



CROSS UNION MATCH APPROVAL GUIDELINES

1st August 2014

A. KEY POINTS

- Constituent Bodies (CBs) have delegated authority to authorise **both** incoming and outgoing tours on behalf of the RFU. Should CBs wish to continue to utilise the services of the RFU, they may do so, although there is no obligation to notify the RFU.
- This applies to matches between schools, colleges and universities, and community club rugby (adult and age-grade). Therefore, appropriate applications must be made to their relevant CB as follows:
 - Club and university matches – to the geographical CB
 - Schools and college matches – to the ERFSU
- The templates for club and university incoming tour and outgoing tour forms are set out in the appendices to this guidance. The schools and colleges templates are available with advice and guidance from schools@therfu.com.
- CB officials are covered by the CBs Directors & Officers Liability insurance, providing the person authorising the tour is an authorised representative of the CB.
- English clubs will be covered by the RFU Death & Catastrophic Injury Insurance regardless of whether playing in England or in another Union (subject to conditions of the Policy). However, when travelling to another Union the club should ensure that appropriate travel insurance is in place and such other additional insurances as they think appropriate, including for non-rugby activities, legal, medical and repatriation costs as may be required. **It is not the responsibility of the CB to ensure that the appropriate insurance is in place.** For advice on what additional insurance may be appropriate we recommend that clubs consult with an insurance advisor.

For age-grade tours outside England, it is important to remember that the club will play to the host Union's rules and regulations and may face players of a different age band. In advance of the tour, clubs should ensure that they are aware of those rules and regulations and communicate with the opposition to ensure a balanced and safe match. It is advisable for the CB to remind the club of this but it is ultimately the club's responsibility. CBs can refer clubs to the Age Grade Guidance for further information (www.englandrugby.com/regulations)

It is the club's responsibility to ensure that all safeguarding practices are followed and the Tour Manager should liaise with the Club Safeguarding Officer on this matter. Please see Touring with Children Guide (www.englandrugby.com/governance/game-support/rugby-tours) and the RFU Safeguarding Policy (<http://www.englandrugby.com/governance/safeguarding/>).

- CBs are not required to authorise applications from Premiership and Championship clubs. These are authorised by the RFU.
- It is the club's responsibility to ensure the tour application form (both incoming and outgoing) provides complete and accurate information.

B. OUTGOING TOURS

When authorising outgoing tour applications it is recommended that CBs undertake the following checks:

- Have all sections of the form been completed?
- Has the Club Declaration been signed by the club?
- Is the match schedule reasonable? (i.e. no matches on consecutive days for age-grade tours, unless the tour party is large enough to accommodate)
- It is not the responsibility of the CB to ensure that the host Union's approval is in place prior to granting CB approval. The CB's responsibility is simply to ensure that it is comfortable with the English club touring to another Union. Should the CB wish to do so they can grant approval, subject to the host club obtaining approval from their host Union.
- If matches involved in the tour are regular fixtures (i.e. regular cross-border fixtures with the Home Union clubs), consider if it is appropriate to grant a blanket approval for a series of matches, or specific period or league, and whether such approval should be subject to any conditions. Please see section D below for more background on matches between Home Union clubs.
- Is the disciplinary record of the club such that the touring team can be considered good ambassadors for the RFU and CB, and expected to uphold the core values of the game?
- If all of the above points are satisfactorily covered, then it is reasonable to assume that the tour can be authorised.
- If a club has any disciplinary, safeguarding, player welfare or any other concerns in relation to any of the above points or about the club generally, CBs may consider it appropriate to withhold approval, or grant approval subject to certain conditions.

C. INCOMING TOURS

When authorising incoming tour applications it is recommended that CBs undertake the following checks:

- Have all sections of the form been completed?
- Has the Club Declaration been signed by the club?
- Is the match schedule reasonable? (i.e. no matches on consecutive days for age-grade tours, unless the tour party is large enough to accommodate).
- Is the proposed activity in accordance with RFU Regulation 15 (i.e. is the tour in-season or out of season Pre-Approved Activity?)
- It is the responsibility of the host club to obtain the approval of the visiting Union. The visiting club should facilitate this or clubs can contact the visiting Union directly. CBs can refer clubs to the International Unions contact sheet attached to this guidance. The CB can ask for confirmation of the visiting Union's approval prior to granting CB approval, or can state that CB approval is subject to the visiting Union's approval.
- If matches involved in the tour are regular fixtures (i.e. regular cross-border fixtures with the Home Union clubs), consider if it is appropriate to grant a blanket approval for a series of matches, or specific period or league, and whether such approval should be subject to any conditions. Please see section D below for more background on matches between Home Union clubs.
- Is the disciplinary record of the club such that the club can be considered good ambassadors for the RFU and CB, and expected to uphold the core values of the game?
- If all of the above points are satisfactorily covered, then it is reasonable to assume that the tour can be authorised.
- If a club has any disciplinary, safeguarding, player welfare or any other concerns in relation to any of the above points or about the club generally, CBs may consider it appropriate to withhold approval.

D. TOURS TO AND FROM IRELAND, SCOTLAND & WALES

One of the key changes to RFU Regulation 10 is that cross-border matches with Irish, Scottish and Welsh sides (Home Unions) must now have approval like any incoming or outgoing tour to and from England. As previously drafted, the regulations granted an automatic blanket pre-approval for all incoming and outgoing matches between the Home Unions. This approach did not accord with the requirements of IRB who require both the host and visiting Unions to approve such cross-border matches.

We recognise that this may potentially create further workloads for CBs, particularly for those CBs whose clubs, schools or educational institutions regularly play cross-border matches with Scottish and Welsh clubs. To alleviate this burden, RFU Regulation 10.5(d) and 10.6(b) permits CBs to provide approvals on a blanket basis as they think fit. For example, if a CB bordering Scotland wanted to pre-approve a series of matches between English clubs and Scottish clubs, it would be open to that CB to provide a blanket approval to the English club to avoid the need to obtain approval on a match by match basis.

Each CB can, therefore, determine internally, at its own discretion, whether it wishes to grant any approvals on a blanket basis and, if so, what conditions (if any) it wishes to impose on such approvals. For example, a CB may wish to have the right to revoke the approval in the event of any disciplinary issues arising.

While insurance for travel, medical and repatriation costs is not always necessary for matches in other Home Unions, it is suggested that clubs seek advice from an insurance advisor on what additional insurance may be appropriate, depending on the tour destination and method of travel.