



## **APPENDIX 3 - DISCIPLINARY GUIDELINES FOR THE UNDERAGE GAME**

### **Introduction**

These Guidelines have been made available by World Rugby for Unions who wish to implement a specific disciplinary regime at the Underage Game level which reflects the age of the Players, the truncated playing season of such Players and the likelihood for non-Match based sanctions to be imposed in particular for school-boys and girls.

The Disciplinary Guidelines for the Underage Game (the "Guidelines") may be adopted by Unions at their sole election. If adopted, in order to ensure that the principle of universality is maintained the Guidelines must be implemented in their entirety including the application of the World Rugby Sanctions for Foul Play Table adjusted for Underage Rugby contained in the Guidelines.

### **1. Additional Rules in the Underage Game**

1.1 Where a Union so elects as part of its rules, the following provisions relating to Discipline for Foul Play in the Underage Game shall apply to Underage Players within its jurisdiction.

1.2 For the purposes of Regulation 17.3.1(a) these Underage Game provisions shall not constitute a breach of Regulation 17. These rules shall replace the equivalent provisions within Regulation 17 to the extent necessary to enable their enforcement.

### **2. Definitions (11)**

2.1 "Constituent Body" shall mean a Union member or duly recognised entity within the territory of the Union responsible for the running of Matches involving Underage Players and/or participation of Underage Players in the Game and imposition of sanctions in the Underage Game (including primary and second level educational institutions).



2.2 “Underage Players” shall mean those players below the Age of Majority at the level of Game below International Match and/or cross-border match level within the territory of the Union. For the avoidance of doubt such provisions shall not apply to any Underage professional, semi-professional or Rugby academy Players or to those playing adult Rugby.

### 3. Disciplinary Personnel

3.1 The Union shall develop and/or approve a process for the appointment by it or its designated Constituent Bodies of suitable and experienced personnel to an Underage disciplinary panel and (where appropriate) an accompanying accreditation system to deal with cases involving Foul Play by Underage Players. Such panel shall comprise persons who can act in a disciplinary and/or appeals capacity.

3.2 The Union and/or its designated Constituent Bodies may appoint a single “Disciplinary Officer” (or a Disciplinary Committee) to deal with cases of Foul Play for Underage Players. An appeals process should also be developed.

3.3 All appointees to the Underage disciplinary panel and (where appointed) accredited personnel shall have an in-depth knowledge of the Game and its disciplinary process, be either a lawyer, judge or senior member of an educational institution (such as the principal, vice principal or head teacher), be accustomed to dealing with Underage Players and meet any national imposed criteria for engaging / interacting with Underage Players.

3.4 Neutrality of the appointee(s) to the parties is desirable but can be waived by agreement save where there is a conflict of interest scenario.

3.5 The appointed disciplinary personnel shall carry out their functions in a manner that recognises the following fundamental principles – including the need to ensure:



- (a) the provision of a comfortable and safe hearing environment for the Underage Player;
- (b) the adoption of a structured but less formal approach to the proceedings;
- (c) the adherence to the principles of natural justice which should be made known to the Underage Player (and their representative) at the outset; and
- (d) be administered by people who are accustomed to dealing with children.

#### 4. Sanctioning

4.1 Where the Guidelines are adopted, the World Rugby Sanctions for Foul Play Adjusted for the Underage Rugby shall apply to all Underage Players. These Sanctions have been established on a per Match basis.

4.2 It is recognised that for Underage Players restorative justice and community sanctions, alongside mentoring, educational development and supervision are all effective mechanisms in dealing with the treatment of breaches for Underage Players. Therefore, augmenting playing sanctions with non-playing sanctions for Underage Players is considered appropriate for this age-group.

4.3 Disciplinary personnel in the imposition of sanctions for Underage Players may consider the imposition of non-playing sanctions (such as suspension from membership of a team or club or from social activities, loss of privileges, detention etc.) in addition to the World Rugby Sanctions for Foul Play Adjusted for the Underage Rugby.

