



# **WRU**

## **CODES OF CONDUCT**

Mission Statement

We all have a responsibility, both on and off the field, to promote high standards of behaviour in the Game, as well as uphold the values, spirit, and image of Welsh rugby.

In line with our strategic vision, our purpose is to ensure more people engage with rugby, as often as possible, with more enjoyment and more success. Our strategic vision is to encourage Club officials to be true to rugby's values and provide role model leadership within the community.

We all want to ensure we protect our players, officials, volunteers, referees and the image and values of our Game.

1. There are separate Codes of Conduct relating to:

- (a) Players.
- (b) coaches, team managers and Club officials
- (c) match officials.
- (d) referee advisers.
- (e) spectators; and
- (f) social media and communications.

each of which shall be applied accordingly.

2. For breaches of the Codes of Conduct, the Disciplinary Panel may impose any appropriate punishment (by reference to Regulation 1.5 and Regulation 6.20 of the Disciplinary Regulations) that may include, but shall not be limited to:

- (a) For a person, a reprimand, a financial penalty, or suspension from playing, coaching and/or administration.
- (b) For a Club, in addition to the sanctions set out at 2(a), financial or other compensation, deduction of league points or relegation, exclusion or disqualification from any competition. Where a competition does not fall within the jurisdiction of the WRU a Club may be required to withdraw from that competition.

The imposition of any sanction and/or penalty shall be subject to the right to appeal in accordance with these Disciplinary Regulations.

3. In accordance with paragraph 5 below, a Code of Conduct Report/Complaint can be initiated by any of the following, to the WRU Disciplinary Department:

- (a) a Club or School.
  - (b) match officials.
  - (c) a referee adviser.
  - (d) The Club Secretary or a Senior Club Official (in his/her absence).
  - (e) The WRU Disciplinary Officer; or
  - (f) a member of the Board of Directors/WRU Council.
4. A Code of Conduct Report/Complaint shall ordinarily be made within seven (7) days of the incident complained of. Reports or Complaints which fall outside this period may be considered by the WRU if it is in the interests of the Game to do so, or if it was not reasonably practicable for the complaint to have been made within the seven-day window.
  5. A Code of Conduct case may be commenced by the WRU in accordance with Disciplinary Regulations 6 of the WRU Disciplinary Regulations.
  6. A Code of Conduct Report should contain the following:
    - (a) the name of the Person, Club, or School submitting the Code of Conduct Report.
    - (b) full details of the complaint; and
    - (c) any evidence relied on by the party submitting the Code of Conduct Report.

**A standard Misconduct complaint form (to be completed) can be obtained from the WRU website.**

7. The Disciplinary Officer shall determine what steps, **if any**, to take in relation to the allegations contained in the Code of Conduct Report in accordance with Disciplinary Regulations 6.4 to 6.9 of the Disciplinary Regulations.
8. Where it is determined that disciplinary proceedings are to be commenced against a Person or Club, such disciplinary proceedings shall be commenced and conducted in accordance with Regulation 9 of the Disciplinary Regulations.
9. A party that receives a Disciplinary Notice in respect of a Code of Conduct Complaint/Report **must within seven (7) day of receipt** of the Notice respond to the WRU Disciplinary Department to confirm whether the allegation is accepted or disputed.

**A standard Misconduct complaint response form (to be completed) can be obtained from the WRU website.**

10. The WRU Disciplinary Lead may, in their sole discretion, refer a Code of Conduct complaint to a Panel or such other person whom the WRU Disciplinary Lead considers to be appropriately experienced for review, in order to establish whether the complaint satisfies the evidential threshold and/or the rugby interest threshold for further action/sanctioning, before any disciplinary proceedings are commenced.
11. For the avoidance of doubt, nothing in a Code of Conduct complaint shall preclude the WRU from exercising its power to commence disciplinary proceedings against a Club and/or person in accordance with Disciplinary Regulations 6.4 to 6.9 of the Disciplinary Regulations.
12. Failure to comply with the following Codes of Conduct at all times, may result in the WRU Disciplinary Panel imposing such sanctions and penalties as it deems appropriate in accordance with the Disciplinary Regulations.

