



The RFU Governance Committee today made a difficult decision that, with the exception of Premiership, Championship, Premier 15s and Elite 15s rugby, no organised* RFU or non-RFU Leagues adult or age grade competitions will be played before January 2021.

We will be issuing communications to the game via CGU (as below), the England Rugby website and social media at 8.15pm this evening

We hope you will understand the rationale for this tough decision.

RETURN TO COMPETITIVE PLAY IN 2020/21 SEASON DELAYED TO JANUARY 2021 EARLIEST

Under powers delegated by Council, the RFU Governance Committee today made a difficult decision that, with the exception of Premiership, Championship and Premier 15s rugby, no organised* RFU or non-RFU Leagues including merit tables, adult or age grade competitions will be played before January 2021 at the earliest.

With the increased uncertainty caused by Government's additional restrictions to curb the increase in Covid-19 cases across the country, the decision has been made so that we can provide clubs with some certainty over the next few months.

The rugby community can continue to organise non-contact fixtures with other clubs using Ready4Rugby and other touch rugby activity. Limited and restricted contact rugby training can also be continued.

The RFU continues to be in active dialogue with Government about moving to Stage E on the [Roadmap](#) should we reach this point at any time before Christmas, competitive friendly matches could commence.

The Adult and Age Grade Competitions Groups will be making recommendations to Governance on what they can do to ensure that any competitions from January are meaningful, including whether to make changes to the structured season.

Governance also agreed that any decision to suspend promotion and relegation for the 2020/21 season would be referred to Council once the nature of the competitions is known.

Further guidance will be provided in due course to support clubs, schools, colleges and universities in playing to the relevant stage of the appropriate Roadmap stage.

Jeff Blackett, RFU President, comments: *"We are very keen to see competitive rugby being played again. However, given the introduction of further restrictions to curb the increase in Covid-19 cases, we will not be able to move to Stage F on the Roadmap until a later date. This announcement gives clubs clarity over the immediate term to help them with their planning. We will continue to liaise with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and Public Health England to accelerate a return to competitive play as soon as it is safe to do so."*

Although social gatherings of more than six people were banned in England from Monday 14 September and a number of local lockdown restrictions put in place in some areas of the country,

the Government has confirmed that organised sports and activities that have been through return to play protocols can continue. With the exception of clubs impacted by local lockdown restrictions, we continue at **Stage D** on the [Roadmap](#).

Clubs in areas where additional local lockdown measures have been introduced may need to limit their activities in line with any local restrictions. All are advised to consult with their local authority should they be in any doubt.

**Organised competition in this instance includes any competition organised by the RFU, its delegated competition organising committees, or any other league or cup organiser.*