



THE WELSH RUGBY UNION NATIONAL LEAGUE RULES 2017/2018

1. Description:

The Competition shall be called:

- i) In respect of the Premier Division, “The Principality Premiership”; and
- ii) In respect of the Championship, Divisions 1 to 3 and Divisions 1 to 3 North, “The WRU National Leagues”.

2. Interpretation:

For the purposes of these National League Rules, the following terms have the meaning assigned to them:

- **ARTICLES** means the Articles of Association of the Union.
- **CLUB** means a Club that is a member of the Union only and does not include Affiliated Organisations (as defined in the Articles) or any other entity which may be admitted to membership of the Union.
- **DISCIPLINARY REGULATIONS** means the disciplinary regulations of the Union for Season 2017/2018.
- **DISTRICT MEMBER** shall have the definition given in the Articles.
- **PREMIER DIVISION CRITERIA** means the A Licence criteria for entry into and prerequisite to remaining in the Premier Division as set out in Annexure 1 to these National League Rules.
- **COMPETITIONS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** means the Committee appointed by the Board of Directors of the Union in accordance with the Articles which is a Sub Committee of the Community Sub Board.
- **UNION** means The Welsh Rugby Union Limited.

All other defined terms shall be interpreted in accordance with the Union’s Memorandum of Association and Articles.

3. Form

The League comprises 25 Divisions, which shall be formed as follows:

<i>Premier Division</i>	-	<i>Up to 16 Clubs</i>
<i>Championship</i>	-	<i>12 Clubs</i>
<i>Division 1 East</i>	-	<i>12 Clubs</i>
<i>Division 1 East Central</i>	-	<i>12 Clubs</i>
<i>Division 1 West Central</i>	-	<i>12 Clubs</i>
<i>Division 1 West</i>	-	<i>12 Clubs</i>



<i>Division 2 East</i>	-	<i>12 Clubs</i>
<i>Division 2 East Central</i>	-	<i>12 Clubs</i>
<i>Division 2 West Central</i>	-	<i>12 Clubs</i>
<i>Division 2 West</i>	-	<i>12 Clubs</i>
<i>Division 3 East A</i>	-	<i>12 Clubs</i>
<i>Division 3 East B</i>	-	<i>11 Clubs</i>
<i>Division 3 East C</i>	-	<i>11 Clubs</i>
<i>Division 3 East D</i>	-	<i>11 Clubs</i>
<i>Division 3 East Central A</i>	-	<i>12 Clubs</i>
<i>Division 3 East Central B</i>	-	<i>12 Clubs</i>
<i>Division 3 East Central C</i>	-	<i>11 Clubs</i>
<i>Division 3 West Central A</i>	-	<i>12 Clubs</i>
<i>Division 3 West Central B</i>	-	<i>12 Clubs</i>
<i>Division 3 West Central C</i>	-	<i>12 Clubs</i>
<i>Division 3 West A</i>	-	<i>11 Clubs</i>
<i>Division 3 West B</i>	-	<i>12 Clubs</i>
<i>Division 1 North</i>	-	<i>12 Clubs</i>
<i>Division 2 North</i>	-	<i>12 Clubs</i>
<i>Division 3 North</i>	-	<i>10 Clubs (to include 4 Second XV Teams)</i>

Note: the table below sets out the position regarding promotion and relegation at the end of the 2017/2018 Season.

<i>Division</i>	<i>Promotion and relegation at the end of 2017/2018 Season</i>	<i>Number of Clubs in Division as of start of 2018/2019 Season</i>
Premier	The top Club in the Division at the end of the 2017/2018 Season will be declared the Champion Club. Subject to each Club maintaining the necessary criteria to play in the Premier Division (see paragraph 2.1 of Annexure 1 to these National League Rules), no Club will be relegated from the Premier Division at the end of the 2017/2018 Season	Up to 16 Clubs.
Championship	The top Club in the Division at the end of the 2017/2018 Season will be declared the Champion Club. There will be no promotion to the Premier Division at the end of Season 2017/2018	Up to 12 Clubs.



	<p>The bottom two Clubs will be relegated and will be placed into Division 1 as determined by the Union.</p>	
<p>Divisions 1 East, 1 East Central, 1 West Central and 1 West</p>	<p>The top Club in each of Divisions 1 East, 1 East Central, 1 West Central and 1 West will enter a playoff system to determine which two Division 1 Clubs will be promoted to the Championship.</p> <p>The playoff system will be played over two rounds, home (Match 1) and away (Match 2).</p> <p>Playoff 1 – Winners of Div 1 East v Div 1 East Central.</p> <p>Playoff 2 – Winners of Div 1 West v Div 1 West Central.</p> <p>Match 2 – if the score is equal after 80 minutes then extra time of 10 minutes each way will be played.</p> <p>The winners of each playoff will be determined by the highest aggregate score of the two matches – Home and Away. If this is equal the winner will be determined by the number of tries, if this is equal it will be the number of converted tries. A kicking competition will be held in the same format as EPCR should the scores remain equal.</p> <p>The winners will then be promoted to the Championship Division for season 2018/2019.</p> <p>As regards relegation the bottom two clubs in each Division 1 will be relegated to Division 2.</p> <p>The Clubs remaining in Division 1 following both promotion to and relegation from the Championship and promotion from and relegation to Division 2</p>	<p>Up to 12 Clubs in each Division (up to 48 Clubs in total).</p>



	<p>will be placed within the appropriate Division 1 for the Season 18/19 based on the optimum 12 clubs participating in the Division in line with Clause 4 below.</p>	
<p>Divisions 2 East, 2 East Central, 2 West Central and 2 West</p>	<p>The top two Clubs in each of Divisions 2 East, 2 East Central, 2 West Central and 2 West will be promoted to Division 1 level at the end of the 2017/2018 Season.</p> <p>The bottom two Clubs in each of Divisions 2 East, 2 East Central, and 2 West Central at the end of the 2017/2018 Season will be relegated to Division 3A level.</p> <p>The bottom two Clubs in Division 2 West at the end of the 2017/2018 Season will be relegated to Division 3 West A or 3 West B, having taken geography into consideration. This may result in teams not affected by promotion or relegation still having to move across Divisions.</p>	<p>Up to 12 Clubs in each Division (up to 48 Clubs in total).</p>
<p>Divisions 3 East A, 3 East B, 3 East C and 3 East D</p>	<p>The top two Clubs in Division 3 East A will be promoted to Division 2 East at the end of the 2017/2018 Season.</p> <p>The top two Clubs in Division 3 East B will be promoted to Division 3 East A at the end of the 2017/2018 Season.</p> <p>The top two Clubs in Division 3 East C will be promoted to Division 3 East B at the end of the 2017/2018 Season.</p> <p>The top two Clubs in Division 3 East D will be promoted to Division 3 East C at the end of the 2017/2018 Season.</p> <p>The bottom two Clubs in Division 3 East A will move to Division 3 East B at the end of the 2017/2018 Season.</p>	<p>12 Clubs in Divisions 3 East A, and up to 11 Clubs in 3 East B, 3 East C and 3 East D (up to 45 Clubs in total).</p>



