

# Minimum High Performance Standards





# CONTENTS

<b>MINIMUM HIGH PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.....</b>	<b>1</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	1
<b>PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>STAFF AND MANAGEMENT TEAMS .....</b>	<b>5</b>
STAFF AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE.....	5
STAFF AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT .....	6
<b>POTENTIAL STAFF STRUCTURES .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>FACILITIES AND RESOURCES.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>PLAYER SUPPORT .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>SELECTION POLICIES .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>PLAYER PATHWAY .....</b>	<b>17</b>



# Minimum High Performance Standards

## Introduction

*This document sets the minimum standards that should be put in place to deliver High Performance programmes with relevant with education and good practice document links provided.*

*The document is designed to be used by union's across men's and women's, sevens and 15s programmes, with relevance to boards, management and players.*

*The guidelines must be set in the context of the wider performance strategy which will ensure the long-term development of a High Performance environment and allow athletes to thrive.*

*A High Performance strategy should be in place which will include the following characteristics:*

- Effective, professional leadership, management and operational support to national teams, who can keep improving as they deliver their own High Performance plan with clear and measurable objectives.
- World-class coaching with integrated sports science and sports medicine expertise, to ensure the needs of teams and individual athletes can be met.
- A supportive daily training environment with high-quality facilities and a set of standards that challenge and support each athlete's development and performance.
- A clear, nationally coordinated pathway with entry and exit points and suitable standards of competition.
- Bespoke team pathways carefully contextually and culturally designed to be easy to understand and adopted by all stakeholders.
- Campaign plans linked to pinnacle competitions that define calendars and training models.
- A business model supported by multiple revenue sources and with good investments in priority areas, to ensure the best possible performance by the players and their wider team.

*The organisational structure of any framework can vary depending on a number of factors which may be unique to a union or region.*



Each rugby nation will have its own unique rugby, sporting and cultural environment which can depend on, but not limited to, the following elements:

- Location and distribution of players, staff, suitable facilities and service providers.
- National and provincial rugby competition structures. (provincial, club, secondary school)
- National rugby culture and history.

This High Performance standards document should underpin the strategy to ensure standards are being met in all areas. It is set out as a series of questions for unions to consider in order to assess their current delivery with suggested guidelines/good practice in certain areas.

## Programme Management

The union must have:

1. A High Performance strategy in place, covering men's and women's sevens and 15s rugby, as appropriate.
2. A High Performance Director or equivalent in place to oversee the High Performance programmes.

Does the union have a High Performance strategy encompassing all areas defined above?

Does the Union have dedicated leadership across all aspects of the programme – men's and women's sevens and 15s rugby?

Is the women's programme integrated into the High Performance programme? Does it have dedicated leadership?

Does the leadership have authority to make decisions and the resource to deliver the programme?

Are there clear priorities understood by all management and participants?

Rugby programmes require clear and assertive leadership in a competitive, dynamic and challenging operating environment. Ensuring a single strategic leadership role that assumes the overall responsibility, authority and accountability for performance both on and off the field is essential in any High Performance programme. This leadership role in unions may have different position/job titles (e.g., General Manager, Director of Rugby, High Performance Director, General Manager, etc.); however, the primary overall accountabilities are likely to remain largely consistent. As a general rule, this leadership position is responsible for:

- High Performance Strategy
- Campaign and Operational Plans and Reviews
- Recruitment, Retention, Development and wellbeing of High Performance staff
- Oversight of Player Selection Processes

- National Team and Academy/Pathway Programmes
- High Performance Budget Oversight and Financial Management
- Culture, Values and Behaviours
- Policy Development and Compliance
- Issue and Performance Management and Resolution

The women's High Performance programme leadership structure and associated responsibilities may be integrated (in part) with the men's programme. However, regardless of size or structure, it remains preferable for a designated women's specific 'leader' to be employed.

A women's High Performance plan and associated pathways should sit within the national union's overall plan and be suitably financed for growth and development.