## **1. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PLAYERS**

### **Promote and comply with the Laws of the Game and Regulations**

#### **1.1 Players must:**

- (a) adhere to the Laws of The Game, the World Rugby Regulations, the Rules, and Regulations of the WRU, the rules of any competition (on and off field) in which their Club participates, and their Club's rules at all times.
- (b) comply with the Code of Conduct for Players.
- (c) comply with the WRU's Anti-Doping Rules and all anti-doping regulations issued by World Rugby and WADA.
- (d) comply with the WRU's Safeguarding Policy.
- (e) comply with the Payment to Players Policy; and
- (f) comply with the Anti-Corruption and Betting Regulations issued by World Rugby.

Any Player found not to have complied with the provisions set out within each of the Laws and Regulations stipulated above, may be subject to disciplinary proceedings and sanctions being imposed pursuant to paragraph 2 of the WRU Codes of Conduct.

### **Promote High Standards of Behaviour**

#### **1.2 Players shall win and lose with dignity, shall uphold the values and spirit of the Game, and shall take all possible steps to prevent the Game from being brought into disrepute.**

#### **1.3 Players shall:**

- (a) speak to team-mates, the opposition, spectators, match officials and their coach/manager with respect on and off the field; and
- (b) respect and observe the authority of match officials' and their decisions at all times.

### **Ethical and Professional Behaviour**

#### **1.4 Players shall conduct themselves at all times in an ethical and professional manner, observe the highest standards of integrity, and shall not engage in any conduct or any activity (whether on or off the field) that may impair public confidence in the honest and orderly**

conduct of a match, tour, tournament or series of matches or in the integrity and good character of any person.

1.5 Players shall not:

- (a) Engage in behaviour which is prejudicial to the interests of the WRU and/or the Game.
- (b) engage in offensive, insulting or abusive language or behaviour towards other players, match officials, opposition players, coaches, team managers, officials, and spectators.
- (c) engage in bullying, intimidation or harassment of other players, match officials, opposition players, coaches, team managers, officials, and spectators; or
- (d) engage in any behaviour that is likely to intimidate, offend, insult, humiliate or discriminate against any other Person on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

**Social Media and Communications**

- 1.6 Players shall not engage in public criticism (whether via social media or social networking sites or otherwise) of any player, Club, match officials, opposition players, coaches, team managers, Club officials, spectators or any other Person which might be defamatory, improper, threatening, abusive, indecent, insulting, offensive or that brings or has the potential to bring the Game into disrepute.
- 1.7 Players shall comply with the social media and Communications Code of Conduct.

## **2. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COACHES, TEAM MANAGERS AND CLUB OFFICIALS**

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, Club officials shall include any member or Person of a Club.

### **Promote and comply with the Laws of the Game and Regulations**

2.1 Coaches, team managers and/or Club officials must:

- (a) adhere to the Laws of The Game, the World Rugby Regulations, the Rules, and Regulations of the WRU, the rules of any competition (on and off field), in which their Club participates, and their Club's rules at all times.
- (b) Comply with the Code of Conduct for Coaches, Team Managers and Club Officials.
- (c) comply with the WRU's Anti-Doping Rules and all anti-doping regulations issued by World Rugby and WADA.
- (d) comply with the WRU's Safeguarding Policy.
- (e) comply with the Payment to Players Policy.
- (f) comply with the Anti-Corruption and Betting Regulations issued by World Rugby; and
- (g) adopt the WRU Coaches Code of Practice.

Any Coach, Team Manager or Club Official found not to have complied with the provisions set out within each of the Laws and Regulations stipulated above, may also be subject to disciplinary proceedings and sanctions being imposed pursuant to paragraph 2 of the WRU Codes of Conduct.

### **Promote High Standards of Behaviour**

- 2.2 Coaches, team managers and/or Club officials shall uphold the values and spirit of the Game.
- 2.3 Coaches, team managers and/or Club officials shall win and lose with dignity, shall uphold the values and spirit of the Game, and shall take all possible steps to promote the reputation of the Game at all times and to prevent the Game from being brought into disrepute.
- 2.4 Coaches, team managers and/or Club officials shall:
  - (a) speak to Players, the opposition, spectators, match officials, Club officials and other coaches/managers with respect on and off the field.

- (b) respect and observe the authority of match officials' and their decisions at all times.
- (c) take all reasonable steps to ensure that Players and/or other Club employees under their control respect and observe the authority of match officials' and their decisions at all times.
- (d) never enter the field of play without the referee's permission and shall always adhere to the published technical zone protocol.

