Rugby League 2016/17

League & Cup Rules and Regulations

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**CODE OF CONDUCT**

AoC Sport, its member colleges and other participants will encourage the development of high standards of performance and behaviour. Both staff and competitors should always seek to set a good example by the way in which they carry out their duties and responsibilities both on and off the field. AoC Sport may refuse the entry of any team that does not follow this charter.

 **AoC SPORT**

1. Will ensure that the rules are fair. They need to be thoroughly understood by competitors and officials, and properly enforced.
2. Will make every effort to ensure that the rules are applied consistently and with absolute impartiality.
3. Will make every effort to impress upon participants and officials the absolute need to maintain the highest standards of sporting behaviour in the organisation and the practice of their sport.

**STAFF/COACHES**

1. Must ensure that all competitors satisfy the eligibility requirements of AoC Sport competitions and that they are registered before playing.
2. Insist that competitors understand and abide by the principles of good sporting behaviour.
3. Must not countenance the use of illegal or performance-enhancing drugs by competitors.
4. Must never employ methods or practices that might involve risks to long-term health or physical development of their students.
5. Must not attempt to manipulate the rules to the advantage of their competitors.
6. Must show respect to all officials and their decisions.
7. Will demonstrate proper professional behaviour at all times, providing a positive role model for the competitors. In particular foul, abusive or offensive language/actions must not be used in the presence of competitors.
8. Must not use social networking sites to make derogatory comments about any official, opponent or AoC Sport.
9. Must prioritise AoC Sport matches to ensure that they are played on the dates specified.
10. When playing as the home team, must communicate relevant information to the opponents at least seven days before the match.
11. Must ensure the criteria of the competition are met in full.
12. Must take the competition rules, a playing under protest form, evidence of eligibility and completed team sheet to every match.
13. Must follow all administration requirements related to the collation of team sheets and the updating of results.

**COMPETITORS**

1. Must abide by both the laws and the spirit of their sport.
2. Must accept the decisions of the umpires and referees without question or protestation.
3. Must not cheat and in particular must not possess, consume or supply illegal or performance-enhancing drugs.
4. Must exercise self-control at all times.
5. Must accept success and failure, victory and defeat with good grace and without excessive display of emotion.
6. Must treat their opponents and team members with due respect and fairness at all times, which includes the use of social networking sites.
7. Must respect everyone participating in AoC Sport competitions in terms of age, gender (including transgender), ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation or disability.

**SPECTATORS**

1. Must support their team in a friendly, positive way, without abusing officials or other competitors, and without trying to influence the decisions of referees or organisers.

**It is recommended that a copy of the Rule Book of all sports be to hand, and that the member college/organisation be affiliated to the Governing Bodies of all the sports in which it is taking part.**

As well as adhering to the code of conduct set out by AOC, all 16+ School/College training establishments (SCTE) participating in Rugby League organised and run by AOC are bound by the RFL Community Game Tiers 4, 5 and 6 Operational Rules.

**PREMIER LEAGUE AND REGIONAL LEAGUES**

1. **ELIGIBILITY**
	1. All participants in AoC Sport competitions must be recorded on the Individualised Learning Record (ILR) by the institution.  They must be on the ILR as a continuing student at the time of the match.  Students on the ILR who are registered as completed, withdrawn or transferred are not eligible to play.
	2. All participants in the men’s leagues must be under 19 and over 16 years of age at midnight on 31 August in the academic year of participation.
	3. In the Premier League, students must be on a full time study programme of a minimum of 450 hours. Part time students may be permitted to play League matches as long as they are in at least band 2 of the National Funding Rates and studying a minimum of 280 hours
	4. Students on apprenticeship progammes are permitted to play in AoC Sport competitions.
	5. Members of staff who are on the institution’s ILR as an apprentice are permitted to play in Aoc Sport competitions as long as they are not responsible for the team in which they are playing.
	6. Students on HE programmes are permitted to play in AoC Sport competitions as long as they comply with the other eligibility criteria.
	7. All participants must be on the ILR of the same institution unless written permission is received from AoC Sport. Learning Federations, Learning Partnerships, Trusts or any institution which operates multiple sites in which the students are on the ILR of any of the partner institutions may request permission for players in the same team to be drawn from across the partnership. Permission will only be granted where evidence of the status of the partnership can be provided and where participation is made possible by this partnership approach.
	8. It may be possible for a student to be on a funded study programme at more than one college. In such circumstances, the student will play for the college at which they study more guided learning hours. If this college does not enter a team in the student’s chosen sport, the college at which the student studies fewer hours must make a written request to the other college for the student to play in their team.
	9. Players who hold a professional contractare permitted to play in AoC Sport competitions as long as the institution has received written permission from the club holding the contract. A copy of this letter should be held in the match day pack.
	10. Players can only play for one institution in a season. Where a player transfers from one institution to another during the season written permission must be obtained for the player to compete for the new institution.
	11. Any college submitting false information or playing an ineligible player(s) may forfeit the match.
	12. Teams must have 20 players registered before the commencement of the season. Scheduled fixtures will be refused until 20 players are registered and the opposition will be awarded the competition points.
2. **STAFFING**
3. There must be a person in attendance at each game who is a qualified first aider.
4. Premier Only: College/team head coaches must be qualified at RFL Level 3.
5. In other leagues the head coach must hold a current RFL coaching qualification.
6. **COMPETITION SYSTEM**
	1. The competition will be organised and administered by the Aoc Sport Competition Administration Officer (RFL).
	2. The RFL will designate teams to each league according to the entries received and geographical location.
	3. Dates of fixtures will be advertised to participating teams by the end of the summer term.
	4. Matches will be played on the Wednesday afternoon designated by AoC Sport in the fixture list. Games will be scheduled between September and April.
	5. Matches can be played on other days if both teams are in agreement.
	6. Where a team is unable to complete a fixture on the designated date due to extenuating circumstances