Are macro, meso and micro cycles appropriate periodised plans, including daily working patterns and environments defined for all squads?

Have targets been set for all squads?

Has there been a needs analysis or gap analysis undertaken – what it takes to win (understanding what needs to be delivered to reach targets and how to do this)?



## Staff and Management Teams

### Staff and Management Structure

- Is the staff structure clear and transparent?
- Does the staff and management structure support the delivery of the High Performance strategy?
- Are there discrete management teams for each programme or are resources shared?
- Is there clarity over priority if resources are shared and how is delivery backfilled if there are any conflicts of interest?
- Does the role come with appropriate remuneration to ensure quality applicants come forward?

There are various ways to 'structure' or organise staff into teams or groups to maximize integration, provide deliberate focus and also for staff management and reporting purposes. There is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach; however, the functions remain largely consistent across most High Performance programmes, recognising scale and complexity will differ significantly.

- **Coaching** – Head Coach, Assistant Coaches, Specialist Coaches
- **Performance Support** – S&C, Sport Scientist/Physiology, Performance Analyst, Psychologist/Mental Skills, Nutritionist
- **Medical** – Doctor, Physiotherapist, Massage
- **Management and Administration** – Team Manager, Operations/Logistics/Kit Manager
- **Wellbeing & Personal Development** – Lifestyle Manager/Personal Development/ Player association

Generic job and position descriptions are available as 'templates' and can be used as a guide. Being very clear on the context and what specifically is required from the role is an essential task prior to recruitment and when managing performance.

- Is there a recruitment strategy for all staff and management?
- Is it clearly articulated and are positions open for everyone to apply?
- Are there identified skill sets and standards of qualification included within each job description? Do these match the role that is being recruited?
- What will this role be accountable for and what do we need successful applicants to specifically deliver?
- What experience, knowledge and skills do we need this person to have?
- What style or approach are we looking for to complement the rest of the team but also align with our expected High Performance culture and behaviours?
- What other staff gaps have we got across the team that this role may also assist with if the person recruited has a broader skill set and where capacity allows this to happen?
- Is there a gender neutral application process?
- Are the staff and management available for all camps and competitions? Is time allocation sufficient for the role?
- What are the staff ratios? That is, the number of players in relation to members of staff, e.g. medics or coaches
- Are they available to prepare players and programmes ahead of camps and competitions?
- Is there consistency of staff? Are they able to work outside of camps to get to know players and support their development/management?
- Do staff have experience working with female athletes?

The needs analysis for staff should take account of the cohort involved.

- Gender specific requirements
- Age specific requirements
- Training age
- Cultural requirements

## **Staff and Management Support**

- Is there a performance management process in place for all contracted staff and management?
- Do all staff have contracts?
- Do all staff have development programmes and opportunities for Continuing Professional Development (CPD)?
- Is there a mentoring programme in place for staff?
- Is there coach development programme in place for talented coaches? Does this work across male and female coaches?
- Is there a match official development pathway in place for both male and female match officials?