4.4 In terms of the application of Sanctions the following principles apply:

4.4.1 The Core Sanctioning Process in Regulations 17.17 to 17.21 shall be followed;



4.4.2 Regulation 17.19.1 allows the youth and inexperience of the Player to be taken into account for (off-field) mitigation purposes. In the Underage Game this is particularly pertinent;

4.4.3 Regulation 17.19.2 permits up to a maximum of 50% discount on the entry point sanction – this allows great flexibility;

4.4.4 Where a matter is determined to be low end offending (following the assessment under Regulation 17.18.1) and there are off field mitigating factors and the sanction would be wholly disproportionate to the level and type of offending involved, in these cases a sanction below 50% of the sanction may apply;

4.4.5 Education based sanctions shall be supplemental to the World Rugby Sanctions for Foul Play Adjusted for the Underage Rugby.

## 5. Enforcement

5.1 It is the responsibility of the Union where it introduces these Guidelines to ensure that they are implemented in a consistent and cohesive manner. The Union shall exercise its supervisory jurisdiction in this regard and introduce relevant rules to support such review.

5.2 Where a Union implements these Guidelines it shall:

5.2.1 so inform World Rugby and provide a copy of the empowering regulations;

5.2.2 keep an account (on an annual basis) of the cases and decisions which arise under these Guidelines and make them available to World Rugby upon request;

5.2.3 provide suitable educational materials and training to the disciplinary panel (and as applicable accredited) personnel on the implementation of the Guidelines and the application of the disciplinary process.



5.3 Any sanctions imposed under the Guidelines for the Underage Game are intended to carry through into adult rugby where applicable.

5.4 Where adopted, these Guidelines shall be treated as enforceable by World Rugby in the same way as Regulation 17.

### **WORLD RUGBY SANCTIONS FOR FOUL PLAY (REGULATION 17) ADJUSTED FOR UNDERAGE RUGBY**

*Note: Any act of foul play where the person committing the act of foul play makes contact with an opponent's head and/or neck, and that contact with the head and/or neck warrants a red card, shall result in at least a mid-range sanction. (12)*

9.11 Players must not do anything that is reckless or dangerous to others including leading with the elbow or forearm, or jumping into, or over, a tackler.

Up to U15s Sanction	U16 to U18 Sanction
Low-end: 1 match	Low-end: 2 matches
Mid-range: 2 matches	Mid-range: 4 matches
Top-end: 4+ matches	Top-end: 6+ matches

9.12 A player must not physically abuse anyone. Physical abuse includes, but is not limited to:

#### **Biting**

Up to U15s Sanction	U16 to U18 Sanction
Low-end: 4 matches	Low-end: 8 matches
Mid-range: 8 matches	Mid-range: 10 matches
Top-end: 12 + matches	Top-end: 14+ matches

#### **Intentional contact with Eye(s) (13)**

Up to U15s Sanction	U16 to U18 Sanction
Low-end: 4 matches	Low-end: 8 matches



Mid-range: 8 matches  
Top-end: 12+ matches

Mid-range: 10 matches  
Top-end: 14+ matches

#### Reckless contact with Eye(s) (14)

Up to U15s Sanction  
Low-end: 2 matches  
Mid-range: 4 matches  
Top-end: 8+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction  
Low-end: 4 matches  
Mid-range: 6 matches  
Top-end: 12+ matches

#### Contact with Eye Area (15)

Up to U15s Sanction  
Low-end: 2 matches  
Mid-range: 4 matches  
Top-end: 6+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction  
Low-end: 4 matches  
Mid-range: 6 matches  
Top-end: 10+ matches

#### Punching or striking with hand, arm, elbow or shoulder

Up to U15s Sanction  
Low-end: 1 match  
Mid-range: 2 matches  
Top-end: 4+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction  
Low-end: 2 matches  
Mid-range: 4 matches  
Top-end: 6+ matches

#### Striking with head (16)

Up to U15s Sanction  
Low-end: 2 matches  
Mid-range: 4 matches:  
Top-end: 6+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction  
Low-end: 4 matches  
Mid-range: 6 matches  
Top-end: 10+ matches

