

MIXED GENDER DISPENSATION PROCEDURE

BACKGROUND

The starting position for mixed gender participation is that:

Males and females can participate in mixed gender rugby up to and including the calendar year (1 January - 31 December) in which they turn 12 years of age.

Whilst boys and girls may often prefer to play sports with those of the same gender, Australian Rugby supports girls and boys playing with each other up to the year in which they turn 12.

Australian Rugby is seeking to grow the number of girls' competitions throughout Australia so that both boys and girls each have access to regular rugby. Where that opportunity for regular rugby is not available, Australian Rugby would like to ensure that those girls are afforded the opportunity to continue their participation in this great game so long as it is safe to do so.

WITH DISPENSATION – WHERE CAN A PLAYER PLAY?

This procedure defines the step by step process to enable mixed gender participation as follows:

A player over 12 years of age may (subject to meeting the requirements of this procedure) play on a mixed gender team in the Under 13, Under 14 and Under 15 age groups where no other option to play regular Rugby exists. A player can participate in mixed gender teams in the calendar year up to and including the year in which they turn 15 (1 January to 31 December).

Note: Ad hoc tournaments and development programs should not be viewed as 'regular' Rugby competition and therefore should not prevent an application for Mixed Gender Dispensation. When assessing regular Rugby opportunities, reasonable consideration should be given to the player's preferred format of Rugby.

RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of all Coaches, Club Officials, Unions and Affiliates and Parents / Guardians to follow this procedure to ensure inclusion whilst having primary regard for the Australian Rugby Safety Policy. Intentional or reckless disregard for the Australian Rugby Safety Policy, Australian Rugby Participation or this procedure **may result in disciplinary action under the Australian Rugby Code of Conduct or the Australian Rugby Member Protection Policy.**

Each State or Territory Union must designate an appropriate person(s) to apply this procedure within a competition. The competition manager will typically be the person responsible; however, the State or Territory Union may nominate an alternate person and/or convene an advisory panel or group of subject matter experts to provide recommendations and/or make decisions in the application of this procedure.

This procedure is applicable to all registered players participating in an age grade competition except for the non-contact form of Rugby, VIVA7s.

STEP BY STEP PROCEDURES

STEP	DESCRIPTION OF ACTION	RESPONSIBLE
1	A female participant, up to and including the year in which they turn 15, expresses a desire to participate in mixed gender competition in the Under 13, Under 14 or Under 15 age group.	Accredited Coach / Club or School Official / Parent or Guardian
2	The Club / School provide the Parent / Guardian with the Mixed Gender Dispensation Consent Form and Dispensation Schedule A.	Club / School
3	The Mixed Gender Dispensation Consent Form is completed.	Parent / Guardian
4	Written confirmation is provided from an appropriate medical practitioner with an understanding of the demands of Rugby to whom the player is known that the player is in a physical condition to play Rugby at the desired level with that view being supported by a musculo-skeletal evaluation and/or other appropriate assessments.	Medical Practitioner to whom the player is known
5	Written agreement from a medical officer with an understanding of the demands of Rugby employed or retained by the player’s Union that the player is in a physical condition to play Rugby at the desired level with that view being supported by musculo-skeletal evaluation and/or other appropriate assessments.	Union identified Medical Practitioner
6	Schedule A of the Dispensation Form is completed and returned to the Club / School with recommendation of the appropriate grade for safe participation. Please Note: Players who wish to utilise the Mixed Gender Dispensation process to play in the <u>Front Row</u> (prop or hooker) must also apply for approval from the ARU prior to participation in rugby, as outlined in Schedule B - Exception for Front Row.	Qualified Assessing Coach
7	The Mixed Gender Consent Form and Dispensation Form Schedule A (and Schedule B where required) are forwarded to the competition manager (or other designated State or Territory Union representative).	Club / School OR Parent / Guardian