#### **Ethical and Professional Behaviour**

2.5 Coaches, team managers and/or Club officials shall conduct themselves at all times in an ethical and professional manner and observe the highest standards of integrity and shall not engage in any conduct or any activity (whether on or off the field) that may impair public confidence in the honest and orderly conduct of a match, tour, tournament or series of matches or in the integrity and good character of any person.

2.6 Coaches, team managers and/or Club officials shall not:

- (a) Engage in behaviour which is prejudicial to the interests of the WRU and/or the Game.
- (b) engage in offensive, insulting or abusive language or behaviour towards other players, match officials, opposition players, coaches, team managers, officials, and spectators.
- (c) engage in bullying, intimidation or harassment of other players, match officials, opposition players, coaches, team managers, officials, and spectators; or
- (d) engage in any behaviour that is likely to intimidate, offend, insult, humiliate or discriminate against any other Person on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

2.7 Club officials shall ensure that there is in force at their Club a fair and effective disciplinary policy applicable to Players, coaches, team managers, Club officials and other Club employees and shall ensure that it is applied consistently.

#### **Social Media and Communications**

2.8 Coaches, team managers and/or Club officials shall not engage in public criticism (whether via social media or social networking sites or otherwise) of any Club, match officials, opposition Players, coaches, team managers, Club officials, spectators or any other Person which might be defamatory, improper, threatening, abusive, indecent, insulting, offensive or that brings or has the potential to bring the Game into disrepute.

2.9 Coaches, team managers and/or Club officials shall comply with the social media and Communications Code of Conduct.



### **Promote the Codes of Conduct**

2.10 Coaches, team managers and/or Club officials shall not encourage or incite any Person (including other employees of their Club) to act in breach of the Codes of Conduct and shall take all possible steps to ensure that the Codes of Conduct and Codes of Practice are adopted and complied with.

2.11 Coaches, team managers and/or Club officials shall put measures in place to ensure that all spectators fully comply with the Code of Conduct for Spectators (see below) and take sufficient action if spectators are not upholding the standards of behaviour expected.

### **3. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MATCH OFFICIALS**

#### **Promote and comply with the Laws of the Game and Regulations**

##### **3.1 Match officials must:**

- (a) adhere to the Laws of The Game, the World Rugby Regulations, the Rules, and Regulations of the WRU, the rules of any competition (on and off field), in which they participate.
- (b) comply with the Code of Conduct for Match Officials.
- (c) comply with the WRU's Anti-Doping Rules and all anti-doping regulations issued by World Rugby and WADA.
- (d) comply with the WRU's Safeguarding Policy; and
- (e) comply with the Anti-Corruption and Betting Regulations issued by World Rugby.

Any Match Official found not to have complied with the provisions set out within each of the Laws and Regulations stipulated above, may also be subject to disciplinary proceedings and sanctions being imposed pursuant to paragraph 2 of the WRU Codes of Conduct.

#### **Promote High Standards of Behaviour**

##### **3.2 Match officials shall uphold the values and spirit of the Game and shall take all possible steps to prevent the Game from being brought into disrepute.**

##### **3.3 Match officials shall:**

- (a) speak to Players, spectators, other match officials and coaches/team managers with respect on and off the field.
- (b) support match official colleagues at all times.
- (c) set a positive personal example by promoting good behaviour and showing respect to everyone involved in the Game; and
- (d) respond in a clear, calm, and confident manner to any appropriate request for clarification by the team captains and/or coaches when appropriate.

#### **Ethical and Professional Behaviour**

##### **3.4 Match officials shall:**

- (a) conduct themselves at all times in an ethical and professional manner and shall observe the highest standards of integrity and shall not engage in any conduct or any activity (whether on or off the field) that may impair public confidence in the honest

and orderly conduct of a match, tour, tournament or series of matches or in the integrity and good character of any person;

- (b) endeavour to apply the Laws of the Game fairly and to an agreed interpretation as specified by the WRU and to provide the style of play as determined by the WRU when appropriate; and
- (c) deal with and report all instances of violence, aggression, unsporting behaviour, Foul Play, and other misconduct.