	<p>The bottom two Clubs in Division 3 East B will move to Division 3 East C at the end of the 2017/2018 Season.</p> <p>The bottom two Clubs in Division 3 East C will move to Division 3 East D at the end of the 2017/2018 Season.</p>	
<p>Divisions 3 East Central A, 3 East Central B and 3 East Central C</p>	<p>The top two Clubs in Division 3 East Central A will be promoted to Division 2 East Central at the end of the 2017/2018 Season.</p> <p>The top two Clubs in Division 3 East Central B will be promoted to Division 3 East Central A at the end of the 2017/2018 Season.</p> <p>The top two Clubs in Division 3 East Central C will be promoted to Division 3 East Central B at the end of the 2017/2018 Season.</p> <p>The bottom two Clubs in Division 3 East Central A will move to Division 3 East Central B at the end of the 2017/2018 Season.</p> <p>The bottom two Clubs in Division 3 East Central B will move to Division 3 East Central C at the end of the 2017/2018 Season.</p>	<p>12 Clubs in each of Division 3 East Central A and 3 East Central B and up to 11 Clubs in Division East Central C (up to 35 Clubs in total).</p>
<p>Division 3 West Central A, 3 West Central B and 3 West Central C</p>	<p>The top two Clubs in Division 3 West Central A will be promoted to Division 2 West Central at the end of the 2017/2018 Season.</p> <p>The top two Clubs in Division 3 West Central B will be promoted to Division 3 West Central A at the end of the 2017/2018 Season.</p> <p>The top two Clubs in Division 3 West Central C will be promoted to Division 3 West Central B at the end of the 2017/2018 Season.</p> <p>The bottom two Clubs in Division 3 West Central A will move to Division 3 West Central B at the end of the 2017/2018 Season.</p>	<p>Up to 12 Clubs in each Division (up to 36 Clubs in total).</p>



	The bottom two Clubs in Division 3 West Central B will move to Division 3 West Central C at the end of the 2017/2018 Season.	
Divisions 3 West A and 3 West B	The Champion Club in each of Divisions 3 West A and 3 West B will be promoted to Division 2 West at the end of the 2017/2018 Season.	11 Clubs in Division 3 West A and 12 Clubs in Division 3 West B (up to 23 Clubs in total).
Division 1 North	The Club that tops Division 1 North at the end of the 2017/2018 Season will be the Divisional Champion Club and will be declared the Champion Club of North Wales. The bottom two Clubs will be relegated to Division 2 North.	12 Clubs.
Division 2 North	The top two Clubs in the Division at the end of the 2017/2018 season will be promoted to Division 1 North. The bottom Club in Division 2 North will move to Division 3 North at the end of the 2017/2018 Season. Please refer to note below in relation to an exception to the relegation process.	12 Clubs.
Division 3 North	The top Club in the Division at the end of the 2017/2018 season will be promoted to Division 2 North Note: Should the top Club in Division 3 be a Second XV team whose First XV is in Division 2 at the end of 2017/2018 Season the Second XV Team will not be promoted. In this instance, there will be no promotion to or relegation from Division 2 North	10 Clubs (to include 4 Second XV Teams)

For the avoidance of doubt, subject to point 4 below, Clubs playing in the Division 3 Leagues will be placed by the Union within the relevant Division on a meritocracy basis, with the exception of Division 3 West whereby geography will also be considered.

In the event that a Club fails to complete its League programme, the Competitions Management Committee shall have the discretion to deal with that Club, as well as any consequential changes to the



National League, as it deems appropriate. Such discretion shall include, but is not limited to, relegating the Club concerned to lowest Division 3 and promoting such other Club(s) as it deems appropriate in the circumstances.

A Club which fails to complete its League programme and is sanctioned by the Competitions Management Committee shall have the right to appeal the decision of the Competitions Management Committee to an appeal body appointed by the Board of Directors in accordance with Rule 8i (ii) below.

4. Structure of League for the 2018/19 Season

The National League structure may be reviewed by the Union during the season in respect of the composition of any Division within the League whereby the number of participating Clubs has or is likely to reduce below the optimum number of 12 competing Clubs. The Union reserves the right to amend the National League structure for the 2018–2019 season following the completion of such review.

It is agreed that (subject to each Club maintaining the criteria set out at Annexure 1 to these National League Rules) there will be no relegation from the Premier Division at the end of Season 2017/2018.

5. Eligibility to Participate

a. Clubs

- (i) The Competition will be restricted to those Clubs who are full members of the Union, RGC1404 (North Wales Development Region) and Clubs which are District Members of the Union, and who conform to the provisions for the time being of the Union's Memorandum of Association and the Articles and which, taking part therein, must be represented by each Club's First XV with the exception of the four second XV teams in Division 3 North.
- (ii) In order to compete in the Premier Division, Clubs must comply with the Premier Division Criteria.
- (iii) In order to compete in leagues below the Premier Division, Clubs and District Members must comply with any licensing requirements promulgated by the Union from time to time.
- (iv) All Clubs have a responsibility to field a minimum of twelve players at the commencement of any National League match.

b. Players

- (i) No player may represent a Club in the National League unless he is a registered or dual registered member of that Club, he is on loan to that Club or a permit has been granted for him to play by his parent Club/Regional Team. With the exception of registered players from a Club who has withdrawn from the League. In this instance, the permit may be granted by the Union to play for a Club in the National League.
- (ii) A player has to be registered in Wales with a Club, a Regional Team or Regional Academy, a Development Region and its associated Academy, in addition to the National Academy, and his registration must be notified to the Union before he is eligible to play for a Club in the National League.



All players must be named on the team sheet submitted by the Club to the Match Official prior to the match (see the protocol for matches played in Wales as set out in the Union's Disciplinary Regulations). The Team sheets must also identify the tight head, loose head replacements. In addition, the Team sheets must identify the Head Coach of each team.

(iii)

The team sheet **must** identify any player(s) who is on permit, dual registration or on loan, together with their parent Club/Regional Team.

(iv) It is recommended that any player who has suffered a diagnosed concussion shall not participate in any match or training session for a minimum period of 19 days for adults (defined as any player aged 19 years and above as at 1 September of the relevant year) or 23 days for children or adolescents (defined as any player aged below 19 years as at 1 September of the relevant year) All players should be reviewed by a medical practitioner and should not return to training or playing until symptom free and having successfully completed the WRU graduated return to play programme. It is recommended that declarations of return to fitness to train and play be supported by a written medical practitioner's report. The WRU Concussion Guidance document is available online at wru.wales/medical

(v) Clubs are required to complete and sign a Statement of Truth (set out in the Player Transfer and Registration Regulations) in respect of the payment of players on an annual basis, as directed by the Union from time to time.

