to support their introduction. You'll hear more about these over the next year, once we have the playing season underway.

Areas for further engagement

During the age grade regulation review, a few topics sparked significant debate and a range of different views. Rather than rush, we will be running additional engagement with the game over the next 6-9 months to discuss these further before we put any firm recommendations forward for a decision.

We're looking forward to the new regulations that make age grade rugby safer, clearer and simpler for everyone involved and to engaging further with people from across the community game.

Keep an eye on the RFU Regulations and Age Grade Rugby pages for updates.

Important additional update: Regulation 15 Review and Schools Sevens

We recently announced the headlines following our Regulation 15 Review. In our communications, we explained that we will be introducing some of the approved changes from 2026/27 and some of the others from 2027/28 to provide a longer preparation period. The planned changes for 2026/7 included introducing a dedicated school sevens window with some restrictions in the spring.

Over the last few weeks, we have received a number of queries about the decision to prevent schools sevens from taking place on Sundays. We are taking a pause on this whilst we hold meetings with school and club representatives to explore the operational concerns around implementing this and the risk to player participation. These discussions have already started and are ongoing. We are listening.
We acknowledge that, whilst schools, colleges and clubs, coaches, teachers, match officials and administrators, together with many parents and players took part in the consultation, for most it wasn't clear this covered sevens. This is probably because school sevens are not mentioned explicitly in Regulation 15. Rather, dates are allocated in the Age Grade Calendar. We also realise not all Headteachers directly

received the consultation. We think it only fair to review this matter urgently to consider views that were not heard in the consultation.

We will confirm the position on school sevens tournaments for 2026/27 as soon as possible. Please send your views to AgeGradeRugby@RFU.com by return.

RFU Player Pipeline Team and Partners.

GMS Information

Vitally Important:

Please ensure that your college details are correct and up to date on your GMS page. This is vital to ensure you receive communications in a timely fashion and also receive the ticket ballot details.

Please do check names, emails and all contact details are up to date.

England Rugby Learning

England Rugby is introducing a major upgrade to how we support coaches, match officials and volunteers to complete essential training, access resources, and continually refresh their knowledge and skills. These changes will go live at the end of July and are designed to make learning simpler, more personalised, and easier to complete- especially on mobile devices. You can find out more about the platform here, including an overview of the learning available to support you and others in your club in performing your roles effectively. We'll share further details in the coming weeks on how you and your members can access the platform.

GMS eLearning Courses

As part of the transition to England Rugby Learning, from 1 July the following courses will no longer be available on GMS. These courses will be available again on England Rugby Learning within three weeks:

- Headcase
- Introduction to Safeguarding
- TackleSafe

These courses have been updated and are now incorporated into broader learning pathways on England Rugby Learning for coaches, match officials, and volunteers.
As we transition between systems, there will be a short period where these courses are not accessible. This is necessary to ensure data integrity and enable accurate reporting between GMS and England Rugby Learning.

Qualification Expiry Updates

To improve reporting within GMS following the launch of England Rugby Learning, expiry dates have been applied to courses that were not previously managed consistently. These include:

- Play it Safe
- Emergency First Aid in Rugby Union

- In Touch

These courses will now expire three years after completion, in line with the original intent. You may already have noticed updates to your GMS profile reflecting these changes.
In addition, both *Introduction to Safeguarding* and *Headcase* will expire on 1st August 2026 to support the accuracy of the new reporting functionality.

If you'd like to learn more about England Rugby Learning, and are not currently signed up to one of the CCC Workshops, please join one of our upcoming webinars (feel free to share with others in your club):

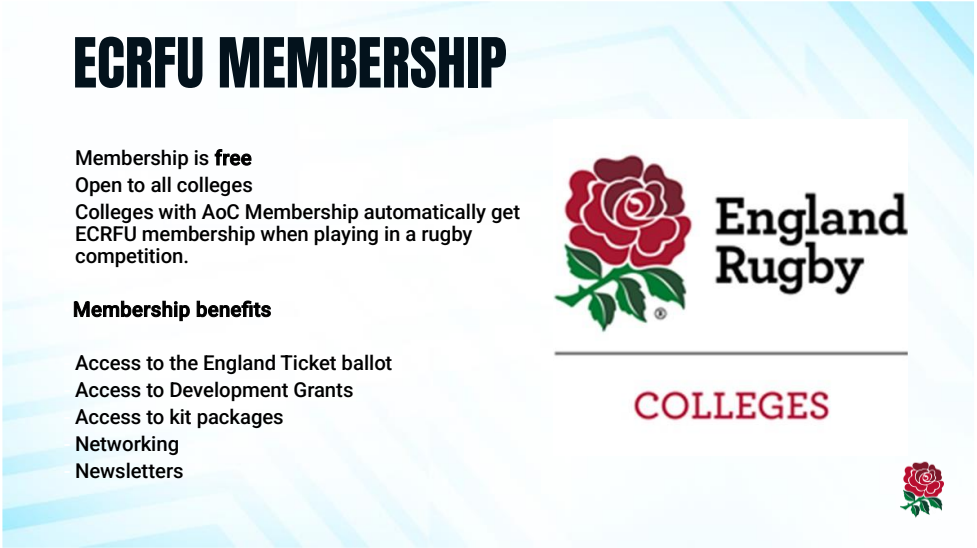
- Thursday 16 July from 12:30-13:30- REGISTER HERE
- Monday 20 July from 19:00-20:00- REGISTER HERE

England Rugby Learning is designed to better support the role you play in our game, providing more personalised, relevant, and accessible learning through a modern digital platform and mobile app.

We will circulate more information as this becomes available.

England Colleges Membership

Colleges already registered as members **please ensure that you log onto your GMS account and update all details** to ensure that you receive all communications and information about developments as well as details regarding the International Ticket Ballot. The individuals assigned to the Golden Roles are key contacts and need to be regularly updated when staff change or you will not receive the information you require.



Your Regional ECRFU Rep

England Colleges RFU is the advocate of College Rugby within the RFU and, as the national Constituent Body, works hard to ensure the voice of the college sector is heard.

The role of the England Colleges Rep is a key one in ensuring this dialogue takes place and all views are clearly represented.

ECRFU Reg Rep	College	Contact Details	Region
James McKeown	Runshaw College	McKeown.J@runshaw.ac.uk	**North West**
Andy Douthwaite Dale Smallman	Hereford VIth Form Shrewsbury College	AD@hereford.ac.uk dales@shrewsbury.ac.uk	**West Midlands**
Naz Deen Trevor Martingell	Corams Kent	naz@coramsfields.org.uk t.martingelll@btinternet.com	**London & Kent**
Tim Peck	Leyton	Timothy.Peck@leyton.ac.uk	**London & East**
Mark Rugman	Worthing College	M.Rugman@worthing.ac.uk	**South East**
Chris Wall Glenn Channing	Exeter College South Devon College	chriswall@exe-coll.ac.uk glennchanning@southdevon.ac.uk	**South West**
Evan Woodworth	Bishop Burton College	Evan.Woodworth@askham-bryan.ac.uk	**East**
Robert Green	Bede Sixth Form College	robert.green@stockton.ac.uk	**North East**

Stay in Touch **@EngRugColleges**