they must contact AoC Sport Competition Adminitration Officer at least seven days in advance of the fixture to obtain permission to agree an alternative date with the opposition. If permission is granted, the fixture must be rescheduled within seven days and the new date for the match posted on FixturesLive. Colleges entering this competition must accept that completion of fixtures within this timescale must take priority over other competitions.

* 1. Where teams cannot mutually agree on a new date, the Competition Administration Officer (AOC) may set a date that both colleges must abide by. Failure to re-play the game on the date specified will result in both teams facing a point penalty and/or fine.
	2. A match may be cancelled for legitimate reasons only such as:-
* International call ups (two players).
* Severe weather conditions.
* Work experience (providing AoC Sport is notified by 30 September).

Non legitimate reasons are:-

* Lack of players due to injury, illness, holidays, etc.
* Clashes with non AoC Sport competitions.
* Other arrangements clashing with the structured season.

Please note the AoC Sport structured season with all dates for the year was available in May and by completing the online entry form institutions accepted the dates as a commitment.

* 1. Where a match is cancelled for not legitimate reasons after midday on the day before the match teams may apply for a walkover by using the form available in the resources section of the AoC Sport website.
	2. Protests must be lodged and walkovers sought within seven days of the fixture. Walkovers will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and must be sent to appeals@aoc.co.uk using the Stage 1 (S1) Walkovers, Protests and Appeals form. It is not acceptable for teams to merely enter a 30-0 score when an opponent has not fulfilled a fixture.
	3. A score of 30-0 will be recorded in the event of a walkover.
	4. Where a team offers three walkovers in a season all of their results will be removed, with any remaining fixtures being converted to friendlies.
	5. If a fixture is agreed to be postponed by both parties then a walkover cannot be requested in the future if the fixture is not rescheduled and played by the end of the structured season.
	6. No double headers are allowed in any of the Leagues.
	7. If appropriate fixtures can be brought forward or reversed. Please note it is the home teams responsibility to update FixturesLive accordingly.
	8. If you experience any issues with contacting the opposing team it is important that you raise this with AoC Sport immediately so appropriate action can be taken.
	9. In league matches, points will be awarded as follows:
* Win = 2 points.
* Draw = 1 point.
* Loss = 0 points.
	1. Where teams within the same league share the same number of points, the following criteria will be applied in order to determine the order:
1. Best points difference in League games.
2. Most points scored in League games.
3. Least points conceded in League games
4. Head-to-head record of the teams involved in the tie based on total points in League games.
5. Where the points are the same the aggregate score of the teams involved in the tie will be used to determine the tie.
6. Ranking based on points earned against top four group finishers.
7. Lottery conducted by ECFA at league office.