(vi) In relation to Division 3 North and the Second XV Teams participating in the National League. Other than in exceptional circumstances, any player who has played for the First XV of any Club for a total of 12 times, whether that be in the National League, National Cup, Plate or Bowl, will be precluded from participating in the Second XV Teams in the National League. For the avoidance of doubt this includes playing on permit and/or loan.

5.1.1 Subject to Rule 5.1.4, Premier Division Clubs and Championship Clubs who have been awarded an A Licence by the Union having met the Premier Division Criteria may register up to two non-Welsh qualified players (being players who at the date of registration are not qualified to take the field of play as a member of a team at senior level to represent Wales in accordance with World Rugby Regulation 8.1) who will at any one time be eligible to play for it in the National League (i.e. if one or both non-Welsh qualified player(s) leave the Club he/they may be replaced providing the number of non-Welsh qualified players at that Club does not exceed two). In the case of a professional or semi-professional player from outside the EC and who does not have EC workers' rights, a licence to employ the player must be obtained by the Club from the UK Border Agency. An application for a licence to employ a professional or semi-professional rugby player has to be supported by the Union. The Union will not support an application for a licence to employ a professional or semi-professional rugby player other than an application made by a Professional Region, a Development Region, a Premier Division Club or a Championship Club which has been awarded an A Licence having met the Premier Division Criteria. The numbers of non-Welsh qualified players which may be contracted by a Professional Region is governed by the Rugby Services Agreements between the Union and the Regional Organisations.

5.1.2 With the exception of those Championship Clubs that have obtained an A Licence, Clubs in the Championship Division through to Division 3 may register more than two non-Welsh qualified players, but no more than two overseas players (such players must provide documentary evidence to prove they have a right to reside in the UK and Clubs must confirm such players do



not receive any material benefit from playing Rugby Union). Subject to Rule 5.1.5, a Championship Club that has obtained an A Licence may register up to two non-Welsh qualified players who will at any one time be eligible to play for it in the National League (i.e. if one or both non-Welsh qualified player(s) leave the Club he/they may be replaced providing the number of non-Welsh qualified players at that Club does not exceed two) and Rule 5.1.1 shall apply to any such Championship Club accordingly.

- 5.1.3 For the avoidance of doubt, an overseas player is one who is not qualified to play for Wales at the date of registration and who cannot prove to the satisfaction of the Union that he is entitled to the rights granted under Title III of the EC Treaty or under the EEA or other European Agreement (i.e. a person who has European workers' rights).
- 5.1.4 **Any Premier Division Club** registering more than two non-Welsh qualified players will forfeit £15,000 from their Union distribution monies for every additional non-Welsh qualified registered player in the squad and will fail the A Licence Criteria to participate in the Premier Division and in turn will be in breach of the Premier Division Participation Agreement.
- 5.1.5 **Any Championship Club that has obtained an A Licence** registering more than two non-Welsh qualified players, **will forfeit £1,250** from their Union distribution monies for every additional non-Welsh qualified registered player in the squad and will fail to comply with the Premier Division Criteria and will forfeit its A Licence, resulting in the Club not being eligible for promotion to the Premier Division.
- 5.2. **Clubs in the Premier Division** which run only one senior team will be limited to registering up to 32 players who will be eligible to play for the Club in National League matches. Clubs in the Premier Division which run two or more senior teams, the second team playing at least 16 matches in a Season, will be allowed to register more than 32 players who will be eligible to play in the National League. Failure to fulfil 16 second team matches for Clubs that register more than 32 players may result in the Club being penalised.
- 5.3. A Player will be ineligible to play for a Club in any National League fixture if he transfers or is registered after 11:59 pm on 31 January 2018, unless such a player is:
- (i) a player registered with that Club's Youth team, who has attained the age of 18 and is subsequently registered as a senior player with that Club;
 - (ii) a player who is subject to a permanent residential relocation from another area where extensive travel (in excess of 100 miles round trip) precludes the player continuing to play for his former Club (applies to Clubs playing in the Championship that have not been awarded an A Licence and Clubs playing in Divisions 1–3 only). Before such a player may play, the player's registration must be sanctioned by the Competitions Management Committee; or
 - (iii) a player not previously registered with any other rugby Club. Before such a player may play, the player's registration must be sanctioned by the Competitions Management Committee.

Player Registration requests must be lodged with the Rugby Operations Department of the Union by 11:59 pm on 31 January 2018, in accordance with the Union's Player Registration and Transfer Regulations.

- 5.4. A player who transfers in the period between the end of the previous season and 11:59 pm on 31 January 2018 will be eligible to play for his new Club in National League matches provided that



the process has been completed in accordance with the Player Registration and Transfer Regulations.

5.5. **Player Loan scheme**

Details of the Player Loan scheme are outlined in Regulation 6 of the Player Registration and Transfer Regulations.

5.6. **Player Permits**

The Player Permit Scheme will operate as follows:

5.6.1 Subject to Rule 5.6.2, in any National League match:

- (i) **With the exception of Clubs in the Premier Division, a Club may play up to a maximum of four players in total on permit in a National League match.**
- (ii) **Clubs in the Premier Division may play up to a maximum of 23 players on permit in a National League match.**
- (iii) A player with a Regional Team may only play on permit for a Premier Division Club in a National League match.
- (iv) No overseas players (as defined in Rule 5.1.3) may play on permit unless that player is registered with a Regional Team and then he may only play for a Premier Division Club.
- (v) A player who is registered with a **Regional Academy** may play on permit for a Club in any Division. The permit may be granted only by an authorised representative of the Regional Academy and must be lodged with the Union’s Fixture and Competitions Manager.
- (vi) Permits may be obtained as stipulated in and subject to the restrictions contained in the following table:

Division	Clubs from where permits may be obtained
Premier Division	Regional Teams (no limit) Regional Academy (no limit) Premier Division Club (no limit) Championship and Divisions 1 to 3 (no limit) (OVERALL MAXIMUM OF 23 PERMIT PLAYERS PER MATCH) Registered Premier Division players will be allowed to permit down into Championship and Division 1 clubs only. With the exception of any Play Off matches.
Championship and Division 1	Regional Academy (max 4) Premier Division (max 4) Championship (max 4) Divisions 1 to 3 (max 4)* District Member clubs (max 4) (OVERALL MAXIMUM OF 4 PERMIT PLAYERS PER



	<p>MATCH)</p> <p>*Registered Championship players will be allowed to permit down into Division 1 and Division 2 clubs only. With the exception of any Play Off matches.</p> <p>Registered Division 1 players will be allowed to permit down into Division 2 and Division 3 clubs. With the exception of any Play Off matches.</p>
Divisions 2	<p>Regional Academy (max 4) Championship (max 4) Divisions 1 to 3 (max 4) District Member clubs (max 4) (OVERALL MAXIMUM OF 4 PERMIT PLAYERS PER MATCH)</p> <p>Registered Division 2 players will be allowed to permit down to Division 3 clubs. With the exception of any Play Off Matches.</p>
Division 3	<p>Regional Academy (max 4) Championship (max 4 – limited to the Club who held the previous registration) Divisions 1 to 3 (max 4) District Member clubs (max 4) (OVERALL MAXIMUM OF 4 PERMIT PLAYERS PER MATCH)</p> <p>Registered Division 2 players will be allowed to permit down to Division 3 clubs. With the exception of any Play Off Matches.</p>

(vii) A permit must be sought for each match in which a player plays and such permit may be granted for a match at any time during the season subject to the conditions set out in Regulation 7 of the Player Registration and Transfer Regulations.

