September 2025 - College Update



Dear Colleagues,

I do hope that you all had a really good summer break and have returned full of energy ready for the new academic year and the 2025/26 season.

As we return to college of course the Women's RWC has got underway and what a great start to the tournament we have enjoyed with some wonderful games and a really positive start for the Red Roses. The engagement of the supporters has been excellent and will only continue to grow as the tournament gathers pace. This is a wonderful opportunity for really growing the girl's game within the college sector and so it is vital we harness this enthusiasm and offer the opportunity to the girl's in our colleges to enjoy becoming involved in the game whether non-contact or contact.

Within this newsletter you will find ways of getting started and so introducing the game in your college either through T1 Rugby or getting involved in the 'Festival' series offered. Both are ideal opportunities for you to get the game started within your college.

May I on behalf of England Colleges RFU wish you all a great season ahead and I look forward to watching the game continue to grow across the sector in both the boy's and girl's games.

Best Wishes

Martin Tucker
ECRFU Chair
(Principal, Truro and Penwith College)

T1 Rugby Enrichment Sign Up 2025/2026:

World Rugby has launched T1 Rugby, the world's first non-contact sport that fully reflects the unique characteristics of rugby, to supercharge participation and engagement by making the sport more relevant and accessible to young people.

With the mantra of 'a game for everyone, played by anyone', T1 Rugby has an emphasis on fun, fitness and inclusion and will provide a fun, welcoming, time efficient and safe environment for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds, reflecting the international federation's mission of a global sport for all.

As part of the colleges T1 Rugby sign up you will receive the following:
- Kit Pack including - balls, cones and bibs
- eLearning
- Sessions Plans
- Promotion materials

As part of the T1 Rugby Offer you are also invited to recruit 2 x Rugby Ambassadors as part of the AoC Sport Student Leadership Programme.

T1 Rugby Flatpack: https://forms.office.com/e/XBTCbLrW52

England Rugby | COLLEGES

England Colleges LEARN Grant – 2025/2026

England Rugby are extremely pleased to continue the 'LEARN' grant for 25/26, supporting colleges to retain players through high quality coaching experiences.

Colleges can apply for up to 3 vouchers covering either the:

- England Rugby Coaching Award (ERCA) - 2 day course - Day 1 October/November - Day 2 May/June supported by webinars - £75
- Introduction to Contact - 1 6hr course or 2 x 3 hour sessions. £25
  Principles of Scrum - £10- Principles of Lineout - £10

  To apply for the voucher support please simply complete this ECRFU ' LEARN Grant Application' and hit
  submit.

  The deadline for applications will be Wednesday 24th September at 5.00pm. This is to allow time for the voucher to be allocated, and the candidates to book on.

  Please note that in order for the vouchers to be redeemed, coaches/referees will need an active GMS account and know there RFU ID number.
  You can create a GMS account here - **https://gms.rfu.com/GMS/Home/Start**

If you have any further questions please contact England Colleges on - **ECRFUHonsec@RFU.com**

England Colleges Learn Grant: https://forms.office.com/e/GJ8TgNag15

Rugby Fest 2025

RugbyFest is a nationwide celebration of rugby, taking place from Friday 3rd to Monday 6th October 2025. It follows the conclusion of the Women's Rugby World Cup in England and is a chance for communities to come together and celebrate the tournament.



Women's Rugby World Cup

We have a number of ways your College and students can get involved. For a complete guide of what's available please visit our RWC Hub here: https://www.englandrugby.com/wrwc25/get-involved Specifically for colleges, the RWC is a great opportunity to give rugby a go. Our Non-contact format – T1 Rugby – is a great way to start and there is lots of helpful information on how to play, session plans etc. on the T1 Rugby section of our website.

If you are planning to do a RWC themed event (which could be an enrichment offer, give it a go session, or other activity such as design a T-shirt or Yarn Art – this can be registered as a "Rugby Fest" event. Rugby Fest takes placed between 3*rd*-6*th* October and there's lots of resources to help you promote your event here.

Important Update – Regulation 15 'Playing Down'

Important Information

Changes to Regulation 15 – 'Playing Down'

Please find a summary of the modifications to regulations for the 2025/26 season. The new season's regulations begin from 1st August 2025; that is when players shift up to their new ages and set of playing rules.