## Potential Staff Structures

Role – per squad unless stated	Minimum Standard	Best practice
<b>HP Lead</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Overarching lead in place.</li> <li>- Implements recruitment through an open and transparent process with Job Description and application process across all staffing structures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dedicated team, including a pathways manager and a dedicated lead for relevant 15s, sevens and women's programmes.</li> </ul>
<b>Head Coach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nominated to each national team.</li> <li>- Contracting, including outside of contact time to each national team.</li> <li>- Level 3 qualification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Level 4 with international experience.</li> </ul>
<b>Assistant Coaches</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Contracting</li> <li>- One Assistant Coach, Level 3 qualified.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Position specific coaches: Lineout/scrum/kicking/attack/defence.</li> </ul>
<b>Physical Performance Coach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One per squad with S&amp;C coach.</li> <li>- World Rugby Level 2 or country equivalent qualification.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- International experience, supported by a second S&amp;C practitioner.</li> </ul>
<b>Physio</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National level qualification/degree</li> <li>- ICIR Level 2</li> <li>- 1:20 Physio to player ratio</li> <li>- Must be available to attend all competitions and tournaments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ICIR Level 3 – two physios and sports massage 1:10</li> </ul>
<b>Doctor (all campaigns)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National level qualifications/degree</li> <li>- ICIR Level 3</li> <li>- Must be able to attend all competitions and tournaments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- International experience in rugby, Level 3</li> </ul>
<b>Performance Analyst</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Experience in the ability to delivery:</li> <li>- Filming – caption</li> <li>- Ability to film and capture training / competition</li> <li>- Collect (code) and store event data that enables easy access for coaches and staff to view.</li> <li>- Present data as required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Take a lead in designing and implementing the systems that underpin the performance analysis in an organisation.</li> <li>- Support analysts available to code and film</li> </ul>
<b>Player Development Managers (all camps)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Access to a Player Development Manager for specific sessions and to a PA for contractual queries.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dedicated Player Development Manager for specific squads who has knowledge of the players</li> </ul>
<b>Team Manager</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Each squad to have a dedicated and contracted team manager, who is integrated into the full management team.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assistant Team Managers available to provide support for campaigns and pinnacle events.</li> </ul>

Role – per squad unless stated	Minimum Standard	Best practice
<b>Nutritionist (all camps)</b>	- Input into menu and supplement requirements and player advice.	- Qualified individual embedded within the team to support players inside and outside of camp environment.
<b>Sports Psychologist</b>		- Appropriately qualified individual (s) embedded in the team.
<b>Female health practitioner</b>		- Individual with specific knowledge of women’s health and wellbeing.

## Facilities and Resources

The types of facilities and resources will depend on the structure of camps and the daily training environments.

The programme will operate as one of, or a mix of the following operational models, dependent on the national rugby environment and the resources available to the union.

- Centralised or regionalised
- Camp-based

This may differ between sevens and 15s, men’s and women’s rugby. It is typically more likely for the sevens to be a fully centralised model requiring a comprehensive daily training environment for all players, while 15s is typically more likely to be a camp-based model with time together dependent on whether players are centrally contracted or contracted to clubs. From a women’s perspective, while there is an increasing number of full-time professional environments, it is more likely players will need to balance study or their working careers so thought must be given to providing appropriate daily training environments outside of camp environments. Providing these daily training environments is likely to involve a mix of provision from different providers so adequate monitoring and review is required.

The model of provision will influence the training programme and therefore the facilities required.

	Minimum Standard	Best Practice
<b>Range of Training Surfaces</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- At least one good grass training pitch and an alternate 4G venue for training in poor weather conditions (cold, rain, snow).</li> <li>- Posts/post protectors</li> <li>- Lines/full size pitch</li> <li>- See appendix</li> </ul>	- Excellent grass pitches, indoor and outdoor 4G training areas, fully matted contact dojo.
<b>Scrum Facility</b>	- Access to functioning scrum machine	- Scrum facility including space and machine