(viii) Team sheets submitted to the match official prior to the start of a match must identify players on permit, loan or dual registration and their parent Club/Regional Team. The Team sheets must also identify the tight head, loose head replacements. In addition, the Team sheets must identify the Head Coach of each team.

5.6.2 No player registered to a Regional Organisation or a Regional Academy shall be allowed to play in a play-off match for a Premier Division Club on permit unless:

- (i) that player has played for that Premier Division Club at least five times (at least 45 minutes on the field in each match) in National League matches during the season; or
- (ii) the Competitions Management Committee has, if it is satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances, granted specific permission for the player to play in the play-off match.



5.7 Dual Registration scheme

Details of the Dual Registration scheme are set out in Regulation 8 of the Player Registration and Transfer Regulations.

5.8 Replacements

In the Premier Division up to eight replacements may be named for any National League match provided that, of the 23 named players and replacements, there must be six suitably trained and experienced players who can play in the front row to ensure that on the first occasion that a replacement hooker is required and on the first occasion that a replacement tight-head prop forward and on the first occasion that a replacement loose-head prop is required, the team can continue to play safely with contested scrums.

In the Championship, **up to five replacements may be named for any National League match provided that, of the 20 named players and replacements, there must be five suitably trained and experienced players who can play in the front row.** This will include Two Hookers and three (3) prop forwards. The replacement prop must be either a Tight Head or Loose Head or a player capable of playing on both Heads. This will ensure that on the first occasion that a replacement hooker is required the game can continue safely with contested scrums. If a Tight Head were to be required and a team only has a Loose Head named as a Front Row replacement and he/she is not trained or able to play in that position then uncontested scrums will be ordered by the referee. Similarly, if a Loose Head were to be required and a team only had a Tight Head named as a Front Row replacement and he/she is not trained or able to play in that position then again uncontested scrums will be ordered by the referee.

If they are available, a team must have three (3) front row players in the front row at all times in an uncontested scrum, only when there is no available front row replacement or substitute is any other player permitted to play in the front row Law 3.6.e applies

In Divisions 1 to 3 and Division 1 to 3 North **no more than five replacements may be named. If a Club does name five replacements there must be five players who are suitably trained and experienced who can play in the front row.** This will include Two Hookers and three (3) prop forwards. The replacement prop **MUST** be either a Tight Head or Loose Head or a player capable of playing on both Heads. This will ensure that on the first occasion that a replacement hooker is required the game can continue safely with contested scrums. If a Tight Head were to be required and a team only has a Loose Head named as a Front Row replacement and he/she is not trained or able to play in that position then uncontested scrums will be ordered by the referee. Similarly, if a Loose Head were to be required and a team only had a Tight Head named as a Front Row replacement and he/she is not trained or able to play in that position then again uncontested scrums will be ordered by the referee.

If they are available, a team must have three (3) front row players in the front row at all times in an uncontested scrum, only when there is no available front row replacement or substitute is any other player permitted to play in the front row Law 3.6.e applies

A Club may play without any named replacements. If a Club names 15 players only there is no need to name more than three suitably trained and experienced front row players.

For clarification, the Laws of the Game (3.5) state:



Each player in the front row and any potential replacement(s) must be suitably trained and experienced.

When 16, 17 or 18 players are nominated in a team there must be four (4) players who can play in the front row.

When 19, 20, 21 or 22 players are nominated in a team there must be five (5) players who can play in the front row to ensure that on the first occasion that a replacement hooker is required and, on the first occasion that a replacement prop forward is required, the team can continue to play safely with contested scrums. When 19 Or 20 players are nominated in a team there must be five (5) players who can play in the front row (two (2) Hookers and three (3) Prop Forwards) as outlined above)

For the Premier Division only. As provided above, when 23 players are nominated in a team there must be six players who can play in the front row to ensure that on the first occasion that a replacement hooker is required and on the first occasion that a replacement tight-head prop forward and on the first occasion that a replacement loose-head prop is required, the team can continue to play safely with contested scrums.

Where uncontested scrums are ordered as a result of there being no suitably trained and experienced front row players for any reason, the team concerned shall not be entitled to replace the player whose departure caused the uncontested scrums. Law 3.6.d applies.

The replacement of a front row forward must come from suitably trained and experienced players who started the match or from the nominated replacements.

If after a front row player has been sent off or during the time a front row player is temporarily suspended, and there are no further front row players available from the nominated team, then uncontested scrums will be ordered. It is not the responsibility of the match official to determine the suitability of trained front row replacements nor their availability, as this is a team responsibility.

To avoid confusion and to make everyone aware of the rules relating to the number of substitutes that can be used, please see the following examples, relating to World Rugby Law 3 (Number of Players) and these National League Rules.

- (a) If Team A has only fifteen players (or less) available and it has three suitably trained front row forwards, then the match will start with contested scrums.
- (b) If Team A has fifteen players (or less) and does not have three suitably trained players to play in the front row, then the match will start with uncontested scrums. Team A will not have any replacements.
- (c) If Team A has only three suitably trained front row forwards and Team B has four suitably trained front row forwards, then the match will start with contested scrums. Team A is not entitled to any substitutes, but Team B will be able to have two additional replacements (i.e. a total of three replacements).
- (d) If Team A has less than three suitably trained front row forwards and Team B has five suitably trained front row forwards, either on the field or as replacements, then Team A is not entitled to any substitutes and Team B will be entitled to the full complement of replacements. The match will start with uncontested scrums.



In all cases, in relation to Team B, for it to have the full benefit of its replacements, it must start with the required number of suitably trained front row players and also the ability of replacing a front row forward with a nominated suitably trained front row replacement.

All suitably trained front row players must be highlighted on the official team sheet prior to the match.

If a match goes to uncontested scrums the relevant details are to be forwarded by the Match Official to the Union's Fixture and Competitions Manager (see Rule 8b below).

AT ALL TIMES SAFETY IS PARAMOUNT.

In relation to uncontested scrums, World Rugby Law 20.13 shall apply. The Law allows the Number 8 to pick up from the base of the scrum.

6. Entry Conditions

All Clubs participating in the National League shall comply with:

- a. these National League Rules;
- b. the Union's Memorandum of Association and the Articles;
- c. the Regulations and Resolutions of the Board of Directors of the Union;
- d. the World Rugby Bye Laws, Resolutions and Regulations relating to the Game, and
- e. the Laws of the Game.

7. Responsibility for Organisation

All matches in every Division of the National League will be under the control of the Union. The Competitions Management Committee will deal with all matters relating to every Division of the National League.

