

Penryn Rugby Football Club

Match Official Abuse Policy

Effective Date: September 2026

Review Date: September 2027

Approved by: Penryn RFC Committee



1. Policy Statement

Penryn RFC is committed to creating and maintaining a safe, respectful, and positive environment for all participants in the game of rugby. Match officials (including referees, assistant referees, and touch judges) play a vital role in the sport and must be treated with dignity and respect at all times.

In accordance with the policies, regulations, and codes of conduct issued by the Rugby Football Union, Penryn RFC adopts a zero-tolerance approach to abuse of match officials. Abuse of match officials will not be accepted in any form and will be dealt with promptly, consistently, and robustly.

2. Policy Aims

This policy applies to:

- All players (senior and junior)
- Coaches and team management
- Match officials appointed to fixtures involving Penryn RFC
- Club officials, volunteers, and committee members
- Members and spectators
- Parents, carers, and guardians
- Any individual representing or associated with Penryn RFC

This policy applies at:

- Matches (home and away)
- Training sessions
- Tours and festivals
- Social events connected to rugby
- Online and social media platforms

3. Definition of Abuse

Match official abuse includes, but is not limited to:

- Verbal abuse, foul or abusive language
- Threatening, intimidating, or aggressive behaviour
- Dissent, questioning, or arguing decisions in an aggressive or disrespectful manner
- Discriminatory language or behaviour
- Physical intimidation or contact
- Abuse via social media or electronic communication

Abuse may be committed by players, coaches, club officials, spectators, or any other person associated with Penryn RFC.

4. Club Responsibilities

Penryn RFC acknowledges its responsibilities under RFU regulations and commits to the following:

4.1 Prevention

- Promote respect for match officials through education, communication, and leadership.
- Ensure all players, coaches, and officials understand RFU Codes of Conduct.
- Appoint a match-day point of contact (e.g. Club Referee Liaison Officer) for officials.
- Display signage and communications reinforcing respect for officials.

4.2 Match-Day Management

- Support match officials before, during, and after matches.
- Act immediately if abuse is reported or observed.
- Remove or manage spectators whose behaviour is unacceptable.
- Assist match officials in submitting reports where required.

4.3 Reporting

- Encourage prompt reporting of abuse by officials, players, or spectators.
- Cooperate fully with RFU disciplinary processes.
- Submit reports to the RFU when required by regulations.

4.4 Disciplinary Action

- Take appropriate internal disciplinary action against any member or representative of Penryn RFC found to have abused a match official.
- Apply sanctions that may include:
 - Verbal or written warnings
 - Suspension or removal from matches or training
 - Removal of club membership
 - Referral to the RFU disciplinary process

5. Player and Coach Responsibilities

All players and coaches at Penryn RFC must:

- Respect the authority of match officials at all times.
- Accept decisions without complaint or dissent.
- Ensure team members and substitutes behave appropriately.
- Challenge poor behaviour constructively and report concerns to club officials.

Team captains have a specific responsibility to communicate with match officials in a respectful and controlled manner.

6. Spectator and Parent Responsibilities

Spectators, parents, and carers attending Penryn RFC fixtures must:

- Support the game positively.
 - Refrain from any comments or behaviour that could be perceived as abusive.
 - Follow instructions from club officials when requested.
- Failure to comply may result in removal from the venue and further disciplinary action.

7. Safeguarding and Welfare

Abuse of match officials may also constitute a safeguarding or welfare concern. Where appropriate, incidents will be referred to the Penryn RFC Safeguarding Officer and handled in accordance with RFU safeguarding policies.

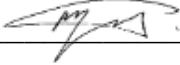
8. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be:

- Communicated to all members of Penryn RFC.
- Reviewed annually or in line with RFU policy updates.
- Updated as required to ensure continued compliance with RFU regulations and best practice.

Approved by Penryn RFC Committee

Chair: Matthew Gray

Signature: 

Date: 01/10/26



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