	Minimum Standard	Best Practice
<b>General Rugby Equipment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ball 1:2</li> <li>- Tackle shields/pads</li> <li>- Cones</li> <li>- Bibs</li> <li>- Post protectors</li> <li>- Pitch and markings</li> <li>- Flag poles</li> <li>- Availability of gumshields</li> <li>- Player access to boots</li> <li>- Water bottles</li> <li>- Rugby posts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Variety of tackle shields</li> <li>- Cylinders</li> <li>- Contact suits</li> <li>- List TBC</li> </ul>
<b>Training Room</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Room available to players and staff for meetings with access to audio visual equipment and white boards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A variety of rooms available to include staff rooms, player rooms set up with individual review stations for analysis with wifi, meeting and relaxation spaces</li> </ul>
<b>Strength and Conditioning Provision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Basic strength and conditioning equipment with range of barbells and dumbbells, cables, benches and racks with enough stations to cover for unit work and appropriate weight available for strongest players for use in all weather eg under cover / air conditioned, windows or fans. Accessible in facility or close to training venue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Weights room available for one squad, full range of training modalities including cardio, strength and power, indoor with relevant heating / cooling, rehab area, speed and power area. Close to pitch</li> </ul>
<b>Medical Room</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A specific room with physio beds for practitioners with relevant equipment, tape, basic prehab and rehab equipment including mats rollers and bands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Two medical rooms including room for private consultations, adjustable beds for all practitioners, advanced diagnostic and treatment equipment including for example ultrasound, prehab and rehab equipment, Alter G</li> </ul>
<b>Food</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fresh, local food. Breakfast and lunch provided on-site for all players and staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fresh, seasonal and local food with recipes/menus based around the needs of the players and their training/competition goals.</li> <li>- Chefs on site, reactive to needs of the team.</li> </ul>
<b>Video Analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Functional filming equipment and storage capacity</li> <li>- Laptop</li> <li>- Filming and capturing equipment for training.</li> <li>- IT software for coding.</li> <li>- Data storage, both locally and on cloud.</li> <li>- Presentation tools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sophisticated capture to remote destinations that allows detailed aspects of performance to be analysed live or within moments of the game.</li> <li>- Human resource provision, managed and checked for reliability regularly.</li> <li>- Drone</li> <li>- Integrate analysis workflow with GPS metrics.</li> </ul>

	Minimum Standard	Best Practice
<b>Pool</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Small pool, enabling recovery and rehab sessions of a depth and temperature conducive to both.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Varying depth to enable variable aspects of rehab, including deep water running.</li> <li>- Long enough to enable intense swimming sessions (minimum 20 metres).</li> </ul>
<b>GPS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enough GPS units for a representative sample of the squad (e.g. 15), that provides downloadable data.</li> <li>- A nominated specialist to use the system and create meaningful data sets for players and staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enough GPS devices for the whole squad.</li> <li>- A system that provides both live and recorded feedback, that can be used in all training and competitive environments.</li> <li>- A nominated specialist to use the system and create meaningful data sets for players and staff.</li> </ul>
<b>Nutrition Supplements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Basic macronutrients that support recovery and fueling around training sessions and that adheres to WADA anti-doping guidelines.</li> <li>- Clear guidelines around fueling and recovery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bespoke supplement programme that adheres to WADA anti-doping guidelines and that enhances the effectiveness of the physical and rugby performance programmes for all players.</li> <li>- Expert nutritionist to work with players and support team regularly.</li> </ul>
<b>Player Load Monitoring Framework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A low-cost, data driven system that enables coaches and support staff to make decisions regarding the effectiveness of their training and competition programmes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A system comprising all rugby, medical, S&amp;C and sport science data that is used to promote the best development of all players in the organisation.</li> </ul>
<b>Sand Pit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- N/A</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A luxury item but very effective for lower limb rehab.</li> <li>- Covered to provide a training facility even in wet weather and measuring 10 x 10m in size.</li> </ul>
<b>Climatic Chamber</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- N/A</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Large enough for 20 players on watt bikes and adjustable for altitude and temperature</li> </ul>
<b>Nationwide Research Programme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sharing of best practice between (coaches to coaches, S&amp;Cs to S&amp;Cs etc.) of domestic clubs and host unions regarding the development/ performance of their players.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A collaborative, well-funded research programme between domestic clubs and the host union that is designed to promote a better and safer game for all participants.</li> </ul>

# Player Support

All programmes should have the following player support in place:

	Minimum Standard	Best Practice
<b>Player Representation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Player's free to organise their own representative body without any barriers or resistance from Unions, subject to there being a strong representation of players actively supporting the association</li> <li>- Unions to engage with player association where this is strong player representation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A National Player Association which is recognised and has a strong working relationship with the Union, with negotiated documentation that supports consistency in employment terms for players.</li> </ul>
<b>Individual Development Plans (IDPs)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- IDPs across seasons; campaigns that are monitored three to four times per year by national coaches.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- An individualised template or framework to facilitate the development and continuous improvement of players in a High Performance programme, that is aligned with both club and country. This needs to be monitored and measured with responsibility for the different elements of the programme suitably assigned.</li> </ul> <p>Potential categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technical (catch/pass, cleanout, tackle, Evasion etc)</li> <li>Tactical (role in game plan, tactical awareness, positional understanding)</li> <li>Physical (strength, aerobic, anaerobic, power, speed)</li> <li>Mental Skills (resilience, performance focus, performance readiness, work ethic)</li> <li>Nutrition (body weight, skinfolds, hydration, sleep)</li> <li>Periodisation (workload and calendar)</li> <li>Leadership (self-awareness, self-reliance, life balance, finance and asset protection)</li> <li>Data Protection (data ownership rights, what data is used for and by whom).</li> </ol>
<b>Review and Feedback Mechanism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clear individual feedback for players post games/tournaments.</li> <li>- Team review after each campaign/ tournament or single tests.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Independent review after campaigns</li> <li>- Clear processes for players to feedback on a continuous basis including leadership groups.</li> </ul>

<b>Player Welfare – Medical</b>	<b>Minimum Standard</b>	<b>Best Practice</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To ensure appropriate medical and safety standards in all professional rugby environments.</li> <li>- The minimum player welfare standards in place (concussion, medical screening) need to be adopted and implemented across all elite level training and competitions through terms of participation.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entry Medical and protocol screening</li> <li>• Entry physical capacity testing</li> <li>• Concussion SCAT baselines – start of every season</li> <li>• Education on concussion protocols</li> <li>• Comprehensive rehab plans for injured players</li> <li>• Medical cover (add to staffing) medical provision or regular monitoring for return.</li> <li>• During camps and competitions – physical and mental wellbeing monitoring, including menstrual cycles</li> <li>• Mental health access framework</li> <li>• Injured players provision for medical contact time.</li> <li>• World Rugby medical modules                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-doping module</li> <li>• Integrity module</li> <li>• Headcase Concussion</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Blood testing</li> <li>- Mental Health Support</li> <li>- Rehab programmes/ Interventions to ensure safe and efficient player return with clear management.</li> <li>- Enhanced Return To Play (RTP) protocols are in place.</li> </ul>

	Minimum Standard	Best Practice
<b>Player Welfare – Daily Training Environment (DTE)</b>	<p>DTE to align with season-planning, training and competitions programme with specific training plans for players outside of the DTE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bespoke plans for individual playing plans for dual sevens and 15s players</li> <li>- Bespoke plans for players around work and study commitments</li> <li>- Mandatory rest periods (four weeks), to include gradual return/active rest</li> <li>- Player load monitoring</li> <li>- Regular testing for de-centralized programmes</li> <li>- Camp base, load management plans</li> <li>- Development leadership group for staff- player communication</li> <li>- Respecting players cultural or religious needs</li> </ul>	
<b>Player Welfare – Lifestyle</b>	<p>Active relationship with Player Association (where there is one)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Finance (numeracy, banking, accountant, saving/investments)</li> <li>b. Professional rugby education (agents, anti-doping, betting, social media, contracts, media training, understanding the role of a professional player.</li> <li>c. Family and culture (expectation management, balancing priorities, religion, maintaining relationships)</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Player Development Managers in place to support players.</li> <li>- Player development opportunities outside of rugby particularly where a dual career approach is promoted</li> <li>- Career and education (study and/or work experience opportunities)</li> <li>- Personal development (mental wellness/fitness, life balance, family)</li> </ul>
<b>Campaign Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Campaign plans in place for all squads leading to pinnacle events.</li> <li>- Selection policy in place for all squads.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All funding in place to ensure best possible performance and maximum preparation time.</li> </ul>