8. General Rules (refer to attached Guidance Document)

- a. All National League matches must be played and each Club must complete its National League programme. In the event that a National League match is not played the matter will be reported to the Competitions Management Committee who will establish why the match was not played. **Where a match does not take place, it is the responsibility of the Honorary Secretary of each Club to notify the Union's Fixture and Competitions Manager, in writing, within four working days of the reason(s) for the postponement (with supporting evidence if necessary).** If the Competitions Management Committee is not satisfied with the explanation of the Club or Clubs concerned it may apply whatever sanction it deems appropriate in its absolute discretion. Sanctions available to the Competitions Management Committee include but are not limited to the deduction of League points, the imposition of a fine, expunging the Club's League points total and/or expulsion from the National League. If a Club is expelled or withdraws from the National League, the Competitions Management Committee have the discretion to



apply criteria to the Club prior to accepting its re-entry into the National League in future seasons.

b. **Passive scrums**

i) **For all divisions other than the Premier Division**

No match may be postponed because of the lack of suitably trained/experienced front row forwards. The match must be played on the due date with uncontested scrums. If prior to any match a Club becomes aware that it will be unable to field for that match a sufficient number of suitably trained/experienced front row forwards it shall, as soon as reasonably practicable, notify the opposing club and match officials that it will elect to take uncontested scrums during the match. Following the match, the Competitions Management Committee may consider the conduct of the Club and the reason for uncontested scrums and whether any sanction should be applied. The Competitions Management Committee may apply any sanction it deems appropriate if it is not satisfied with the Club's explanation.

ii) **For the Premier Division**

If a Club postpones a match because of the lack of suitably trained/experienced front row forwards, the Competitions Management Committee may consider the reasons for the postponement. It shall be a matter for the Club which caused the match to be postponed to justify its decision. The Competitions Management Committee may apply any sanction it deems appropriate if it is not satisfied with the Club's explanation.

If during the course of a match a team elects to take uncontested scrums, it must continue the match with 14 men. For the avoidance of doubt this will apply regardless of whether the team consists of 22 or 23 men.

iii) **For all Divisions**

If during the course of a match a team elects to take uncontested scrums, the matter will be reported to the Competitions Management Committee. The Competitions Management Committee may consider why passive scrums were necessary during that match. It shall be a matter for the Club which opted for uncontested scrums to explain to the Competitions Management Committee why it did so. The Competitions Management Committee may apply any sanction it deems appropriate if it is not satisfied with the Club's explanation.

If during the course of a match a team elects to take uncontested scrums, it must continue to have 8 players committed to each scrum. In addition, only the player in the scrum half position may play the ball from the scrum. For the avoidance of doubt the ball may not be played by the player in number 8 position within the scrum.

c. **Declaration of winners.** Winners of National League matches will be teams which have scored the greater number of points at the end of each match. For the avoidance of doubt and in compliance with the Laws of the Game (Law 6.A.12), the Referee will be



the final arbiter as to the score of each National League match. National League points shall be awarded as follows:

Win	-	4 points
Draw	-	2 points
Defeat	-	0 points
Bonus Points	-	1 point for a team scoring 4 or more tries
		1 point for a team losing by 7 points or less

- d. **National League placings** will be decided on the basis of League points gained during the season. Where teams have gained equal numbers of League points, the team with the most wins shall be given preference. If the number of wins is equal then the Club having recorded the most tries in the Season shall be given preference. If the number of tries is equal the points 'for' shall be divided by the points 'against' and the team with the highest factor shall be declared to have the better record.
- e. **Duration of play** – 80 minutes each match (40 minutes each half) plus any time permitted by the Match Official for delays (Laws of the Game – Law 5). At half time, an interval of not more than 10 minutes is allowed.
- f. **Fixture Arrangements.** National League matches must be played on the dates allocated unless otherwise previously agreed by the Competitions Management Committee. These will be decided by the Competitions Management Committee and circulated to Clubs as soon as practicable. The match will take place on the home Club's first pitch or on a suitable alternative.
- g. **Notification of Results.** The appointed Match Official will notify the Union of the result of each match by submitting the match result card electronically within 24 hours of the match taking place. The appointed Match Official will also submit by post team lists, which must be completed by officials from each team and handed to the match official prior to the kick off.
- h. **Postponed, rearranged and abandoned matches**
- (i) Postponed or Rearranged Matches

National League matches must be played on the allocated dates unless a match is postponed because of ground or weather conditions or the Clubs concerned have mutually agreed to the postponement and have received the prior consent of the Union to its rearrangement. Consent to postpone fixtures where the Clubs concerned have mutually agreed to the postponement can be granted by the Union 48 hours prior to the fixture. However, consent to postpone fixtures in other such circumstances may not be given if sought less than seven days prior to the fixture. Where both Clubs have received the consent of the Union to postpone a fixture, then that fixture must be played, where practicable, within 21 days of the postponement. If the Clubs cannot agree on an alternative date within 14 days, the Union will determine the date of the rearranged fixture.



If the ground of the home Club is not fit because of weather or ground conditions, or is unavailable for any other reason and the away fixture has not yet been played, Clubs should endeavour to switch the venue to the Away Club so that the fixture is played on that date.

Both Clubs must notify the Union's Fixture and Competitions Manager, in writing, of the new fixture date at least four working days prior to the match being played. This timeline may be reduced in exceptional circumstances subject to the agreement of both Clubs and the availability of a suitably qualified referee.

Each Club must notify the Fixture and Competitions Manager in writing of the postponement or rearrangement of any fixture. If this written notification is not received the match will be deemed to be an unfulfilled fixture and the appropriate sanctions may be applied.

Any dispute in respect of such cancellation, postponement or rearrangement shall be referred to the Competitions Management Committee for determination.

When ground or weather conditions demand, and if requested to do so, an opportunity **must** be given to an official representative of the visiting Club, a Union Match Official living locally of similar standing to the appointed Match Official or an Officer of the Union to view the situation in sufficient time to allow matches to be postponed to prevent unnecessary travelling. Clubs should undertake ground inspections no earlier than three hours before the scheduled kick off time except in cases where an earlier inspection is required to prevent an Away Club undertaking a long journey or in cases where the Match Official is travelling from a long distance. **Should the Clubs disagree on the condition of the ground, the match will not be played.** The Match Official appointed by the Union will report on the matter and that report will be considered by the Competitions Management Committee.

(ii) Abandoned Matches

All matches must be played to full time. The Match Official is to be the sole judge of the amount of time played. If a match is abandoned then both Clubs' Honorary Secretaries must separately notify the Union of the fact in writing no later than 48 hours following the abandonment.

If both Clubs agree then the Competitions Management Committee may permit the score, at the time of the abandonment, to stand.