3.5 Match officials shall not:

- (a) tolerate offensive, insulting, or abusive language or behaviour from players, coaches, team managers, and officials.
- (b) engage in public criticism of other match officials, referee advisers, players, coaches, team managers, officials, and/or spectators.
- (c) engage in behaviour which is prejudicial to the interests of the WRU and/or the Game.
- (d) engage in offensive, insulting or abusive language or behaviour towards players, other match officials, coaches, team managers, officials, and spectators.
- (e) engage in bullying, intimidation or harassment of players, other match officials, coaches, team managers, officials, and spectators; or
- (f) engage in any behaviour that is likely to intimidate, offend, insult, humiliate or discriminate against any other Person on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

3.6 Match officials must wear the agreed kit and comply with the terms of any sponsorship agreement(s) as determined by the WRU from time to time.

3.7 Match officials are expected to attend disciplinary hearings relating to matches or incidents in which they have been involved, whenever requested to do so. Where such attendance is not possible, the reason for non-attendance must be provided to the WRU Disciplinary Department in advance of the relevant hearing.

### **Social Media and Communications**

- 3.8 Match officials shall not engage in public criticism (whether via social media or social networking sites or otherwise) of other match officials, Players, coaches, team managers, Club officials and/or spectators which might be defamatory, improper, threatening, abusive, indecent, insulting, offensive or that brings or has the potential to bring the Game into disrepute.
- 3.9 Match officials shall comply with the social media and Communications Code of Conduct.

## **4. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR REFEREE ADVISERS**

### **Promote and comply with the Laws of the Game and Regulations**

#### **4.1 Referee advisers must:**

- (a) adhere to the Laws of The Game, the World Rugby Regulations, the Rules, and Regulations of the WRU, the rules of any competition (on and off field), in which they participate.
- (b) comply with the Code of Conduct for Referee Advisers.
- (c) comply with the WRU's Anti-Doping Rules and all anti-doping regulations issued by World Rugby and WADA at all times.
- (d) comply with the WRU's Safeguarding Policy; and
- (e) comply with the Anti-Corruption and Betting Regulations issued by World Rugby.

Any Referee Adviser found not to have complied with the provisions set out within each of the Laws and Regulations stipulated above, may also be subject to disciplinary proceedings and sanctions being imposed pursuant to paragraph 2 of the WRU Codes of Conduct.

### **Promote High Standards of Behaviour**

#### **4.2 Referee advisers shall uphold the values and spirit of the Game and shall take all possible steps to prevent the Game from being brought into disrepute.**

#### **4.3 Referee advisers shall:**

- (a) speak to Players, spectators, other match officials and coaches/managers with respect on and off the field.
- (b) support match official colleagues at all times.
- (c) set a positive personal example by promoting good behaviour and showing respect to everyone involved in the Game; and
- (d) respond in a clear, calm, and confident manner when providing feedback to match officials on performance.

### **Ethical and Professional Behaviour**

#### **4.4 Referee advisers shall:**

- (a) conduct themselves at all times in an ethical and professional manner and shall observe the highest standards of integrity and shall not engage in any conduct or any activity that may impair public confidence in the honest and orderly conduct of a match, tour,

tournament or series of matches or in the integrity and good character of any person;  
and

- (b) report all instances of violence, aggression, unsporting behaviour, Foul Play, and other misconduct.

4.5 Referee advisers shall not:

- (a) tolerate offensive, insulting, or abusive language or behaviour from players and officials;  
or
- (b) tolerate offensive, insulting, or abusive language or behaviour from players, coaches, team managers, and officials.
- (c) engage in public criticism of other match officials, referee advisers, players, coaches, team managers, officials, and/or spectators.
- (d) engage in behaviour which is prejudicial to the interests of the WRU and/or the Game.
- (e) engage in offensive, insulting or abusive language or behaviour towards players, other match officials, coaches, team managers, officials, and spectators.
- (f) engage in bullying, intimidation or harassment of players, other match officials, coaches, team managers, officials, and spectators; or
- (g) engage in any behaviour that is likely to intimidate, offend, insult, humiliate or discriminate against any other Person on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

4.6 Referee advisers are expected to attend disciplinary hearings relating to matches or incidents in which they have been involved, whenever requested to do so. Where such attendance is not possible, the reason for any non-attendance must be provided to the WRU Disciplinary Department in advance of the relevant hearing.

**Social Media and Communications**

4.7 Referee advisers shall not engage in public criticism (whether via social media or social networking sites or otherwise) of other referee advisers, match officials, Players, coaches, team managers, Club officials and/or spectators which might be defamatory, improper, threatening, abusive, indecent, insulting, offensive or that brings or has the potential to bring the Game into disrepute.