#### Striking with knee

Up to U15s Sanction  
Low-end: 2 matches  
Mid-range: 4 matches  
Top-end: 6+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction  
Low-end: 4 matches  
Mid-range: 6 matches  
Top-end: 8+ matches



### Stamping or Trampling

Up to U15s Sanction

Low-end: 1 match

Mid-range: 2 matches

Top-end: 4+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction

Low-end: 2 matches

Mid-range: 4 matches

Top-end: 10+ matches

### Tripping

Up to U15s Sanction

Low-end: 1 match

Mid-range: 2 matches

Top-end: 4+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction

Low-end: 2 matches

Mid-range: 4 matches

Top-end: 6+ matches

### Kicking

Up to U15s Sanction

Low-end: 2 matches

Mid-range: 4 matches

Top-end: 6+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction

Low-end: 4 matches

Mid-range: 6 matches

Top-end: 10+ matches

9.12 A player must not verbally abuse anyone. Verbal abuse includes, but is not limited to, abuse based on: religion, colour, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation.

Up to U15s Sanction

Low-end: 2 matches

Mid-range: 4 matches

Top-end: 6+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction

Low-end: 4 matches

Mid-range: 8 matches

Top-end: 12+ matches

9.13 A player must not tackle an opponent early, late or dangerously. Dangerous tackling includes, but is not limited to, tackling or attempting to tackle an



opponent above the line of the shoulders even if the tackle starts below the line of the shoulders.

Up to U15s Sanction  
Low-end: 1 match  
Mid-range: 2 matches  
Top-end: 4+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction  
Low-end: 2 matches  
Mid-range: 6 matches  
Top-end: 8+ matches

9.14 A player must not tackle an opponent who is not in possession of the ball.

Up to U15s Sanction  
Low-end: 1 match  
Mid-range: 2 matches  
Top-end: 4+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction  
Low-end: 2 matches  
Mid-range: 6 matches  
Top-end: 8+ matches

9.15 Except in a scrum, ruck or maul, a player who is not in possession of the ball must not hold, push, charge or obstruct an opponent not in possession of the ball.

Up to U15s Sanction  
Low-end: 1 match  
Mid-range: 2 matches  
Top-end: 4+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction  
Low-end: 2 matches  
Mid-range: 4 matches  
Top-end: 6+ matches

9.16 A player must not charge or knock down an opponent carrying the ball without attempting to grasp that player.

Up to U15s Sanction  
Low-end: 1 match  
Mid-range: 2 matches  
Top-end: 4+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction  
Low-end: 2 matches  
Mid-range: 6 matches  
Top-end: 8+ matches

9.17 A player must not tackle, charge, pull, push or grasp an opponent whose feet are off the ground.





Up to U15s Sanction  
Low-end: 2 matches  
Mid-range: 4 matches  
Top-end: 6+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction  
Low-end: 4 matches  
Mid-range: 6 matches  
Top-end: 10+ matches

9.18 A player must not lift an opponent off the ground and drop or drive that player so that their head and/or upper body make contact with the ground.

Up to U15s Sanction  
Low-end: 2 matches  
Mid-range: 4 matches  
Top-end: 6+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction  
Low-end: 4 matches  
Mid-range: 6 matches  
Top-end: 10+ matches

9.19 Dangerous play in a scrum.

- a. The front row of a scrum must not form at a distance from its opponents and rush against them
- b. A front-row player must not pull an opponent
- c. A front-row player must not intentionally lift an opponent off their feet or force the opponent upwards out of the scrum.
- d. A front-row player must not intentionally collapse a scrum.

Up to U15s Sanction  
Low-end: warning (18)  
Mid-range: 1 match  
Top-end: 2+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction  
Low-end: 1 match  
Mid-range: 2 matches  
Top-end: 4+ matches

9.20 Dangerous play in a ruck or maul.

- a. A player must not charge into a ruck or maul. Charging includes any contact made without binding onto another player in the ruck or maul.



