October - England Colleges Newsletter



England Rugby Colleges Chair appointment:

Following the retirement of Martin Tucker from Truro and Penwith College, England Rugby Colleges are extremely pleased to announce that the new Chair of the England Rugby Colleges Board is Mr John Laramy (Group Principal & CEO and Exeter College Lead, John Laramy CBE DL).
We are pleased to have John at the helm of the constituent body and look forward to working with him on continuing to grow the game across the Further Education and Sixth Form Colleges sector.
Martin Tucker has now taken up the role as England Rugby Colleges President.

Dear colleagues,

May we welcome you all back to the new academic year and of course the 2026/27 season. As always this first six weeks is always a very hectic time in the sector, we hope that as you move into the second half term that everything starts to settle down.

The mix of provision available to you all from T1 rugby and Festivals, right through to the Premier leagues and ACE programme offers an opportunity for all students both girl's and boy's to find a level that suits them to participate in playing rugby in a format appropriate to their ability.

The delayed start to the season was a decision taken due to the extreme weather leading to the very hard grounds. The extra time hopefully has proved positive for everyone in pre-season preparation and also puling your squads together.

England Rugby Colleges wish you all good luck and a great season ahead.

John Laramy
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: PLEASE COMPLETE YOUR ENTRY BY FRIDAY 16TH OCTOBER 2026

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

Growing the Game - New RFU Regional Growth Partnership Boards

One of the commitments the RFU made to the community game is that they will remain focussed on its continued growth.

The RFU set out an ambition to increase the number of registered players by 50,000 in Plan 2030: 'More than a Game.'

Growing the game across the country requires focus and approaches that use deep regional and community insights, strong partnership working and unlocking new funding streams. The Women's Rugby World Cup drove new interest in the game, and many clubs are already starting to see positive impacts from the investment we've made in schools and colleges and the partnerships with organisations such as Scouts and Guides.

Over the last couple of years, the RFU have been developing a new regional model with the RFU Council and other community game stakeholders. The focus of this is establishing seven Regional Growth Partnership Boards.

These will bring voices together from outside and within the game to:

- Help us all think differently about taking rugby union to new people and new places
- Open new doors and get rugby on to the agenda of more people and organisations who can support growth
- Secure incremental revenue into rugby union to help grow the game
- Strengthen relationships and increase collaboration and cooperation between partners inside and outside rugby

The Boards will complement the fantastic work that already happens in CBs, rugby clubs, professional clubs and partner organisations.

The RFU have recently appointed chairs to each of the seven Regional Growth Partnership Boards.
Read an announcement about the newly appointed Chairs.

Now the Chairs of the Regional Growth Partnership Boards are in place, recruitment to the other Board positions will begin. Each Board will include independent representatives and game representatives, along with an appointed RFU staff representative. The aim is for all Boards to have their full membership in this autumn.

England Rugby Colleges 2030 Strategy



The new England Rugby Colleges Strategy through to 2030 has been created to align with the main strategy of the RFU.

The main targets over the coming seasons will be to:

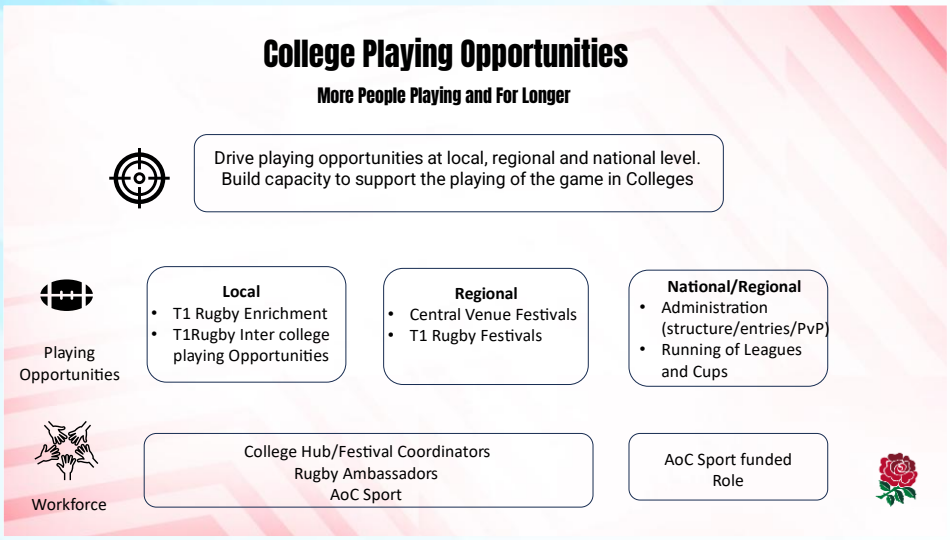
- Grow the game across the sector by encouraging more colleges to take up rugby in one format or another as an offer to their students both girl's and boy's.
- Closely monitor the planned v played data across all levels of the competitions run on England Rugby's behalf
- Increase the number of players registered in the sector so that levels of participation can be objectively measured
- Grow the take up of T1 Rugby as the non-contact offer across the sector encouraging those students who do not wish to play contact rugby however seek the opportunity to play rugby in an environment that suits them
- Increase the number of volunteers taking up the Rugby Ambassador programme across the sector

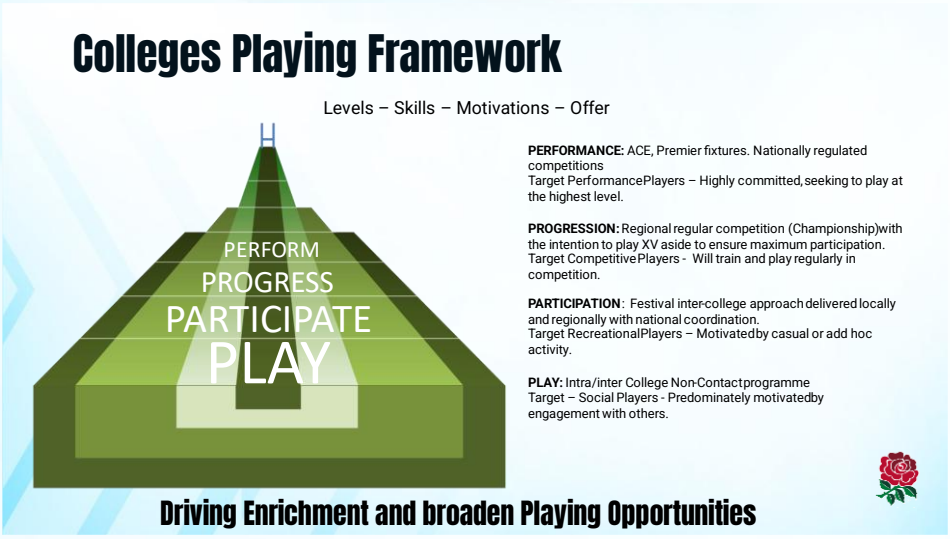
England Rugby Colleges, RFU and AoC Sport have worked in partnership in building a comprehensive playing programme for all colleges encompassing both the men's and women's game from participation through to the elite performance game.

The overarching aim of the Colleges playing programme is to encourage the college sector to become involved in playing rugby at a level that is appropriate to them and build their programmes using the various opportunities open to them within the offer.

Principles: reduce overplaying; increase development; provide men's and women's competitive programmes; appropriate level of competition; cup, league and flexible opportunities.

How will this be achieved:





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Level	Men's U18	Women's U18
Play	Intra Mural activity	Intra Mural activity
Play	T1 Rugby	T1 Rugby
Participation	Festivals	Festivals
Progression	Cup Competition	-
Progression	Championship	Championship
Progression & Performance	7's	7's
Performance	Premier (ACE development squads and Premier league teams)	Premier (ACE development squads and Premier league teams)
Performance	ACE League (Specified providers who offer the current DiSE programme)	ACE League (Specified providers who offer the current DiSE programme)

RFU Regulation Changes 2026/27

Key changes to the RFU Regulations and Competition Regulations ahead of the 2026/27 Season. The Regulations went live on 1 August 2026 and are available to read in full via the RFU website.

