



CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY DISTRICT RUGBY REFEREES SOCIETY

MATCH OFFICIAL PROTOCOL

2025/26 SEASON

Aim

1. The aim of this document is to ensure Cambridge University District Rugby Referees' Society (CUDRRS) Match Officials (MOs) understand what is required and expected of them as representatives of the society. It will be reviewed on a regular basis and the intent is for it to be updated and reissued prior to the start of each new season.

General

2. It is essential that CUDRRS members conduct themselves in a professional manner, remaining calm and courteous, no matter the challenges they face. This always applies, whether prior to the kick-off, during the game, or post-match; the impression you leave paves the way for the next Referee and reflects the society as a whole.

3. CUDRRS is composed of volunteers of all grades such that on match day the Referee appointed is suitable for that grade of game. Regardless, it is essential all involved understand that the senior person for the appointment on the day is the Referee; they are to set the standard and ensure all involved as officials are compliant. The Referee needs the support of all officials, including those who act as touch judges on the day if a team of three is not available or appointed.

Match Appointments

4. You will be appointed to games as an official by the fixture secretary on Who's the Ref (WTR). This information will be emailed to you via WTR.

5. You must accept the appointment through WTR at the earliest opportunity. If you are unavailable to fill an appointment, then you must let the appointer know by declining the appointment through WTR, ASAP. Failure to reply to the appointment secretary may result in you not being appointed to games in the future.

6. Members are responsible for maintaining their availability on Who's the Ref (WTR). By default, you are listed as unavailable until you update your availability on the website. The appointment secretary will ask that the WTR availability is updated so games can have the correct level of referee appointed.

7. Any queries about your appointment should be directed to the appointer of that game in the first instance.

Club Organizer

8. The Club Coach/Captain of the home team of the fixture is responsible for informing the Referee and other officials appointed to the game of the KO time and date. They should also advise on team colours so no clash will occur. Availability of changing facilities and showers should also be identified. This notification should be received a minimum of 48 hours before the fixture.

9. For midweek fixtures, the following should be expected by the home team to contact the match official:

- a. If the KO is on a Wednesday, then contact should be expected on the Monday before the game. This will give any officials travelling time to re-arrange or cancel travel if needed. If the game is on another day, then the 48 hours rule should be applied.
- b. If no confirmation has been made by the 48-hour timeline, then the Referee should contact the appointment secretary and report this; it is then the appointment secretary's role to follow up with the home team and communicate updates back to the Referee. This should be done by both email and phone if available and communicated to the other officials if required.
- c. Prior to the 48-hour timeline, the Referee should contact all other officials. This should be done by email and/or phone.
- d. If the game is cancelled within the timeline above and the Referee has already contacted the other officials, then it is their job to make contact and confirm the message has been passed on.
- e. If no contact has been received from the home team prior to KO (either by them contacting the Referee or the efforts of the appointer), then nobody should travel to the game and the assumption should be the game is not going ahead. The Referee is to get permission from the appointment secretary to stand down and then communicate this to all other match officials.
- f. If the game is cancelled outside of the timelines above, then it is the job of the appointment secretary to inform all officials involved that they are no longer needed, this will be communicated via WTR or phone call.

Match Official Developers/Assessor/Nominated Person

10. Where a Match Official Developer has been appointed to a fixture, it is the Referee's responsibility to ensure they have the required fixture details and that the home team is aware so they can enable the appropriate access. WTR will notify the club that a developer/assessor/nominated person will be attending.

11. The Match Official Developer/Assessor/Nominated person is allowed to walk around the pitch and go behind the posts, inside the boundary.

Dress Code

12. The purpose of this section is to ensure all match day officials are dressed in an appropriate manner.

13. It is the responsibility of the individual official to ensure they have the correct dress in line with the dress code. Where practical, all officials appointed to the game should mirror the dress for the day; this should be set by the Referee and if issued, should be the approved CUDRRS kit. In the interim period, appropriate similar dress should be worn as described in this section.

a. **County and Cup matches.**

1) **On arrival.** A minimum of polo shirt or blazer and tie with slacks (smart jeans may be worn, but not ripped) or CUDRRS clean tracksuit can be worn with CUDRRS polo shirt.

2) **During the game.** On field kit will be the sponsored shirt where possible with an alternative just in case.

3) **Post-match.** Post the game all officials should wear a minimum what is described in serial one.

b. **All other matches.**

1) **On arrival.** Polo shirt with smart trousers or smart clean CUDRRS tracksuit can be worn.

2) **During the game.** All match officials should wear the latest, matching branded CUDRRS kit.

3) **Post-match.** Blazer, shirt, smart trousers and Tie or Polo shirt and trousers. In the case where there is no post- game social function, a smart clean tracksuit may be worn throughout.

4) **Agreement.** All attire to be agreed before attending the fixture if a team of three.