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* 1. Promotion and relegation shall normally be on the basis of one up, one down in between all divisions however the RFL shall have the final decision on the composition of the divisions prior to the season commencing.
	2. In the event that a team is promoted to the Premier League then confirmation must be received in writing, from the College Head Coach and Head of Sport, accepting their commitment to participate in the competition.
	3. If for any reason the league schedule has not been completed by the end of the season all outstanding results will be 0-0 with no league points being given to either team. Failure to complete the matches may result in a £100 fine.
	4. If appropriate then fixtures can be brought forward or reversed. Please note it is the home teams responsibility to update FixturesLive accordingly.
	5. If there is a 50 point difference in the match points then the game will be concluded and the result as it stands will be the end result.
1. **PLAYER REGISTRATION**
2. All players from each team must be registered with the RFL via the online player registration system on the College Rugby League website Details of all players to be used ( full names, gender, DOB, full address including postcode, contact telephone numbers and email) must be completed. Players at colleges must also register on Fixtures Live.
3. In the interests of increasing participation and preventing late cancellations, additional players can be brought into teams at late notice providing:-
* They comply with rules 1.1 and 1.3.
* They are included on the team sheet.
* The opposition coach is notifed.
* They are registered on FixturesLive within 48 hours of the match.
1. Coaches must be able to provide photo ID of their players if challenged about the eligibility of a player. This can be done by

**either** using the management information system to produce the names, photographs and dages of birth of all players **or** insisting that players carry with them their valid student ID card.

1. A team/squad sheet should be exchanged at least 30 minutes before the start of the match in the presence of the referee. Copies of the team/squad sheets are available in the resources section of the AoC Sport website.
* For all Leagues, both teams must send the fully completed team sheet of their opponent to the Competition Administration Officer within two days of the completion of each fixture. Where a game is played on a Wednesday the team sheet should be received by 5pm on the Friday. The away team manager should complete the quality standard questions before submitting the team sheet.
* AoC Sport should be informed on every occasion where an opponent does not exchange a team sheet. On the first occasion the offending team will be issued with a warning after which further breaches of this rule will result in a points deduction or £50 fine
1. All players must be listed on the match report form according to their playing position.
2. Teams may nominate four replacements. The referee must be informed of the names of the replacement players before the start of the game.
3. Any college submitting false information or playing an ineligible player(s) may be withdrawn from that competition, subject to the submission of a written explanation of their action. They may also risk the imposition of additional sanctions, fines or other penalties.
4. AoC Sport staff have the right to attend any fixture and request to see a player’s student ID with or without prior notice. Failure to provide the relevant information upon request will result in further action being taken.
5. In the interests of player development movement between teams is permitted as long as they are registered in accordance with rule 4.1. However, in the spirit of the game, no more than three players listed on the team sheet of a Premier League match may play in the next RFL League match and only with the permission of AoC Sport. These players must be identified on the team sheet. Failure to follow this ruling will result in the match being awarded to the other team. Colleges who continue to play premier players in the lower level leagues after receiving a warning will be removed from the competition and may be subject to a £100 fine.
6. **CONDITIONS OF PLAY AND FIXTURE OBLIGATIONS**
7. Match arrangements and directions must be confirmed by the home college at least seven days in advance of the designated match date. Start times are negotiable to accommodate the travelling of visiting teams. AoC Sport must be informed immediately of any agreed changes to a match date made only as a result of unforeseen circumstances.
8. Played under the Laws of the Game as laid down by the RFL except in the case of all Leagues below the Premier League where teams may play down to 9-a-side where they are unable to field a full quota of players, (13-a-side).
9. All matches should be played on grass or synthetic pitches provided they meet the RFL specifications and all lines should be clearly marked. The pitch should be well maintained and the grass regularly mown to an acceptable length.
10. Duration – all matches will be played in accordance with the RFL Laws of the Game and shall be for a maximum of 70 minutes (i.e. 35 minutes each way). There should be a half time interval of a minimum of five minutes. Where a match is abandoned with 10 minutes or less of playing time remaining, the score at the time of abandonment will constitute a match result.
11. Match balls – two suitable match balls to ensure continuous play will be provided for the referee’s inspection prior to each match.
12. Team colours – in the event of a colour clash the away team will change to colours that provide a satisfactory contrast. Shirts may bear a sponsor’s name and must be clearly numbered.
13. The home college shall provide suitable hospitality and refreshments upon confirmation from the away team they wish to take advantage of such arrangements, irrelevant of the distance.
14. Results must be entered directly onto FixturesLive within 48 hours of game conclusion.
15. If no result is entered for a due fixture the following communication will be sent from AoC Sport to the home team and cc’d to the away team.
* At the beginning of every month an email reminder will be sent to all teams that have results outstanding requesting that the result be entered immediately or a new date to be agreed if the match has not been played.
* Thirty days later where the result of the match or new date has not been added to FixturesLive the away team will be awarded the match with a score of 30-0..
1. A no-show occurs when a team wilfully does not show up at a game and there has been no league approved written agreement for a change to the scheduled game. Penalties for no-shows are as follows:
* A forfeit to the opposing team and 1 point is deducted from the league total.
* A forfeit will result in a 30-0 win to the team not at fault.
* The club will be docked 3 points per infraction and will be automatically relegated for a second no-show in the season.
1. A team unable to attend a scheduled game because of an accident, weather, or Act of God should immediately notify the opponent and the league office. Each situation will be reviewed by AoC Sport which shall render a decision that may be appealed through the system laid out in rule 10.
2. No double headers are allowed in any of the leagues.
3. **MATCH OFFICIALS**
4. Match officials – the RFL will appoint a neutral referee to officiate at each match. The home side must contact the appointed match official by 12pm on the Monday prior to the game. Their match fees will be paid by the home college.
5. **TROPHIES**
	1. The winners of each league will be presented with a cup for permanent retention.