	Minimum Standard	Best Practice
<b>Contracting</b>	<p>As a minimum requirement, all international players should be contracted to the union to cover the periods when the player is in camp or competition. This includes both sevens and 15s, men's and women's standardised contracts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full-time</li> <li>• Part-time</li> <li>• Per diems</li> </ul> <p>These contracts will include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insurance</li> <li>• Tournament/competition terms of participation</li> <li>• Problem resolution</li> <li>• Education and protocols</li> <li>• Player property</li> <li>• Player obligations</li> <li>• Employer obligations</li> <li>• Termination</li> <li>• Misconduct</li> <li>• Family planning support / maternity/paternity policy</li> <li>• Media and commercial requirements/commitments</li> <li>• Remuneration</li> </ul>	<p>All contracts are standard contracts which are developed and supported in conjunction with player associations.</p> <p>Anything outside of these standard contracts should be developed in conjunction with players associations or International Rugby Players.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Models of player representation</li> </ul>
<b>Compliance</b>	<p>Compliance measures and polices must be in place in the Union</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Union Insurance</li> <li>• Player Insurance</li> <li>• Competitions Compliance e.g. Medical Cover</li> <li>• Host Union Agreements/Tour Agreements</li> <li>• WR Regulations</li> <li>• Regulations 4/5/8/9/23, including release requests for players</li> <li>• Maternity/Paternity Leave</li> <li>• Disciplinary</li> <li>• Grievances</li> <li>• Codes of Conduct (players and staff)</li> </ul>	

## Selection Policies

As identified above all Unions should have clear and transparent selection policies. These should be available to players and player associations so it is understood why and when selections are made for different games or events.

Unions should be aware specifically of World Rugby Regulation 4 and Regulation 8 when developing selection policies for squads and events.

**World Rugby Regulation 4** deals with the status and eligibility of players, player contracts and the movement of players from one union's jurisdiction to that of another union.

Importantly for a union's player development programmes, clause 4.4 of regulation 4 deals specifically with movement of players from one union to another and includes compensation for player development (clause 4.7).

As a guide a union is – under the regulation in 2021 – entitled to claim a standard annual development fee for a player of £5,000 for each year a player is in a union's development programme between the ages of 17 and 23.

Sections one to three of regulation 4 provide some detail around the guidelines for unions on the development of young players and the compensation for the training and development of such young players.

It is important that the national union follows the requirements and guidelines of regulation 4 in the setup and conduct of any player development and academy programmes. This would include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Taking an integrated approach to work and liaise closely with schools, colleges, clubs and other rugby bodies at all levels.
- Operating and/or sanctioning rugby bodies or clubs under their jurisdiction to operate Licensed Training Centres (LTCs) in which young players may receive coaching and training services.
- Following the fundamental requirements (for LTCs) in developing programmes that concentrate not only on the physical and technical training of young players but also on the broader educational personal and welfare needs of young players.
- Players must be registered to the programme as associate players. Such players must receive regular and frequent coaching and training services within the programme to ensure the union or rugby body is entitled to compensation if the player moves from one union to another.
- Comply with the guidelines of Section 3.

**World Rugby Regulation 8** refers specifically to the eligibility of players to play for national teams.

Importantly for a union's player development programmes, Section 8.2 outlines the requirements under which a player will not be eligible to play for the senior 15s national representative team, the next senior 15s representative team or the senior sevens national representative team of another union.

It details the criteria which stipulates whether a player is "captured" by a union.



## Player Pathway

A player pathway or talent Identification and development process should sit within the High Performance strategy (see academy framework document appendix) The pathway should be clearly outlined with appropriate entry and exit routes. Detail will depend on unique country characteristics and requirements.

