ACTION TWO

Setting out clear objectives for each of the partners and agreeing to joint principles and standards is a perfect staring point to your link.

Objectives

- Promote the links between the school/SSP/college/university and club
- Provide additional high quality and enjoyable opportunities for young people to participate in Rugby Union both inside and outside education
- Provide opportunities for the club to present its programmes to possible new members in the educational establishment
- Provide opportunities for the school to increase its role in the local community and to engage with people across all ages
- Optimise the provision of coaching expertise and leadership in Rugby Union at school/college/university and club level
- Optimise the use of facilities
- Share models of good practice in all areas including coaching, officiating, administration and child welfare

Core Principles of all Activities

- To be fun for everyone involved
- To be run in accordance with Rugby Football Union guidelines, particularly relating to coaching and officiating qualifications and safe practices
- To operate in line with a code of conduct agreed between the partners including guidelines relating to behaviour, clothing, warming-up and cooling-down, safe use of appropriate equipment, preparation, planning and feedback
- To be accessible to all young people from all genders and cultural and socio-economic groups in the partnership and appropriate to their abilities

Standards

- **People** - Ensure the right people are involved in the process!

- **Agreement** - A formal agreement should be negotiated at the start of the link and maintained throughout. This should clarify roles and responsibilities, and agree a vision, expectations and goals.

- **Communication** - Good communication is crucial to a sustainable link. Clubs and educational establishments will flourish from regular contact and sharing in each other's achievements.

- **Involving people** - It is important to recognise and celebrate people's progress. Clubs and Educational establishments should ensure that they communicate well with every involved. By providing positive feedback you are involving students in their own development.

- **Coaching** - Many in Education value the input of club coaches, as they have good sports specific knowledge and are up to date with rules, coaching methods, events and issues in their sport. Having the opportunity to work together strengthens the partnership between staff/AU/SU officers and coaches, helping them to share and develop approaches and expertise. This of course can work the other way around some of our most qualified coaches are members of HE/FE staff and students who might be able to support coaching at the club. The RFU also run a Community Rugby Coach scheme (see Action 1 for details).

- **Shared standards** - Ensure standards in your Rugby Union link reinforce good practice and share a common approach to working with people. Areas for discussion might include expected standards of behaviour and attitude (of pupil & students/staff members), preparation and planning, and feedback.

- **Understanding and respect** - For a link to be sustainable, the link partners should show respect for one another's role. They need to actively promote and support each other, rather than being in competition for the pupils/students time and commitment. They also need to understand and appreciate the roles and responsibilities of others that support the link, such as PDMs, and county sports partnerships (see Action 1 for details)

- **Continuity** - Continuity for students comes through linking activities. Students and pupils who join clubs after experiencing particular sports are usually more confident in their ability and knowledge. A satellite or feeder club may be created as a branch of an existing local club.