**8. MISCONDUCT**

1. Any person having a connection with the team (e.g. staff, student, parent etc.) guilty of misconduct could cause the team/college to be withdrawn from further involvement in the competition and/or the imposition of a fine or other sanctions.
2. Any matters of misconduct whether recorded by the referee should be sent to or other serious misconduct will be dealt with jointly by AoC Sport and the RFL.
3. AoC Sport cannot intervene in any matters of misconduct that are being investigated by the County FA or the Police.

**9. SANCTIONS AND PENALTY FINES**

1. Teams failing to comply with the rules of the competition or found to be guilty of misconduct may be subject to one or more of the following - the imposition of a significant fine and costs, points deduction, and/or in certain circumstances, exclusion from the league.
2. For teams who are involved in ‘one off’ minor transgressions concerning the Rules of the Competition sanctions and/or Penalty Fines will be imposed by the Competition Administration Officer (AOC) using the scale in table 1.
3. Aoc Sport has the right to reject the application of any team that has a poor disciplinary record for both it’s players and the team .
4. Any team accumulating fines to the value of £200 may be subject to the imposition of further sanctions.
5. In the event of a team withdrawing from the league without finishing its scheduled games, all results will be expunged and other sanctions or fines may be imposed

Table 1

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Offence** | **Fine** | **Sanction** |
| Cancellation of fixture after 2.00 pm on the day before the match | £50 at second offence | 30-0 walkover |
| Failure to meet a fixture obligation on the appointed (or agreed) date |  Up to £100  | 30-0 walkover plus a 1 point deduction |
| Changing facilities, pitches and/or match equipment that do not meet the requirements of the Minimum Operating Standards | £50 at second offence | Warning notice issued on first offence |
| Failure to exchange a team sheet prior to the match | £50 at second offence | Warning notice issued on first offence, 1 point deducted on further offences |
| Failure to provide wholesome post match refreshments | £50 at second offence | Warning notice issued on first offence |
| Failure to record match results and return Team Sheets to the Competition Administrator within 48 hours | £50 at second offence | Warning notice issued on first offence |
| Failure to register players before they play |   | 30-0 walkover for all matches in which non registered players are used |
| Playing a player who does not meet the eligibility criteria detailed in rule 1 | £50 at second offence | 30-0 walkover |
| Committing an act that is deemed to be not in the spirit of the game | £50 |  |
| Failure to control players and/or coaching staff | Up to £500 | plus additional sanctions |
| Withdrawing from a league during the season | No fine up to end of November then up to £100 | May result in temporary or permanent expulsion from the competition |
| Conduct deemed to be undesirable |  | May result in temporary or permanent expulsion from the competition |
| Serious breach of conduct by any official, coach or member of a team |  | Expulsion of the guilty individual or of the team |

1. The Competition Administration Officer (AOC) will write to the institution informing them that they are charged of being in breach of rule.
2. The institution will have 7 days to respond in writing to include:-
3. whether they admit or deny the Charge(s) or any part of a Charge;
4. a list of witnesses upon whom the institution intends to rely together with a written statement signed by each witness setting out his/her evidence in full; and
5. copies of any documentation, evidence or other relevant material (of whatever nature) on which the institution intends to rely at a hearing.
6. The Competition Administration Officer (AOC) will review the evidence and make a decision on any sanction.
7. If the institution does not respond within 7 days The Competition Administration Officer (AOC) will make a decision based on the evidence available.
8. Aoc Sport has the power to exclude from further participation in the competition any team whose conduct, in their opinion, has been undesirable.
9. Any official, coach or member of a team who is found guilty of a serious breach of rule shall be liable to expulsion or any such penalty AoC Sport may decide, and their team shall also be liable to expulsion.