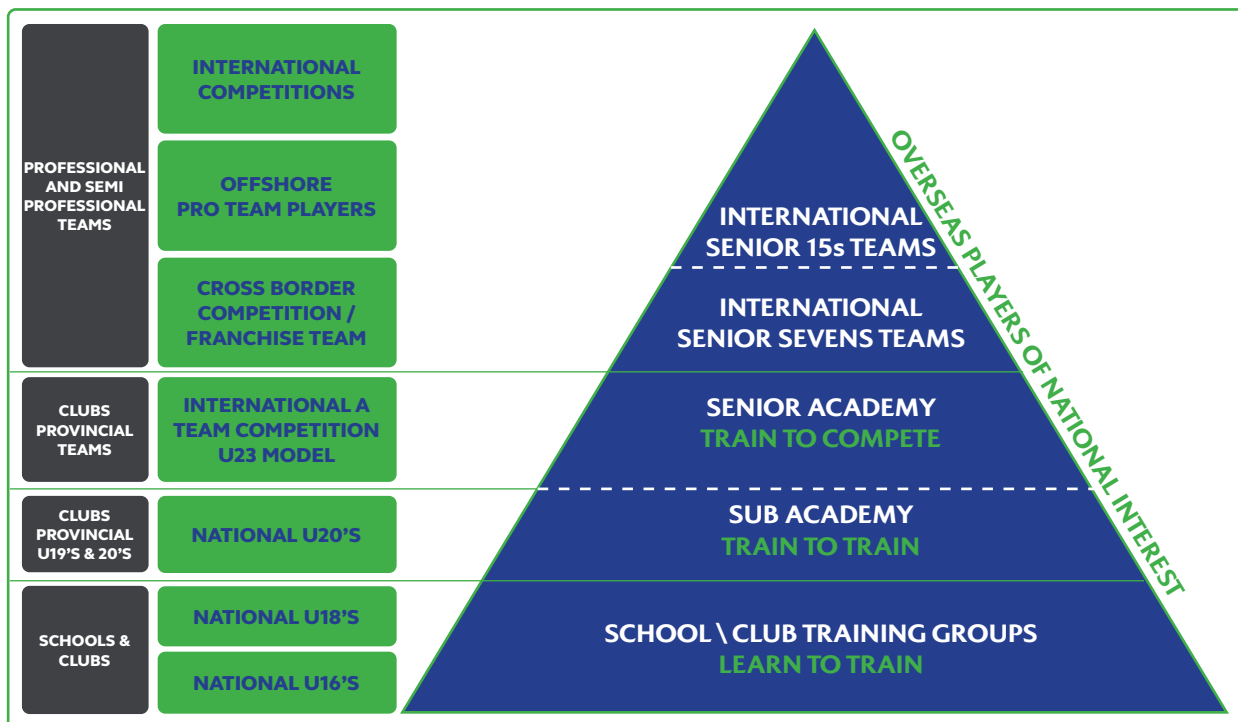
### Player Pathways

#### Minimum Standard

- Clear ID of pathway
- Clear progression
- ID entry and exit routes
- Appropriate competition through the pathway
- Selection criteria clear and articulated at all levels of the pathway

#### Best Practice

Best practice linked to academy document around frameworks, staffing structures and funding.



In order for the player pathway framework to be successful and sustainable, it is important that there is alignment from national level through the age grade pathway

A suitable curriculum must be developed for each stage of the National Academy Framework. This curriculum should cater to the ages (including training age) at each stage of the academy programme and be progressive from entry level, along the pathway, to the national team.

The curriculum would include time (hours) spent in each area on an annual basis spread across both Daily Training Environments (DTEs) and academy camps.

Curriculum content delivery will depend on the structure of the academy adopted.

The curriculum is not limited to rugby and physical aspects only. It should cover all elements of player development.

The curriculum must be connected and continuous for the players from entry levels into the programme through to senior academy requirements and suitable for the age and rugby experience of the players at each level of the programme.

There should be alignment of selection across national age group teams.





[www.world.rugby](http://www.world.rugby)