



RFUW Clustering Guide '09/10

Mission Statement:

Clusters are to be formed for the purpose of facilitating the competitive playing and development of rugby union for individuals whose own clubs can not provide competitive playing and development opportunities. Clusters will actively encourage recruitment on behalf of supporting clubs and will plan to “de-cluster” in no more than 3 years subject to practicality and a set review.

Management of Clusters:

- Each cluster will require the following:-
 - Team Manager
 - Head Coach
 - Assistant Coaches
 - Named Welfare Officer
- All volunteers will be named on application to cluster.
- The cluster management team will submit tri-monthly reports to the WRDM and W & G's forum, to outline player development, recruitment and cluster action plan goals/achievements.
- Clusters names will be decided on application and will be relative to the geographic locations of the clustering teams, thus representing the localities that are supplying the players.

Coaching:

- Each club contributing to the cluster must provide at least one coach to support training sessions.
- In the interest of continuity there must be a head coach named on application
- The head coach must work with the RFUW CCO in developing the coach education of those involved in the cluster The head coach is expected to be available for all cluster training sessions and matches.
- In the event of the head coach being unable to attend, contingency must be in place for another of the cluster coaches to lead the sessions, having liaised with the head coach.
- All coaches must be RFU Enhanced CRB checked and hold, or be working towards, at least a Level 1 Rugby Coaching Award to ensure quality across the clusters.
- CDO's and CCO's will support coaches within the clusters with their CPD.

Training structure:

- Cluster coaches are to adopt a structured approach in line with each other, so that any additional training is roughly the same for all players, regardless of original contributing club.
- Frequency of training must be decided on formation of a cluster and reviewed where applicable. Training will be held at any contributing club able to provide floodlit pitch and changing facilities on a rotational basis.
- Host club to provide all equipment required for training where possible.

De-clustering:

- Upon formation all clusters will submit a Development / Action Plan in line with the RFUW 2009/10 Cluster Action Plan).
- All clusters will actively monitor playing numbers and sustainability for contributing clubs, with an aim to de-cluster as soon as is practicable.

Retaining Club Identity:

- All contributing clubs should view the cluster as their “club” team.
- There is no objection to clubs continuing team training in addition to cluster training, however, welfare of the players must be paramount.
- Cluster sessions and matches should supersede any club training or matches.
- Home matches will be rotated amongst all contributing clubs and the host club strip will be worn.
- Away matches will be played using contributing clubs shirts on a rotational basis.
- Should a cluster obtain sponsorship for shirts, each contributing club colour or badge must be represented on the cluster shirts.
- Clubs will be able to enter independent competitions (eg 7's or 10's) as representatives of their own club as per their affiliation category. This activity is not to occur to the detriment of the cluster team.

Team Structure:

Each cluster will be asked to facilitate one or more of the following team options:

- U18 - Competitive League Team: *To play 15 side rugby on a regular basis within a friendly league structure.*
- U18 - Development Team: *For players who are newer to rugby and prefer a less competitive level of rugby. Playing in friendlies and with no less than 7 a side.*
- U15- Competitive League Team: *To play 13 side rugby on a regular basis within a friendly league structure.*
- U15 – Development Team: *For all girls eligible to play rugby at U15 level. Matches to be arranged in conjunction with player and team skill levels. Matches to be played with no less than 7 a side.*

Players – All players must be registered to their club via the RFU/W official registration system on rugby first.

For the development of the players/coaches and supporting clubs it is vital that all matches played by any player are appropriate for that players skill, knowledge levels and development, and adhere to the RFUW rules and regulations.

Cluster Form 20 & Action Plan:

The cluster form must be completed alongside the Action Plan, this must be approved by your local WRDM and the final sign-off from the Competitions Officer. Please ensure that when you affiliate for the season, you input your cluster information on Form 3.

Final Decision:

Within these clusters, decision regarding development and progression must be made in consultation with all club coaches / managers. If a decision cannot be made within this group then advice must be sought from the local WRDM. If this is proved difficult, the Competitions Officer will have the final say.