**10. WALKOVERS, PROTESTS AND APPEALS**

1. Institutions wishing to make an appeal against the decision of the Competition Administration Officer (RFL) must do so within 7 days using the stage 2 appeals form available on the resources section of the AoC Sport website
2. The stage 2 Appeal must:
3. identify the specific decision(s) being appealed;
4. set out the ground(s) of appeal and the reasons why it would be substantially unfair not to alter the original decision;
5. set out a statement of the facts upon which the appeal is based;
6. The grounds of appeal available to the institution shall be that AoC Sport :
7. failed to give the appellant a fair hearing and/or
8. misinterpreted or failed to comply with the rules or regulations relevant to its decision; and/or
9. came to a decision to which no reasonable such body could have come and/or
10. imposed a penalty, award, order or sanction that was excessive
11. The stage 2 appeal will be dealt with by the Senior Administration Officer or the Competition Manager.
12. The appellant will be sent a written response within 14 days which clearly states the decision appealed against, whether or not the appeal has been accepted and the reasons for this decision.
13. Institutions wishing to make an appeal against the decision of a stage 2 appeal must do so within 7 days using the stage 3 appeals form available on the resources section of the AoC Sport website and enclose a fee of £100.
14. The criteria listed in 10.2 and 10.3 must form the basis of a stage 3 appeal.
* The Stage 3 Appeals Committee will comprise four individuals with relevant knowledge of the sport who have not been involved with previous stages of the same appeal and who have relevant knowledge of the sport. They will be drawn from: the AoC Sport Managing Director, any member of the AoC Sport Board, a representative from the National Governing Body, an AoC Sport Regional Operations Officer.
* The committee will elect its own chair
1. A team that is the subject of the disciplinary hearing cannot be part of the Disciplinary Committee
2. See page 21 for a flow diagram of the appeals process.

**RUGBY FOOTBALL LEAGUE KNOCKOUT CUP RULES**

1. **ELIGIBILITY**
2. All participants in AoC Sport competitions must be recorded on the Individualised Learning Record (ILR) by the institution.  They must be on the ILR as a continuing student at the time of the match.  Students on the ILR who are registered as completed, withdrawn or transferred are not eligible to play.
3. All participants in the cup competition must be under 19 and over 16 years of age at midnight on 31 August in the academic year of participation.
4. Students on apprenticeship progammes are permitted to play in AoC Sport competitions.
5. Members of staff who are on the institution’s ILR as an apprentice are permitted to play in Aoc Sport competitions as long as they are not responsible for the team in which they are playing.
6. Students on HE programmes are permitted to play in AoC Sport competitions as long as they comply with the other eligibility criteria.
7. All participants must be on the ILR of the same institution unless written permission is received from AoC Sport. Learning Federations, Learning Partnerships, Trusts or any institution which operates multiple sites in which the students are on the ILR of any of the partner institutions may request permission for players in the same team to be drawn from across the partnership. Permission will only be granted where evidence of the status of the partnership can be provided and where participation is made possible by this partnership approach.
8. It may be possible for a student to be on a funded study programme at more than one college. In such circumstances, the student will play for the college at which they study more guided learning hours. If this college does not enter a team in the student’s chosen sport, the college at which the student studies fewer hours must make a written request to the other college for the student to play in their team.
9. Players can only play for one institution in a season within Cup comeptitions irrespective of whether or not they have been granted a transfer to another instituition.
10. Any college submitting false information or playing an ineligible player(s) may forfeit the match.
11. Teams must have 20 players registered before the commencement of the season.
12. **STAFFING**
	1. There must be a person in attendance at each game who is a qualified first aider.
	2. Coaches must meet the qualification requirements set out for their particular League they usually participate within.

**3. COMPETITION STRUCTURE**

1. **COMPE**
	1. The competition will be administered by AoC Sport.
	2. Entry to the competition must be received by AoC Sport before the deadline stated on the online entry system.
	3. The format of the Cup comeptitions will be detrmined once the netrants are known.
	4. All games to be played on a one-off knockout basis with no replays.
	5. Each match may have 17 named players with only 26 players on the pitch at any one time.
	6. Matches will be played under the RFL’s Law’s of the Game.
	7. A draw (officially witnessed) will be made by the Competition Administration Officer (Rugby Football League). The completion dates for fixtures will be circulated with the draw at the start of the competition and available on the AoC Sport structured season. Fixtures are to be played on a Wednesday afternoon or a mutually agreeable date either before or on the fixture completion for each round date stated on the website and structured season. Failure to comply with these dates will result in the toss of the coin deciding who passes through or both teams being ejected.
	8. Where matches are cancelled due to weather they must be played on the following term time Wednesday.
	9. The draws shall be circulated and all games are to be played at the ground of the first named team (unless agreed otherwise by both teams).