The changes include:

- Greater clarity within Regulation 6 (Adult Competitions), aiding competition management and league administration, as well as changes to the play-off structure.
- The development of an escalating sanction table within Regulation 9 (Player Safety)
- Clarity around Student/Services passes after the Transfer Deadline within Regulation 14 (RFU Registration)
- A comprehensive review and re-write of Regulation 15 (Age Grade Rugby) and Regulation 21 (Safeguarding)

Follow this link for a summary: VfSCEY6D-UZHV7Rg.pdf

Regulation 15 - Playing out of Age Grade

COLLEGES PLAYING UP OR DOWN OUT OF AGE GRADE APPLICATION FORM

Playing Out of Age Grade Important Information
Playing out of age grade should be a very carefully made decision. Discussion must take place with the player, the parents / guardians and their club to ensure that everyone is fully aware of the restrictions in playing down.

For all players, the circumstances, conditions, assessments and approvals required in regulation must be in place beforehand. The ultimate consideration must be the welfare and safety of all the players involved. Playing Up, Down and Adult Rugby is about individual players for whom it is appropriate. Please note, there is a separate form for England Academy and Player Development Group Players.

Please read Regulation 15.5 (for Playing Down) and 15.6 in detail before completing this form.
Please read the accompanying advice in the Age Grade Codes of Practice

Please use this link:
COLLEGES PLAYING UP OR DOWN OUT OF AGE GRADE APPLICATION FORM
….to go directly to the Colleges application form for playing down. Any form submitted which is incomplete will automatically be declined. Please ensure that **ALL** areas are completed accurately and in full.

Membership & GMS Information

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.

GMS (Game Management System)
To help us keep you up to date and to best help support you we ask that colleges and teachers register on our Game Management System.

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.

ECRFU MEMBERSHIP

Membership is **free**
Open to all colleges
Colleges with AoC Membership automatically get ECRFU membership when playing in a rugby competition.

Membership benefits

Access to the England Ticket ballot
Access to Development Grants
Access to kit packages
Networking
Newsletters

England Rugby
COLLEGES

England Rugby Learning

England Rugby has introduced 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 take into consideration feedback from the game and our Community Rugby Digital User Groups. The new offer is designed to make learning simpler, more personalised, and easier to complete, especially on mobile devices.

What has changed?
England Rugby has launched a new platform called England Rugby Learning, which will replace the current course booking processes on the existing Game Management System (GMS) and enable app-based learning. You can find out more here.

The new England Rugby Learning Platform will provide:

- Mobile-first, app-based access, so learning can be completed anytime, anywhere
- A modern, intuitive interface with personalised and role specific content recommendations
- Easier navigation and clearer connection between learning, qualifications and next steps
- Access to communities where volunteers can share experiences and support each other
- Automated tracking of qualifications and compliance
- Direct integration with GMS, reducing admin and improving data accuracy
- The ability for clubs, CBs and referee societies to better understand who is active, trained, and ready to support the game
- Free essential learning for all volunteers (e.g., Headcase, Safeguarding)
- New digital resources and subscription options

This change is about supporting clubs, reducing admin, and giving people the learning and development they need to feel confident in their roles.

Please see How do I register for England Rugby Learning? for guidance on how to get started, or head straight to https://englandrugbylearning.csod.com/.

Regional England Rugby Colleges Reps

England Rugby Colleges is the National Constituent Body for Colleges Rugby and is run by a number of volunteers who are currently or have previously worked in Colleges of Further Education. Colleges Sport has for years relied on the enthusiasm, dedication and expertise of a large number of volunteers whom give their time freely to support the development of the game.

The Unions subcommittee consists of colleagues from across the Country who are continually looking at ways to develop the game in the sector and importantly enrich and support the student experience.

ECRFU Reg Rep	College	Contact Details	Region
James McKeown	Runshaw College	mckeown.james1967@gmail.com	**North West**
Lisa Cockburn Dale Smallman	Hereford VIth Form Shrewsbury College	Lisa.cockburn@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 on X: @EngRugColleges