Travel

14. Travel can be claimed via WTR by filling in the claims report attached to the fixture against your name and then formally submitting the form.

a. This will be sent to the treasurer for payment based on the mileage allocated via google maps.

Match Day

15. The purpose of this section is to give officials some clear guidelines to help structure their match day appointment. As officials become more experienced, they will be able to amend the process to better suit them or the game. The fundamentals of the process should still be adhered to in the most part; this will ensure that consistency is achieved for the teams and other officials.

a. Where possible the Referee and other match Officials should arrange to be at the venue no less than 60 minutes before the kick off. If the appointment has ARs or

other Officials allocated, the arrival time may need to be amended to accommodate pre-match briefings and administration.

- b. On arrival the Referee should contact both teams' coach, captain or senior official to arrange the team safety brief and stud/kit check. This will need to be done at the convenience of the team but in suitable time prior to kick off.
- c. The team clothing/equipment check needs to include all players, including replacements. The Safety Brief needs to include the Front Row and any Front Row replacements, covering the engagement sequence, the put-in at the scrum and what standards the Referee expects.
- d. The Referee will brief the senior person on the touch line from both sides that all replacements need to enter from the halfway line, only with the permission of the Referee during the game.
- e. With the two captains, a coin toss should be conducted and the winning captain be given the option to select an end or to kick off (no other option is available).
- f. The Referee is to agree on the location of the coaching staff and replacements during the game, if there is a technical area then this is to be used (in accordance with RFU Regulation 6.26). Two technical areas should either be marked out (note it could be as simple as using four training cones to mark each area), or else coaching staff / Permitted Personnel should remain in the area.
- g. Replacements should warm up outside the playing enclosure, or where not practical, in/behind the dead ball area of the try line their side are attacking. This should be confirmed with the referee in advance.
- h. At no time is anyone other than one of the team physios to follow the game from proximity of the touchline. No more than four people per team acting as water carriers (including medical staff and replacement players), are permitted within the pitch side or perimeter fencing or other barrier. Water carriers may only be permitted onto the playing area for the purposes of taking water to the players at such times as shall be approved by the Referee (on any other occasion players must come to the touchline to get water).
- i. If there are no ARs allocated to the game, each team must allocate a person to function as the Touch Judge and the Referee is to brief this person on what is expected.
- j. The Referee will be available to speak with the coaches up to 15 minutes prior to kick off.
- k. The Referee may speak to the team captains at half time in line with their game management strategy.
- l. The Referee will not be available to both teams until 15 minutes after the game; any contact made post the game before this time is at the Referee's discretion.

Post-Match Admin

16. It is important that we get the post-match administration right, there can be a lot of information that needs to be communicated to different people and the accuracy of this is vital. The key areas are listed below:

Discipline.

17. All match officials should be familiar with this procedure before they accept an appointment. It is an area where accuracy is paramount.

- 1) It is important that, if you need to send a player off with a Red Card, or experience unacceptable behavior at a match, it is reported and in the correct manner.
- 2) All current discipline reports and guidance can be found on the RFU web page in the discipline section (<https://www.englandrugby.com/run/refereeing/referee-resources/forms>). The report must be submitted within 48 hours to the CUDRRS:

E mail: cudrrssec@gmail.com

- 3) **Abuse of match officials is not to be tolerated and must be reported.**

Medical advice.

18. Referees should be made aware of who the first aid cover is from both teams prior to kickoff.

Training.

19. Referees must complete the following courses annually.

- a) RFU's Headcase Training.
- b) E learning intro to Safeguarding
- c) Law Exam

18.1 The following courses are recommended to be completed.

- d) Play it Safe course (This last 3 years)
- e) InTouch

Reporting.

20. Reportable Injury Events¹ should be reported (through the CUDRRS secretary, using the email above) by the match officials who must also complete the RFU form if hospitalised which can be found on the RFU website.

Feedback

- 1) It is important the Referee takes time to speak to players and coaches post the game and receives feedback, should they wish. Match officials should attend the post-match function (in the correct dress code). If you are not able to then this needs to be conveyed in the pre-match contact with the team.
- 2) Attend the post-match debrief from the Match Observer if one is present. The assessor/Developer will fill in the relevant report form and send it to you to add comments and then sign off as a final copy.

¹Defined by the RFU as: an injury which results in the player being admitted to a hospital (this does not include those that attend an accident or Emergency Department and are allowed home from there); Deaths which occur during or within six hours of a game finishing, or injuries in which artificial grass pitches or equipment such as sports goggles are involved.

3) This will be logged and screened by the senior advisor

Summary

21. The standards laid down in this Protocol are in the interests of all and not individuals, ensuring CUDRRS is shown in the best light possible and rugby within Cambridge and on exchange stays at the highest standard possible.

CUDRRS Safeguarding Officer

Issued: 11th Oct 25