**4. PLAYER REGISTRATION**

1. All players from each team must be registered with the RFL via the online player registration system on the College Rugby League website. before they are eligible to play. Details of all players to be used (i.e. full names, gender, DOB, full address including postcode, contact number and email) will need to be completed. Players at colleges must also register on Fixtures Live.

1. Teams may nominate four replacements. The referee must be informed of the names of the replacement players before the start of the game.
2. Where institutions have more than one team in a competition a player is ‘cup tied’ once they have played for one team and cannot then play for the other team.
3. Coaches must be able to provide photo ID of their players if challenged about the eligibility of a player. This can be done by **either** using the management information system to produce the names, photographs and dates of birth of all players **or** insisting that players carry with them their valid student ID card.
4. Any team found to have submitted false information or played an ineligible player(s) will forfeit the match.
5. The team sheet must be exchanged in the presence of the referee 30 minutes prior to kick off.
* Premier Cup: Both teams must send the fully completed team sheet of their opponents to the Competition Administration Officer within two days of the completion of each fixture. Where a game is played on a Wednesday the team sheet should be received by 5pm on the Friday.
* Knockout Cup: Each team must retain their opponent’s team sheet until the end of the season in the event of AoC Sport requiring the information for any investigation.
1. AoC Sport staff have the right to attend any fixture and request to see a player’s student ID with or without prior notice. Failure to provide the relevant information upon request will result in further action being taken.
2. In the interests of increasing participation and preventing late cancellations, additional players can be brought into teams at late notice providing:-
* They comply with rules 1.1 and 1.3.
* They are included on the team sheet.
* The opposition coach is notifed.
* They are registered on FixturesLive within 48 hours of the match.

**5. CONDITIONS OF PLAY AND FIXTURE OBLIGATION**

1. The home college should provide necessary information, i.e. kick-off time, colours, map etc, for the travelling team at least seven days before the fixture date.
2. Each match shall be played according to the rules of the game and shall be for a maximum of 70 minutes (35 minutes each way)If a match is abandoned during play with less than 10 minutes of play remaining, then the team leading at the time of the abandonment shall be declared the winner, unless mutually agreed otherwise.
3. In the event of tied score at full-time in matches up to the final, the team with the most tries scored shall be the winner. If the teams have scored an equal number of tries, then the away team shall be declared the winner. Extra time shall not be played
4. In the final if scores are level after 35 minutes each way there
shall be an immediate period of extra time between the teams of 10 minutes each way.
If the scores are still tied after extra time then the winner will be the team which has scored the most tries in the game (including extra time).
5. Match balls: two suitable match balls to ensure continuous play must be provided by the home team.
6. Team colours/bibs: in the event of a colour clash the away team will change to colours which provide a satisfactory contrast.
7. The home college shall provide suitable hospitality and refreshments upon confirmation from the away team they wish to take advantage of such arrangements, irrelevant of the distance.
8. Results to be inputted by the home team’s Club Administrator within 48 hours of the match.
9. Failure to enter the result or inform AoC Sport of postponement before the Friday after the fixture is due to take place will result in a draw as to which team will process through to the next round.
10. In cup competitions any walkover requests or protests must be completed on form S1 within 24 hours, sent to appeals@aoc.co.uk and be accompanied by the team sheet.

**6. MATCH OFFICIALS**

1. The RFL will appoint a neutral referee to officiate at each match. The home side must contact the appointed match official by 12pm on the Monday prior to the game. Their match fees will be paid by the home college

**7. TROPHIES**

1. The winning team will receive a trophy to retain for 12 months. It will be provided jointly by AOC and the RFL.
2. is the winner’s responsibility to return this trophy to the organiser for presentation the following year.
3. There will be medals for the players of both teams playing in the final.
4. Colleges that win the national cup are responsible for the cost of engraving.

**8. MISCONDUCT**

* 1. Any person having a connection with the team (e.g. staff, student, parent etc.) guilty of misconduct could cause the team/college to be withdrawn from further involvement in the competition and/or the imposition of a fine or other sanctions.

8.2 Any matters of misconduct whether recorded by the referee should be sent to or other serious misconduct will be dealt with jointly by AoC Sport and the RFL.

* 1. AoC Sport cannot intervene in any matters of misconduct that are being investigated by the County FA or the Police.