4.8 Referee advisers shall comply with the social media and Communications Code of Conduct.



## 5 CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SPECTATORS

The Club/School and its coaches, team managers and all officials **will be wholly responsible** for the behaviour of their spectators. Any proven breach of the WRU's Codes of Conduct shall result in sanctions being imposed upon the Club / School pursuant to paragraph 2 of the WRU Codes of Conduct.

Every possible step should be followed by Club officials to ensure that the provisions of these Regulations are not breached.

- 5.1 Spectators must uphold the values of both the Club / School and the WRU and at all times exhibit the highest standards of good behaviour.
- 5.2 Spectators must not enter the field of play immediately before, during or immediately after a match.
- 5.3 Clubs are required to provide a barrier (roped or otherwise), either permanent or temporary, and spectators must remain behind the barrier and adhere to the published Technical Zone Protocol at all times.
- 5.4 Spectators must not at any time throw objects onto the field of play.
- 5.5 Spectators must not engage in or tolerate offensive, insulting, or abusive language or behaviour towards the match officials, Players, coaches, team managers, officials, and other spectators.
- 5.6 Spectators must not engage in or tolerate physical abuse or behaviour towards the match officials, Players, coaches, team managers, officials, and other spectators.
- 5.7 Spectators must not engage in any behaviour that is likely to intimidate, offend, insult, humiliate or discriminate against any other Person on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.
- 5.8 Spectators must not verbally or physically abuse Referees or other match officials before, during or after a match. **The Referee's and other match officials' contribution to a match is vital. Without referees there can be no match.**
- 5.9 After a match, spectators must respect the Players and officials of both teams and must not under any circumstances approach them in anything other than a sporting and friendly manner.
- 5.10 Spectators must not approach a referee or any other match official after the match to discuss the events of the match.
- 5.11 Spectators must not engage in behaviour which is prejudicial to the interests of the WRU and/or the Game.



## 6 SOCIAL MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS CODE OF CONDUCT

For the purposes of the social media and Communications Code of Conduct, Club officials shall include any member of a Club.

### Clubs

6.1 Clubs must:

- (a) decide how the content of their Club's website and/or social network page ("Club's Media Output") will be managed within their Club.
- (b) delete/manage any inappropriate comments posted by their coaches, team managers, Players Club officials and/or spectators (or otherwise) on their Club's Media Output; and
- (c) ensure the person managing the Club's Media Output is fully aware of the guidelines in place, as well as the WRU Codes of Conduct.

### Expectations and Standards Required

- 6.2 A Player, coach, team manager or Club official shall promote their Club online in a positive way.
- 6.3 A Player, coach, team manager, Club official, match official and referee adviser shall not promote poor sportsmanship online.
- 6.4 A Player, coach, team manager, Club official, match official and referee adviser shall not incite violence on or off the field through the use of social media.
- 6.5 A Player, coach, team manager, Club official, match official and referee adviser shall not act in a way that is prejudicial to the interests of the WRU and/or the Game, including through the use of social media or social networking websites or otherwise.
- 6.6 A Player, coach, team manager, Club official, match official and referee adviser shall not publish or cause to be published in any medium (including via any social media or social networking websites or otherwise) or make any public criticism of any Club or any match official, coach, team manager, Club official, Player and/or employee or worker of his/her or another Club or any other Person which might be defamatory, improper, threatening, abusive, indecent, insulting, offensive or that brings or has the potential to bring the Game into disrepute.
- 6.7 A Player, coach, team manager, Club official, match official and referee adviser shall not publish or cause to be published in any medium (including via any social media or social networking websites or otherwise) criticism of the manner in which the Disciplinary Panel, WRU Professional Disciplinary Panel or the Appeal Panel (as applicable) handled or resolved any dispute or disciplinary matter.

- 6.8 Pursuant to Regulation 5.19, and subject to Regulations 5.19 to 5.23, of the Disciplinary Regulations, all oral or written representations, submissions, evidence, and documents created in the course of any proceedings (to include decisions) are confidential (together “Confidential Proceedings Materials”). A Player, coach, team manager, Club official, match official and referee adviser shall not publish or cause to be published in any medium (including via any social media or social networking websites), any Confidential Proceedings Materials.
- 6.9 For the avoidance of doubt, a reference herein to social media and/or social networking websites includes (but is not limited to) a reference to Facebook, WhatsApp, Snapchat, Twitter, emails, and text messages.