Up to U15s Sanction  
Low-end: 1 match  
Mid-range: 2 matches  
Top-end: 4+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction  
Low-end: 2 matches  
Mid-range: 4 matches  
Top-end: 6+ matches

- b. A player must not make contact with an opponent above the line of the shoulders.  
c. A player must not intentionally collapse a ruck or a maul

Up to U15s Sanction  
Low-end: 1 match  
Mid-range: 2 matches  
Top-end: 4+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction  
Low-end: 2 matches  
Mid-range: 4 matches  
Top-end: 6+ matches

- d. A player may remove the jackler/stealer from the tackle area by pushing/driving them backwards (including by grabbing the knee/leg), but must not roll, pull or twist an opponent.

Up to U15s Sanction  
Low-end: 1 match  
Mid-range: 2 matches  
Top-end: 4+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction  
Low-end: 2 matches  
Mid-range: 4 matches  
Top-end: 6+ matches

- e. A player must not drop their weight onto an opponent or target the lower limbs.

Up to U15s Sanction  
Low-end: 1 match  
Mid-range: 2 matches  
Top-end: 4+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction  
Low-end: 2 matches  
Mid-range: 4 matches  
Top-end: 6+ matches

9.25 A player must not intentionally charge or obstruct an opponent who has just kicked the ball.



Up to U15s Sanction  
Low-end: 1 match  
Mid-range: 2 matches  
Top-end: 4+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction  
Low-end: 2 matches  
Mid-range: 6 matches  
Top-end: 8+ matches

9.27 A player must not do anything that is against the spirit of good sportsmanship including but not limited to:

Hair pulling or grabbing

Up to U15s Sanction  
Low-end: 1 match  
Mid-range: 2 matches  
Top-end: 4+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction  
Low-end: 2 matches  
Mid-range: 4 matches  
Top-end: 6+ matches

Spitting at anyone

Up to U15s Sanction  
Low-end: 2 matches  
Mid-range: 4 matches  
Top-end: 6+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction  
Low-end: 4 matches  
Mid-range: 6 matches  
Top-end: 10+ matches

Grabbing, twisting or squeezing the genitals (and/or breasts in the case of female players)

Up to U15s Sanction  
Low-end: 4 matches  
Mid-range: 6 matches  
Top-end: 2+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction  
Low-end: 6 matches  
Mid-range: 12 matches  
Top-end: 18+ matches

Other

Up to U15s Sanction  
Low-end: 2 matches  
Mid-range: 4 matches  
Top-end: 6+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction  
Low-end: 4 matches  
Mid-range: 6 matches  
Top-end: 10+ matches



9.28 A player must not disrespect the authority of a Match Official

Up to U15s Sanction

Low-end: 1 match

Mid-range: 2 matches

Top-end: 4+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction

Low-end: 1 match

Mid-range: 2 matches

Top-end: 4+ matches

9.2.8 A player must not verbally abuse a Match Official. Verbal abuse includes, but is not limited to, abuse based on: religion, colour, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation.

Up to U15s Sanction

Low-end: 2 matches

Mid-range: 4 matches

Top-end: 6+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction

Low-end: 4 matches

Mid-range: 6 matches

Top-end: 10+ matches

9.28 A player must not make physical contact with Match Officials.

Up to U15s Sanction

Low-end: 2 matches

Mid-range: 4 matches

Top-end: 6+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction

Low-end: 4 matches

Mid-range: 6 matches

Top-end: 10+ matches

9.28 A player must not use threatening actions or words towards Match Officials.

Up to U15s Sanction

Low-end: 4 matches

Mid-range: 6 matches

Top-end: 12+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction

Low-end: 6 matches

Mid-range: 12 matches

Top-end: 24+ matches

9.28 A player must not physically abuse Match Officials.



Up to U15s Sanction  
Low-end: 6 matches  
Mid-range: 12 matches  
Top-end: 24+ matches

U16 to U18 Sanction  
Low-end: 12 matches  
Mid-range: 24 matches  
Top-end: 48+ matches