**9. SANCTIONS AND PENALTY FINES**

9.1 Teams failing to comply with the rules of the competition or found to be guilty of misconduct may be subject to one or more of the following - the imposition of a significant fine and costs, points deduction, and/or in certain circumstances, exclusion from the league.

9.2 For teams who are involved in ‘one off’ minor transgressions concerning the Rules of the Competition sanctions and/or Penalty Fines will be imposed by the Competition Administration Officer (AOC) using the scale in table 1.

* 1. Aoc Sport has the right to reject the application of any team that has a poor disciplinary .

Table 1

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Offence** | **Fine** | **Sanction** |
| Cancellation of fixture after 2.00 pm on the day before the match | £50 at second offence | 30-0 walkover |
| Failure to meet a fixture obligation on the appointed (or agreed) date |  Up to £100  | 30-0 walkover plus a 1 point deduction |
| Changing facilities, pitches and/or match equipment that do not meet the requirements of the Minimum Operating Standards | £50 at second offence | Warning notice issued on first offence |
| Failure to exchange a team sheet prior to the match | £50 at second offence | Warning notice issued on first offence, 1 point deducted on further offences |
| Failure to provide wholesome post match refreshments | £50 at second offence | Warning notice issued on first offence |
| Failure to record match results and return Team Sheets to the Competition Administrator within 48 hours | £50 at second offence | Warning notice issued on first offence |
| Failure to register players before they play |   | 30-0 walkover for all matches in which non registered players are used |
| Playing a player who does not meet the eligibility criteria detailed in rule 1 | £50 at second offence | 30-0 walkover |
| Committing an act that is deemed to be not in the spirit of the game | £50 |  |
| Failure to control players and/or coaching staff | Up to £500 | plus additional sanctions |
| Withdrawing from a league during the season | No fine up to end of November then up to £100 | May result in temporary or permanent expulsion from the competition |
| Conduct deemed to be undesirable |  | May result in temporary or permanent expulsion from the competition |
| Serious breach of conduct by any official, coach or member of a team |  | Expulsion of the guilty individual or of the team |

* 1. The Competition Administration Officer (AOC) will write to the institution informing them that they are charged of being in breach of rule.
	2. The institution will have 7 days to respond in writing to include:-
1. whether they admit or deny the Charge(s) or any part of a Charge;
2. a list of witnesses upon whom the institution intends to rely together with a written statement signed by each witness setting out his/her evidence in full; and
3. copies of any documentation, evidence or other relevant material (of whatever nature) on which the institution intends to rely at a hearing.
	1. The Competition Administration Officer (AOC) will review the evidence and make a decision on any sanction.
	2. If the institution does not respond within 7 days The Competition Administration Officer (AOC) will make a decision based on the evidence available.
	3. Aoc Sport has the power to exclude from further participation in the competition any team whose conduct, in their opinion, has been undesirable.
	4. Any official, coach or member of a team who is found guilty of a serious breach of rule shall be liable to expulsion or any such penalty AoC Sport may decide, and their team shall also be liable to expulsion.

**10. WALKOVERS, PROTESTS AND APPEALS**

* 1. Institutions wishing to make an appeal against the decision of the Competition Administration Officer (RFL) must do so within 7 days using the stage 2 appeals form available on the resources section of the AoC Sport website
	2. The stage 2 Appeal must:
1. identify the specific decision(s) being appealed;
2. set out the ground(s) of appeal and the reasons why it would be substantially unfair not to alter the original decision;
3. set out a statement of the facts upon which the appeal is based;
	1. The grounds of appeal available to the institution shall be that AoC Sport :
4. failed to give the appellant a fair hearing and/or
5. misinterpreted or failed to comply with the rules or regulations relevant to its decision; and/or
6. came to a decision to which no reasonable such body could have come and/or
7. imposed a penalty, award, order or sanction that was excessive
	1. The stage 2 appeal will be dealt with by the Senior Administration Officer or the Competition Manager.
	2. The appellant will be sent a written response within 14 days which clearly states the decision appealed against, whether or not the appeal has been accepted and the reasons for this decision.
	3. Institutions wishing to make an appeal against the decision of a stage 2 appeal must do so within 7 days using the stage 3 appeals form available on the resources section of the AoC Sport website and enclose a fee of £100.
	4. The criteria listed in 10.2 and 10.3 must form the basis of a stage 3 appeal.
* The Stage 3 Appeals Committee will comprise four individuals with relevant knowledge of the sport who have not been involved with previous stages of the same appeal and who have relevant knowledge of the sport. They will be drawn from: the AoC Sport Managing Director, any member of the AoC Sport Board, a representative from the National Governing Body, an AoC Sport Regional Operations Officer.
* The committee will elect its own chair
	1. A team that is the subject of the disciplinary hearing cannot be part of the Disciplinary Committee
	2. See page 27 for a flow diagram of the appeals process.