Where such an abandoned match is to be replayed, the match will be played at the original venue or at a venue determined by the home Club. Any National League fixture which has been abandoned must be rearranged by the Clubs and the date of the rearrangement notified to the Union's Fixture and Competitions Manager no later than 21 days of the original date. If details of the rearrangement are not supplied by the due date then the Union will determine the date on which the rearranged fixture will be played. Both Clubs must notify the Union's Fixture and Competitions Manager in writing, of the



new fixture date no later than four working days prior to the match being played. This timeline may be reduced in exceptional circumstances, subject to the mutual agreement of both Clubs and the availability of a suitably qualified referee.

i. Protests and Disputes

- (i) Save for matters which fall to be determined in accordance with the Union's Disciplinary Regulations, the Competition Management Committee shall be responsible for and have discretion in dealing with any protest or dispute arising out of the National League or these National League Rules (which shall include those relating to the application of the Premier Division Criteria). Any such protest or dispute must be made by a Club in writing to the Union's Administration Manager and accompanied by a fee of £100 which may or may not be refunded. No protest or dispute relating to matches played in the Competition will be considered if made more than **10 days** after the end of the relevant match has taken place. The Competitions Management Committee shall have discretion to investigate any breach of these National League Rules at any time and to take such action as it shall deem appropriate.
- (ii) Any Club that wishes to appeal a decision of the Competitions Management Committee made pursuant to these National League Rules may do so to an appeal body appointed by the Board of Directors, which may include the appointment of a legally qualified independent Chairman, provided that the Club's appeal is lodged in writing, with the Union's Administration Manager no later than 14 days of the Competitions Management Committee's decision being notified to it, accompanied by a fee of £100 which may or may not be returned. If the decision is given orally, the period of 14 days shall run from the date of the oral decision but otherwise shall run from the date of receipt of the decision in writing by the Honorary Secretary of the Club.
- (iii) In carrying out their functions pursuant to these National League Rules, the Competitions Management Committee and any appeal body appointed by the Board of Directors of the Union pursuant to Rule 8i(ii) shall have the power to regulate their own procedure in respect of the matters which fall to be considered by them.
- (iv) It should be borne in mind that the bodies dealing with any protest or dispute, to include an appeal body appointed by the Board of Directors, are not courts of law and are disciplinary, rather than arbitral, bodies. A member of the Competitions Management Committee will be entitled to attend any appeal to provide the rationale for the original decision taken. The representative of the Competitions Management Committee will not be a voting member at the appeal.

j. Penalties

- (i) The Competitions Management Committee may apply any appropriate sanction it deems fit to any Club without limitation, found to be in default, or failing to comply with these National League Rules.



- (ii) Where any Club has been found to have included an ineligible player (that is, a player who is not registered with a Club or a player whose name does not appear on the team sheet submitted by the Club in a National League match), the Competitions Management Committee shall have the power to penalise the offending Club further by the loss of League points and scores it may have accrued during the match, and expunge the result from the League table.

Before action is taken under Rules j(i) or (ii), the Club will be offered the benefits of the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Union.

- (iii) An official representative of both home and visiting teams will hand to the Match Official a team and replacement sheet prior to the kick off. Only those players named on this list will be eligible to play in the match. An official representative of each Club has the right to examine their opponent's team list before and immediately after the match. A Club wishing to make an objection will bring it to the notice of the Match Official who will record the same. The Club raising the objection will bring it to the notice of the Union's Administration Manager no later than 10 days of the end of the relevant match taking place, accompanied by a fee of £100 which may, or may not be returned.

k. Match Officials

Match Officials shall be appointed by the Union for all National League matches.

l. Kick Off

The kick off time for National League matches shall be in accordance with the Union's Resolution 15, however, it is recommended that it is standardised at 2.30pm for Saturday matches for the Championship and Divisions 1 to 3 and Divisions 1 to 3 North. Clubs may agree a different kick-off time to that specified by the Union, and shall request the Union's prior approval of the same which will usually be no later than seven days prior to the date of the relevant match. Where League fixtures are scheduled to be played on the day of an international rugby union match in which the Senior Men's Welsh National Team is participating, Clubs may agree a different kick-off time to that specified by the Union and shall request the Union's prior approval of the same which will usually be no later than seven days prior to the date of the relevant match.

For Premier Division matches, kick off times and days on which the matches shall be played will be determined by the Union and shall be notified to Premier Division Clubs by the Union.

For Premier Division matches, the rounds allocated to the British & Irish Cup Competition will be classified as free weekends. No match, including postponed, abandoned or rearranged matches will be staged on these weekends unless the express authority of the Competitions Management Committee has been granted following a written application submitted by both Clubs.

During the 2017-2018 season, there are League matches scheduled to take place on the same weekends as the latter stages of the British & Irish Cup. However, should a Regional Premiership Select Team progress to the latter stages of the competition, the League matches for Premier Division clubs in the successful regional area will be required to reschedule their League match to an alternative weekend.



m. Financial Distribution

No prize money shall be awarded to Divisional winners or runners up.

n. Competitions Management Committee of the WRU

The Competitions Management Committee has the absolute discretion to adapt any area contained within these regulations to ensure the integrity of the competition is maintained and the competition is concluded in a clear, fair and equitable manner.

The Competitions Management Committee has the absolute discretion to suspend any sanction contained within these League rules should they deem is necessary and appropriate.



Annexure 1

Criteria for Entry and Participation in the Premier Division with effect from August 2017.

2017/2018 season

1.1 In the 2017/2018 season, the Premier Division shall comprise the following Clubs:

Aberavon RFC
Bargoed RFC
Bedwas RFC
Bridgend RFC
Cardiff RFC
Carmarthen Quins RFC
Cross Keys RFC
Ebbw Vale RFC
Llandovery RFC
Llanelli RFC
Merthyr RFC
Neath RFC
Newport RFC
Pontypridd RFC
RGC 1404
Swansea RFC

1.2 In addition to the penalties for non-compliance set out in Appendix A hereto, if during the course of the 2017/2018 season a Club in the Premier Division fails to maintain the criteria that allowed it entry to the Premier Division in that season that Club will not receive:

- (a) funding from the Union; nor
- (b) its allocation of tickets for rugby International matches,

from the time that the Club fails to satisfy the Entry/Participation criteria to the Premier Division until such time as the Club again satisfies that criteria in the case of (a) and then on a pro rata basis and in the case of (b) if the criteria is not satisfied by 31 December 2017 for all matches in the Six Nations Championship in 2018.

2018/2019 season

2.1 To play in the Premier Division in the season 2018/2019 a Club that is participating in the Premier Division in the 2017/2018 Season must have applied for and met the criteria to hold an A Licence by 31 August 2017 and be a party to the Premiership Participation Agreement. The A Licence criteria is set out in Appendix A hereto.

2.2 Clubs wishing to apply for an A Licence will be required to complete and sign a Statement of Truth (found at Appendix B hereto). The Union is entitled to rely on the information provided by each Club in its Statement of Truth.

