

Frequently asked questions:

1. How does the professional rugby set up work in France?

Three separate championships are played during the season. The professional games organised by the “League National de Rugby” and the French Federation, a professional body, looking after International games and amateur rugby.

The leagues are the Top 14, Pro D-2 and Federal 1, 2 and 3.

2. How many professional rugby clubs are there in France?

In the premier division 14 clubs compete in the Top 14 championship. This is followed by a Pro -D2 division which forms the next 16 best clubs in France. All 30 clubs are professional and linked to some academy. In the Federal 1 division there are 48 teams.

3. How does this compare to South African Rugby franchises?

In South Africa we have eight unions that professionally contract senior players.

The Sharks, Bulls, Lions, Cheetahs, Stormers, Kings, Griquas and the Pumas.

4. Can I get a French passport?

After 5 contracted years in France, you can apply for French citizenship.

5. Will I get a contract after the academy?

The goal of the first season is to prove yourself to the selected club, and to be offered a junior contract. You will play in the junior side for the first season, and if offered a contract, you will be able to play for the clubs 1st and 2nd sides.

6. What type of monetary value is linked to a junior contract?

Most junior contracts start at 1300 Euros per month, depending on the position, and the quality of the player.

7. Will I be allowed to stay at the academy if I am not contracted?

Yes, but it will be at the discretion of the club – there will be a selection process for the second year players.

8. What will it cost to get into the academies, and what will it include?

The initial cost is 7500 Euros.

This includes your flight to France, transport to the club and Visa's for your stay.



It also includes accommodation, and 3 meals per day.

You will also be enrolled in a study programme (probably French) for the first season.

Play-RSA will also do regular check-ups to make sure you are adapting well to the new environment.

Costs for the returning year is 3 000 Euros, but this cost will only be levied on players that have been unsuccessful in securing a contract, but have been requested by the club to return for another season. This usually includes flights, accommodation, visa's meals and travel insurance. * costs for the second year are subject to change depending on the club and player setup.

9. Where does training take place?

All training sessions will be at the clubs facilities which are shared with the professional team.

Depending on the club, certain sessions will be done with the clubs 1st team.

10. What kind of Visa will I need, and what is the process?

You will need a long stay visa. In order to attain this you will need to follow the following steps:

Process of applying for a long stay visa

In order to process your file and to save time during your appointment, prepare your documents and classify them according to the checklist below.

- Schengen Visa Application form (we will assist you with this)
 - Passport: Travellers' passports must be valid for more than six (6) months after returning from the trip and must have at least 2 blank pages (necessary for Schengen visa sticker and immigration entry/exit stamps).
 - 2 ID pictures with clear background according to standard
 - Medical Certificate
 - Sworn Affidavit
 - Proof of sufficient funds (Bank Statement) – provided by Play Rsa
 - Proof of accommodation
 - Air ticket + copy
 - Proof of payment for appointment and file processing: EFT or Cash Payment
- Play RSA will provide guidance for all candidates through this process

11. How does this compare to the current South African Rugby Academies?

The academy structures in France are smaller and more focussed than those in South Africa. This ensures more individual attention to each player, and the chances for integration into the club's professional setup can be quicker than in South Africa.

12. What will it cost if I stay at the academy for a second year?

The cost will be 3000 Euros for players that return to the academies, and that have not signed formal contracts with the club.

13. Is medical insurance included, and what happens if I get injured?

Travel insurance will get taken out for the player with an added rugby benefit. If you get injured, hospitalization is covered, although we recommend that players keep South African medical aid active in the event that the player is not covered by the medical claim.

14. If I get injured, do I have to return to South Africa?

No, you will go through rehab at the club, and will start playing again as soon as you are fit.

15. Can I choose which academy I go to?

While you can request a place at one of the academies, we cannot guarantee a spot there. We have a strict recruitment policy that we have to follow, and the club selects the final candidates.

16. Do I need to study while at the academy?

Yes, for the first 6 months we will enrol you in a French course.

Each academy offers different courses – more detail will be available once you are at the academy.

17. Once I sign an agency agreement with Play RSA, am I contracted with them for my entire rugby career?

No, Play RSA is not an agent – we provide opportunities for young aspiring rugby players to further their careers in rugby. When the time comes to sign contracts, Play Rsa can put you in contact with reputable French agents.



18. What percentage fee does Play RSA take from my earnings once I am contracted?

Nothing – Play Rsa is not a registered agent.

19. What happens if I already have a South African Agent?

South African Agents are not allowed to operate in France – they have to have an arrangement with an accredited French agency – if you already have an agent – we will partner up with them to make sure you get the best deal, and all your interests are looked after.