



WATSONIAN FOOTBALL CLUB

Standards Statement and Code of Conduct

The Watsonian Football Club (WFC and the Club) was formed in 1875 and has a long tradition at the top flight of the game in Scotland. It has a hard earned reputation both at home and around the world of playing exciting rugby in the true spirit of the game with many players having played for Scotland, the British Lions and the Barbarians. The immediate relationship with George Watson's College (GWC) has been for many years the foundation which allows the club to exist and perform to such a high standard. In many ways both parties rely on each other but to do so we must work together in a respectful manner.

WFC enjoys the use of the school playing facilities at Myreside and Craiglockhart which are second to none and also the recently refurbished Pavilion which is the spiritual home of all sections (sporting and non-sporting) of the Watsonian Club which is the "Parent" club of all former pupils of GWC. It is now open to members of the public.

WFC requires to set out below various statements in regard to the Club, GWC and the Pavilion which are intended to explain various behavioural standards to be understood and respected by all members who are ambassadors for WFC. Members must also be aware that the Club runs the Warriors section (P3 – 7) involving a large number of children which is important both for GWC and the continuing recruitment of players and members. The statements are followed by the Code of Conduct which substantially applies to the playing of the game under the auspices of Scottish Rugby and importantly sets out the procedures by which breaches of standards and field discipline will be dealt with by the Club and Scottish Rugby.

Club Standards & Expectations

All members must:

- Show respect at all times to all employees of George Watson's College, The Pavilion, the Club, other players and coaches, members, teams, officials and the public.
- Follow Health and Safety guidance on and off the pitch as your wellbeing, and the wellbeing of others, is important.
- Smoking, including e-cigarettes, is discouraged because as a club we have a health and well-being focus. It is not permitted inside any part of the Myreside facilities including the Pavilion
- Arriving on time is a mark of respect and players are expected to turn up on time for training or advise their coach in advance.
- Adhering to and promoting the principles of Equality among all. We do not tolerate words or actions which may reasonably be considered as racist, sexist, ableist, transphobic, homophobic or ageist and will actively challenge discriminatory behaviours and language.
- Wearing clothing with the club emblem going to and after a game. You should be proud of your club and we want to show others that we operate as a team. You need to be aware that such clothing will be recognised wherever you may be and misbehaviour will be associated with and reflect badly on the Club as a result.

- Ensure responsible use of all social media platforms (including WhatsApp), particularly around content which clearly identifies the club. Ensuring that we are not sharing content which risks the club's (and by association, GWC, our sponsors and members) good reputation.
- Moderating your language so it is not perceived as offensive. This is because we use GWC premises, have many children in and around the club and we wish to encourage a wide range of the public and families to participate and watch.
- Making all new members and players welcome and players made to feel a part of the team. There will be no 'initiation' of any new player.

Communication

The Club shall ensure that all Coaches understand the importance of appropriate standards of behaviour on and off the pitch, their role in modelling and enforcing the expected standards, and that all WFC coaches are expected to challenge unacceptable behaviour.

The Coaches, Team Managers and Captains shall ensure that new senior players know the standards and existing players are reminded at least once a year.

Members are encouraged to raise issues or concerns openly and as early as possible so that issues can be resolved before any disciplinary action becomes necessary. Many problems can be sorted out through informal dialogue and a 'quiet word' is often all that's needed. Where breaches are repeated or more serious formal action may be required, concerns should be reported to one of the President, Vice President or Secretary who will follow up the appropriate action to be taken.

Apart from employees, the Scottish Rugby disciplinary procedures will apply as referred to in the detailed Code of Conduct below. Any member may be suspended to allow an investigation or mitigate perceived risk to the good name of the Club. This is an operational matter that will be determined by the President, Vice President or Secretary as set out under the heading Breaches and Sanctions below.

Discipline Sanctions

The SRU table of sanctions will be applied where appropriate, however for more general, off pitch misconduct the disciplinary sanction may include one of the following **which are for guidance only and are not prescriptive or binding** on whichever body may impose appropriate sanctions:

First formal warning

If conduct is unsatisfactory, the member will be given a written warning as exemplified by:

- Nudity
- Urinating in public places
- Use of illegal drugs and substances

Immediate dismissal

Examples of Behaviour the Club will consider as Gross Misconduct:

- Dishonesty, theft, fraud or deliberate falsification of records or line calls
- Fighting or assault on another person
- Deliberate damage or serious negligence which causes loss or damage or injury to GWC, or any other club or person or organisation's property. Where this is found to be the case recompense for full costs will also be pursued.
- Serious incapability through being under the influence of illegal drugs. Similarly, the use of illegal drugs (recreational or performance enhancing) is totally unacceptable and not permitted inside any part of the Myreside facilities, grounds of GWC including the Pavilion.
- Serious incapability through alcohol where this results in offensive behaviour to any other party
- bullying and harassment