2.3 All inspections of facilities by the Union's Rugby Operations Department will be completed by 31 August 2017 in respect of Clubs that are participating in the Premier Division in the 2017/2018



- Season. No inspections of such Clubs will be undertaken by the Union's Rugby Operations Department after 31 August 2017, unless the Competitions Management Committee so determines (either following an appeal by a Club, or of its own motion).
- 2.4 All inspections of facilities by the Union's Rugby Operations Department will be completed by 18 December 2017 in respect of Clubs that are participating in the Championship in the 2017/2018 Season and who have notified the Union that they intend to apply for an A Licence in accordance with Paragraph 2.2 above. No inspections of such Clubs will be undertaken by the Union's Rugby Operations Department after 18 December 2017, unless the Competitions Management Committee so determines (either following an appeal by a Club, or of its own motion).
- 2.5 Works which have not been completed by 31 August 2017 by Clubs that are participating in the Premier Division in the 2017/2018 Season shall not be considered by the Union's Rugby Operations Department in determining whether or not the criteria for an A Licence has been met, unless the Competitions Management Committee so determines (either following an appeal by a Club or of its own motion).
- 2.6 Works which have not been completed by 18 December 2017 by Clubs that are participating in the Championship in the 2017/2018 Season shall not be considered by the Union's Rugby Operations Department in determining whether or not the criteria for an A Licence has been met, unless the Competitions Management Committee so determines (either following an appeal by a Club or of its own motion).



2017/18 A Licence Criteria
The Welsh Rugby Union Limited

The Premier Division is fundamental to the sustainability and development of the game in Wales and forms a key platform in the performance and development pathway. The Division has played a proactive role in ensuring that the gap between the amateur and professional game has been bridged to the highest possible standard, allowing players and spectators the opportunity to consistently enjoy high quality rugby.

Definition of Licences:

A Licence: Those Clubs that have achieved the higher standard both on and off the field. Mandatory for entry/participation in the Premier Division.

Penalties for non-compliance:

In the event that a Club is found not to be adhering to the Premier Division Criteria, the Competitions Management Committee shall afford it an opportunity to rectify the fault. If the Club does not rectify the fault within the time period set by the Competitions Management Committee, the Competitions Management Committee shall have the discretion to deal with that Club, as well as any consequential changes to the National League, as it deems appropriate. Such discretion shall include, but is not limited to, relegating the Club concerned to the Championship and promoting such other Club(s) as it deems appropriate in the circumstances.

SECTION 1: Rugby Performance and Development

Criteria Standard:

Clubs aspiring to achieve the A Licence will have a Head Coach in place who has successfully completed the Union's Level 4 coaching qualification (or equivalent) as a minimum. In addition, Head Coaches must have registered their interest and intention to enrol on the Level 5/Fellowship by the criteria deadline.

A Licence Requirements:

Rugby Performance & Development Manual

The Union has implemented the introduction of the Rugby Performance & Development Manual which contains all policies and procedures to be implemented by the club in relation to protocols in the following areas:

- Management
- Coaching
- Analysis
- Medical and Injury prevention – to include the provision of Match Day Doctors at ALL fixtures.
- Conditioning and Nutrition
- The retention and development of players

Rugby Performance & Development Annual Records



With support from the Union throughout the process, all licensed clubs will have in place records that are to be regularly updated by the Rugby Performance Department and monitored by external assessors, to ensure the continued development and welfare of individuals involved with the Club. The records will include the following:

- Current Management structure, role descriptions and clearly defined reporting lines
- Key Performance Indicators for the 1st XV team management, coaching and support staff to include CPD programmes
- Coaching plans
- Match analysis records
- Injury & recovery records
- Conditioning Plans
- Fitness test results
- Individual Player Development Plans which will include relevant match limits, for any players selected to one of the Union's International Pathway Teams
- Records of attendance and qualifications achieved at formal and informal coaching courses and seminars
- Player retention and development plans

Monitoring Procedures:

The Annual record keeping is an ongoing process that will require continued monitoring. The general set up and up-keep will be monitored by the Rugby Operations Department, with regular ad-hoc visits to Clubs throughout the season to ensure information is being obtained and completed.

In addition, relevant personnel from the Rugby Performance Department may monitor and analyse records, to ensure they are of benefit to the Club and other key stakeholders (Regions, the Union).

There will be 2 key monitoring times, plus ad-hoc reviews.

Stakeholder Support:

Throughout the season the Union will continue to hold a variety of seminars relevant to the requirements set out in the criteria i.e. coaching, match officials, and the links between the disciplines, as well as analysis, injury prevention. Attendance at the seminars is compulsory.

In addition, 1st XV squad members of each Premier Division Club may be required to undertake fitness tests at the NCE, carried out by Union personnel (at no additional expense to the Clubs). Specific advice and development techniques will then be provided based on the individual results.

The Regions will be required to provide ongoing support to Premier Division Clubs in line with the Rugby Services Agreement. By way of example, this is to include, but not be limited to, guidance in relation to coaching, selection, permitting of players and such related advice in line with the Union's Licence Scheme.

The Premier Division Clubs are to accept and maximise the support provided by the Regions in line with the Premiership Participation Agreement and the Rugby Services Agreement.

Referees:

The Union will allocate each Premier Division Club a Level 3 Referee with a Division 1 or Premier Division grade, which they are obliged to accept. The allocated referee will be responsible for the dissemination of information relating to the laws of the game and the up-skilling of players/coaches understanding and interpretation.



Player Pathway:

Clubs will be required to provide details of all teams run by the Club including Youth, U16's and below. Where Clubs do not currently run Youth and Junior teams, they are required to evidence a clear pathway for players from associated feeder clubs.

Premier Division Clubs that do not run Youth or Junior teams will only be allowed to develop such teams in accordance with the Union's regulations for such teams.

Section 2: FACILITIES

Club Requirements:

Security of Tenure:

The club should own its own ground, or provide written proof of security of tenure for a rolling period of 5 years from August 2017 or from their date of entry into the Premier Division, whichever is later.

Spectator Facilities:

- Each club will need to provide a safety management plan covering areas such as crowd safety, emergency contingency plans and stewarding plans. Venues in excess of 10,000 capacity will be required to provide a ground safety certificate.
- All spectator facilities are to be permanently enclosed.
- A grandstand with a minimum 501 capacity, which can be provided within a maximum of two areas.
- Covered terracing for a minimum capacity of 1,000 spectators.

Where uncovered terracing is to be considered in addition to the above, there must be a minimum capacity of 1,000.

- On-site parking for at least 200 vehicles, plus team buses, or an agreement must be in place for use of local parking facilities.
- Disabled facilities, including dedicated viewing areas, car parking and toilet facilities.
- Spectator toilets (ratio to attendance).
- Spectator catering facilities, both inside and outside the Clubhouse.
- Clear, audible and competent PA system to all parts of the ground for spectator safety and enjoyment.
- Visible scoreboard

General Club Facilities:

- Guaranteed clubhouse and/or facilities complete with dedicated team dining area for all scheduled fixtures.
- Access to the ground for Emergency Services and broadcasters' access as and when required.



Press, Media & Communication Requirements:

Floodlighting is to be provided to a minimum lux capacity of 300. For those clubs who intend to be assessed for the A Licence, the ability to increase their lux capacity to 500 must be available.