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF AoC SPORT COMPETITIONS**

1. League and Cup entries should be submitted using the online system by Friday 29 May 2015 to enable leagues to be prepared in June. Entries will be accepted until 18 September though we cannot guarantee a place in the preferred league.
2. By entering AoC Sport leagues and cups you are agreeing and committing to play on the dates specified. Failure to do so may result in the match being forfeited.
3. AoC Sport, in consultation with the Regional Operations Group, reserves the right to decline entry to competitions if they are already full or if there has been a breach of the code of conduct in the preceding season.
4. Communication will be made via the Competition Lead or sport specific contact of each college as appropriate. Our website will be regularly updated with information, contact details and fixtures. ([www.aocsport.co.uk](http://www.aocsport.co.uk)).
5. Each college must have a Competition Lead that is responsible for keeping the AoC Sport, Full Time and FixturesLive league management information up to date. They are also responsible for handling the following responsibilities: scheduling, referee payments, game planning, travel coordination, handling information and liaising with AoC Sport.
6. All Competition Leads must have an email address and a telephone number which is connected to a switchboard operator or answering system. Both should be checked on a regular basis.
7. AoC Sport must be notified immediately if the name of the Competition Lead changes.
8. An email confirming all entries will be sent in June after which time the online system will reopen for withdrawals from league and cup competitions, additional entries and amendments until Friday 18 September 2015.
9. A purchase order number must be entered on the online entry form before the end of August.
10. Invoices will be issued in mid-September based on the competition entries as at Friday 18 September 2015.
11. No refund will be given if any team withdraws from the league or cup competitions after Friday 18 September 2015.
12. Relevant sports staff should be made aware of the entry submitted to ensure they know that they have teams expected to compete, and should inform AoC Sport as a matter of urgency if they will not be able to commit.
13. Any college that does not fulfil their fixtures or withdraws once the season commences can be fined up to £100 per team. AoC Sport reserves the right to suspend the entry into the competition for the following season of any team that does not fulfil their fixtures or withdraws once the season has commenced.
14. All Premier competitions must complete their fixtures and update the league tables by Friday 26 February 2016 to enable the teams qualifying for the play offs to be determined. The play offs will take place on the 9 March, 16 March and 20 April 2016 and the finals on 4 May. Failure to complete league fixtures by 26 February may result in the team’s application to join the Category 1 league for the following season being declined.
15. All other leagues will officially finish at noon on 25 March 2016, with all league tables being frozen at this time.
16. Any teams entered into the football leagues and cups must affiliate to their County FA and forward their affiliation number to competitions@aoc.co.uk by 31 August 2015 in order for the FA to sanction the start of our leagues and cups. **Teams will not be permitted to play in AoC Sport competitions until an affiliation number is provided.**
17. All participants in AoC Sportcompetitions must be recorded on the Individualised Learning Record (ILR) by the institution.  They must be on the ILR as a continuing student at the time of the match.  Students on the ILR who are registered as completed, withdrawn or transferred are not eligible to play.
18. All participants in AoC Sport competitions must be over 16 years of age at midnight on 31 August in the academic year of participation. All players in basketball rugby and men’s football must be under 19 years of age at midnight on 31 August in the academic year of participation while in other sports players must be under 21 years of age. In Ability Counts and LLDD players must be under 25.
19. Player registration is required for every AoC Sport competition prior to the first match in that competition.
20. AoC Sport competitions take priority over any other competitions unless stated otherwise in the sport specific rules.
21. AoC Sport cup matches take priority over league matches.
22. AoC Sport reserves the right to put colleges into the appropriate level of competition within the league and cup structure.
23. AoC Sport reserves the right to cancel any cup competition in which low entries mean there is not a round of 32 and reimburse entry fees accordingly.
24. It is the responsibility of every entrant organisation to ensure that it has adequate insurance for its students to participate in sporting activities on and off site, including travel to and from the venue. We reserve the right to see evidence of insurance before allowing an organisation to participate.

**APPEALS**

**SUMMARY OF AoC SPORT/ECFA - WALKOVERS, PROTESTS & APPEALS PROCESS FLOW DIAGRAM**

For further guidelines on the Competition Walkovers, Protests and Appeals procedures please visit <http://www.aocsport.co.uk/resources.aspx> by accessing the Competitions tab.





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