The regulations support the safe and consistent playing of the game and player development. The aim of Regulation 15 covering all Age Grade Rugby is to enable as many options as we can for players to play, while ensuring the critical need for everyone to apply a player welfare and safety lens at all times. This update will help all College coaches in making decisions with their learners with regards to playing down during 2025/26.

The circumstances under which U19s can play down in schools and colleges are more clearly defined (see Reg 15.4.1)

This is to ensure that U19s playing down are doing so for the right reasons and not for competitive advantage. In addition, it ensures assessment of player safety risk and the possibility of playing with/against younger players is considered specifically.

The regulation states that to apply for approval:
The player is an Under 19 (Year 14) in a school or college and must be in at least their third year of study at the school or college and in their second year of their first full level 3 qualification. They must not: (a) have previously completed a full level 3 qualification; and/or (b) be repeating or re-sitting a year; and/or (c) have embarked on an 'additional' one year programme post 16 at any level.

If approved to play down, a player must play in the lower age grade in all rugby environments for the season; this includes for U19s

Playing down approval is valid for up to one season. This update clarifies that this applies in all playing environments the player plays in. This includes U19s who are playing down into an age grade setting from adult rugby; **if approved to play any U18 rugby, this means they cannot also play adult rugby.**

The approval form to play down is access through this link:

COLLEGES PLAYING UP OR DOWN OUT OF AGE GRADE APPROVAL FORM

College Rugby Festivals 2025-26



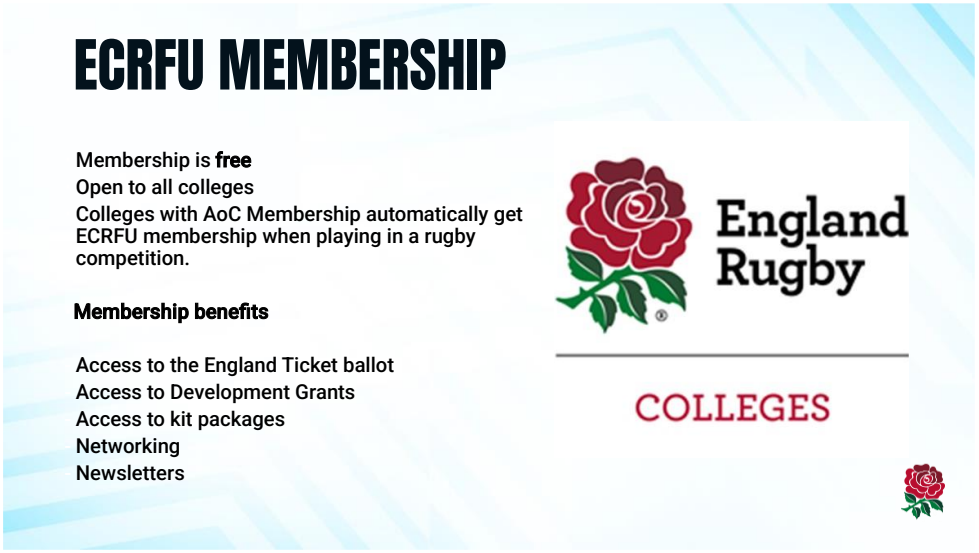
Rugby Ambassador Programme

During 2024/25 a total of 50 learners took up the Rugby Ambassador roles in colleges across the country. Each college had 2 ambassadors who worked on projects driving the girls game and T1 Rugby. The programme was extremely successful and is to be continued in 2025/26.

If you wish to take up the opportunity of the Rugby Ambassador Programme please register through the AoC Sport Student Leadership programme.



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.

SANIX World Youth U18 Rugby Tournament 2026

In April / May 2026 two college teams will be setting off to take part in the annual SANIX World Youth U18 Rugby Tournament in Fukuoka, Japan. Both colleges have already started their planning for the tournaments as they look forward to taking on teams from other nations such as Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, Fiji and Japan.

The following two colleges will represent England at the tournament this season:

- Worthing College – Girl's U18 Tournament
- Exeter College – Boy's U18 Tournament

We wish both colleges a really good season ahead as they also prepare for what will be a very exciting tour and series of extremely competitive rugby once at the tournament.

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**
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Stay in Touch **@EngRugColleges**

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