- Serious acts of insubordination

Suspension

Examples of Behaviour where the Club will normally suspend immediately to allow investigation or minimise potential risk to the Club:

- Child protection issues
- Vulnerable adult issues
- Where someone is referred to the police or charged with committing a sexual offence or other serious crime
- Creating a risk to health, safety, and wellbeing (emotional and physical) of any other member or employee of the club
- Where continuation is damaging to the interests of the Club

Club Code of Conduct

The basis of this Code of Conduct (“Code”) is the “World Rugby Code of Conduct”, amended only in so far as is necessary to apply to the game in Scotland as administered by Scottish Rugby and in turn to all members of the Watsonian Football Club (WFC). The Code shall apply in respect of all members, teams, players, coaches, volunteers, participating in or connected in any way with the game with WFC including non-playing members (“members”).

All members:

- (1) must ensure that the game is played and conducted in accordance with disciplined and sporting behaviour and acknowledge that it is not sufficient to rely solely upon the match officials to maintain those principles.
- (2) shall co-operate in ensuring that the spirit of the Laws of the Game is upheld and encourage players to refrain from committing acts of foul play (including by refraining from selecting them where appropriate);
- (3) shall not repeatedly breach the Laws of the Game.
- (4) shall accept and observe the authority and decisions of the match officials and all other rugby disciplinary bodies, subject to World Rugby 17 and Scottish Rugby’s Disciplinary Rules.
- (5) shall not publish or cause to be published criticism of the manner in which a match official handled a match;
- (6) shall not publish or cause to be published criticism of the manner in which World Rugby, Scottish Rugby or any disciplinary body handled or resolved any dispute or disciplinary matter resulting from a breach of the World Rugby Bye-Laws, the Laws of the Game, World Rugby’s Regulations Relating to the Game, Scottish Rugby’s competition rules or any other Scottish Rugby Bye-Law, rule, regulation, policy or process;
- (7) shall not engage in any conduct or any activity on or off the field that may impair public confidence in the honest and orderly conduct of a match, tour, tournament or series of matches (including, but not limited to, the supply of information in relation to the game, directly or indirectly, to bookmakers or to persons who may use such information to their advantage) or in the integrity and good character of any person;
- (8) shall not commit a breach of any of the World Rugby Regulations or Scottish Domestic Regulations (including but not limited to any Betting and Anti-Corruption offence (SDR 6), any Anti-Doping offence (SDR 21.1), any Illicit Drugs offence (SDR 21.2) or any breach of Scottish Rugby’s competition rules or any other Scottish Rugby Bye-Law, rule, regulation, policy or process; Scottish Rugby Code of Conduct for the Game (Season 2022-23)
- (9) shall promote the reputation of the game and take all possible steps to prevent it from being brought into disrepute.
- (10) shall not abuse, threaten or intimidate any match official, whether on or off the field of play;

(11) shall not use crude, foul or abusive language or gestures towards players, coaches, club officials, match officials, spectators or any other person;

(12) shall not do anything which is likely to intimidate, offend, insult, humiliate or discriminate against any person on the grounds of their religion, race, gender, sexual orientation, colour or national or ethnic origin;

(13) shall not do anything which adversely affects the game of Rugby, Scottish Rugby, any member club or other Union of World Rugby or any commercial partner of the game in Scotland; and

(14) shall abide by all rules, regulations, codes of conduct and policies issued by Scottish Rugby including, inter alia, Scottish Rugby's Child Protection Policy, Concussion Policy and Player Payment Policy;

All members as defined in the preamble to this Code shall be under an obligation to comply with this Code of Conduct.

Breaches and Sanctions

Breaches of the Code of Conduct shall constitute acts of Misconduct and will be dealt with in accordance with the principles laid down in the Disciplinary Rules of Scottish Rugby which are deemed to form part of this Code. They shall be intimated and dealt with by a panel of three members (the Panel) appointed by the President, Vice President or Secretary of the Club, one of whom will be the Chair and two other members, one of whom must be a current playing member.

Whilst Breaches will be dealt with by WFC in this manner, members should be aware that Scottish Rugby may also bring their own proceedings irrespective of any action or sanctions delivered by the WFC Panel.

By purchasing a WFC Membership, you are deemed to have read and understood the Club Standards and Code of Conduct plus any rules, regulations, codes and policies referred to, all of which are available through the websites of World Rugby or Scottish Rugby.

(Version dated 20/06/2024)