- Television gantry for accommodating television cameras and analysis personnel,
- Designated Press area to include, adequate power points, radio points and ISDN lines or equivalent.
- Access to relevant areas to undertake pre and post-match TV, radio and press interviews.
- High quality match day programme.
- Club website updated regularly which includes directions to the ground and relevant news and information about the club.
- The ability to comply with the electronic transfer of information between clubs, themselves and the Union. This will include, but not be limited to email, fax, telephone/answer phone.
- Dedicated match day hotline, with details of cancellations, team changes, etc.

Rugby Performance and Development Requirements:

General Rugby Facilities:

- Even, full size playing field that obtains/maintains the standard as set in the individual club benchmarking process undertaken in the off season inspection.
- Floodlighting to be available for Club games and training sessions as required.
- Separate medical, physiotherapy & drug testing area, suitably equipped & staffed by qualified personnel at the club ground.

Training Facilities:

- A dedicated Team Room, complete with relevant resources to hold briefings, meetings and undertake analysis.
- Guaranteed access to training facilities, which may include an 'all weather' pitch or access to a training pitch away from the main field of play between October and March, and a general training pitch for the duration of the season.
- Access to a gym, which includes a conditioning area.
- An appropriate area within the Club, suitable for pre-hab (injury prevention) work with the players.
- Maintained level of equipment. To include as a minimum, scrummage machines, 10 tackle shields, 10 tackle bags, 10 tackle suits, 5 x ladders, 15 reversible bibs, balls (Gilbert), cones and poles

Match Day Facilities:

- Dedicated area for both home and away Coaching Staff during play on match days.



- Separate changing facilities at the ground suitable for up to five individuals including a minimum of two showers for referees. Additionally, the club must have secure on site parking and a Referee Liaison Officer in place.
- Separate changing facilities for up to 30 members of both the home and away teams at the Club ground.
- Separate analysis gantry/area must be available if TV gantry is being utilised by broadcasters to the maximum capacity set by the Club's Health and Safety personnel.
- Clearly defined and managed technical areas.

Section 3: Administration and Finance

- A Club Management committee with written evidence of clearly defined individual roles and responsibilities.
- Written delegated authority in relation to individuals who attend Premier Division meetings and are required to vote in relation to matters pertaining to the Premier Division.
- A management flow chart for the whole club structure.
- A club constitution.
- An annual operating budget, agreed prior to the commencement of the Season and ring fenced for the sole operation of the Premier Division club.
- A business plan, including cash flow forecasts, for a five year period on confirmation from the Union of its projected funding level for those five years.
- A capital expenditure plan for a corresponding period of five years, Clubs must provide a clear audit trail for such disbursements.
- An agreed repayment plan for all outstanding loans.
- A schedule of current assets and liabilities in line with the Club's audited accounts.
- A sample standard contract and accompanying schedule of all employee contracts including terms and remuneration.
- Compulsory audit of Club accounts accompanied by a signed copy of the previous year's audited accounts.
- Sufficient insurance cover, including club (Public Liability), player and coaching risks in accordance with World Rugby Regulations 23 and 9.
- In line with the Union's policy, clubs are to appoint a Safeguarding Officer.

Section 4: Regulatory Compliance

- Compliance with Union and World Rugby rules and regulations and any World Rugby trial in operation.



Specifically, for Premier Division Clubs, compliance with National League Rule 5.1.1 which provides that, subject to National League Rule 5.1.4, Premier Division Clubs may register up to 2 non-Welsh qualified players who will at any one time be eligible to play for it in the National League (i.e. if one or both non-Welsh qualified player(s) leave the Club he/ they may be replaced providing the number of non-Welsh qualified players at that Club does not exceed 2).

For the avoidance of doubt, on obtaining an A Licence, a Championship Club must comply with National League Rule 5.1.2 which provides that, subject to National League Rule 5.1.5, such Championship Clubs may register up to 2 non-Welsh qualified players who will at any one time be eligible to play for it in the National League (i.e. if one or both non-Welsh qualified player(s) leave the Club he/ they may be replaced providing the number of non-Welsh qualified players at that Club does not exceed 2).

- Compliance with the regulations and/or participation requirements of any other competition that Premier Division Clubs participate in that is not organised by the Union.
- Specific compliance with the Union's Player Registration and Transfer Regulations.

Adherence to the Union's commercial contracts that have specific regard for clubs within the Premier Division.



STATEMENT OF TRUTH & DECLARATION OF INTENT FOR SEASON 2017/2018

By this document, which we have executed as a Deed, we [] on behalf of [] in our capacity as [] hereby confirm, warrant, represent and undertake that:

1. all of the information which has been provided to The Welsh Rugby Union Limited prior to the date hereof on behalf of [] in connection with the Criteria for entry to the WRU Premier Division is true and accurate in all respects; and or
2. all of the information which will hereafter be provided to The Welsh Rugby Union Limited on behalf of [] in connection with the Criteria for entry to the WRU Premier Division and all subsequent seasons will be true and accurate in all respects.

In addition, we [] on behalf of [] in our capacity as [] hereby declare that it is the club's intention to be assessed under the A Licence Criteria, at the enhanced standard which is to be met in all areas.

Executed as a Deed this [] day of [] 2017

Executed as a Deed
by []
whose signature is here subscribed
in the presence of:

.....
Witness

Executed as a Deed
by []
whose signature is here subscribed
in the presence of:

.....
Witness

Executed as a Deed
by []
whose signature is here subscribed
in the presence of:



.....
Witness



National League Competition Format Premier Division

The format of the National League Competition for the Premier Division will change from 2017-2018 onwards.

The new format will see the season split into two blocks.

Block 1

Block 1 will see the League split into an East and West Division. Each Division will contain 8 Clubs who will play each other home and away over a fourteen-week period.

East Division

Bargoed RFC
Bedwas RFC
Cardiff RFC
Ebbw Vale RFC
Newport RFC
Pontypridd RFC
Cross Keys RFC
Merthyr RFC

West Division

Carmarthen Quins RFC
Swansea RFC
Llanelli RFC
RGC 1404
Llandovery RFC
Bridgend RFC
Aberavon RFC
Neath RFC

At the end of Block 1 Clubs will be allocated points based on their placing in the League table as follows:-

East Division

1st place 8 points
2nd place 7 points
3rd place 6 points
4th place 5 points
5th place 4 points
6th place 3 points
7th place 2 points
8th place 1 point

West Division

1st place 8 points
2nd place 7 points
3rd place 6 points
4th place 5 points
5th place 4 points
6th place 3 points
7th place 2 points
8th place 1 point

The two Divisions will then be merged back together ahead of Block 2.

Block 2 – Tier 2

Block 2 will see 15 weekends played on a standard League format with all 16 teams playing one another on a home OR away basis.

The run of fixtures will be the reverse of the 2016-2017 Block 1 fixtures.

The winner will be the top Club in the Division at the end of the 2017/2018 Season will be declared the Champion Club.