STEP	DESCRIPTION OF ACTION	RESPONSIBLE
8	<p>The competition manager (or other designated State or Territory Union representative) will in good faith review the assessment and consider what, if any, regular Rugby opportunities exist before deciding to either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accept or decline the application for dispensation; OR • request an independent assessment in line with the Safety Policy; OR • make a recommendation to the player (or their parent/guardian) as to the appropriate age grade or competition for that player based on the initial assessment or the subsequent independent assessment. 	<p>Competition Manager (or designated Union representative)</p>
9	<p>The competition manager (or other designated State or Territory Union representative) will in good faith contact the Club / School and ensure that all appropriate environmental and social factors have been considered with respect to the safety and wellbeing of the player and those participants in the competition.</p>	<p>Competition Manager</p>
10	<p>Appropriate changes are made in the Competition Management System (Rugby Link) to enable participation in the approved competition. The Club / School is notified as well as the Parent / Guardian.</p>	<p>Competition Manager</p>
11	<p>Where dispensation is provided pursuant to this Mixed Gender Dispensation Procedure, Clubs / Schools with teams in the relevant competition in which dispensation has been provided are notified.</p>	<p>Competition Manager</p>

OTHER INFORMATION

Any grievance by players (or their parents/guardians) regarding decisions made pursuant to this Mixed Gender Dispensation Procedure must be dealt with pursuant to the grievance procedure of the relevant Union with jurisdiction for the competition.

The ARU has the discretion to review any decision made pursuant to this Mixed Gender Dispensation Procedure or conduct an investigation as appropriate.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Australian Rugby Code of Conduct
- Australian Rugby Member Protection Policy
- Mixed Gender Dispensation Consent Form
- Dispensation Form Schedule A and Schedule B
- Australian Rugby Safety Policy
- Australian Rugby Participation Policy

MIXED GENDER DISPENSATION - CONSENT FORM

COMPLETED FORM TO BE SUBMITTED TO YOUR COMPETITION MANAGER OR STATE UNION DESIGNATE

PLAYER <i>(please print clearly)</i>			
Name:	Rugby Link No.		
Club/School:	Competition/State:		
Date of Birth:	Requested Age Grade:		(i.e. U13, U14, U15)
Contact Phone No:	E-mail:		

PARENT / LEGAL GUARDIAN

I confirm that:

- a) I am a parent or legal guardian of the above-mentioned player;
- b) I have been provided with a copy of the Australian Rugby Safety Policy and Australian Rugby Participation Policy as well as the Mixed Gender Dispensation Procedure, Consent Forms and Dispensation Schedules A & B;
- c) I understand that rugby is a contact sport and, like all contact sports, players are exposed to risk of injury. It has been explained to me that the risk of injury may be increased by playing in a mixed gender competition, particularly over 12 years of age;
- d) In addition to understanding these risks, I also agree, to the extent permitted by law, to waive all claims for liability against any participant (including players, coaches, volunteers and administrators) and release every such participant from all liability that may be incurred in connection with the player's participation in the proposed mixed gender competition.

Name:	Signature:	Date:
--------------	-------------------	--------------

COMPETITION MANAGER OR STATE UNION DESIGNATE

Schedules A Attached	YES	NO	(please circle)
Schedules B Attached	YES	NO	(please circle)
Written confirmation from a Medical Practitioner known to the player	YES	NO	(please attach)
Written agreement from a Medical Specialist retained by the Union	YES	NO	(please attach)
Musculo-skeletal evaluation and other appropriate assessments	YES	NO	(please attach)
Independent Coach Assessment Required for Approval of Mixed Gender Dispensation	YES	NO	(please circle)
Regular Rugby opportunities available for player applying for Mixed Gender Dispensation	YES	NO	(please circle)
Approved for Mixed Gender Dispensation	YES	NO	(please circle)
Notes on decision / restrictions with respect to this Mixed Gender Dispensation			
Approved Mixed Gender Age Grade to for player to participate in			

Name:	Signature:	Date:
--------------	-------------------	--------------

DISPENSATION FORM - Schedule A

This Dispensation Form is to be completed as required via the following Dispensation Procedures and Consent Forms: **Age Dispensation, Senior Rugby Dispensation, Mixed Gender Dispensation, Disability Dispensation and Gender Identification Procedures.**

Level of Experience:	The player's level of experience allows the player to compete safely with players in the proposed competition:			
	Enter the number of years played:			
	Was the player granted Dispensation the previous season (please circle):	YES	NO	
	Enter the number of years of representative experience:			
	Outline the representative level of experience below: [e.g. club/school and year(s) played]			
Physical Development:	The player's level of physical development allows the player to compete safely with players in the proposed competition			
	Proposed Playing Position(s):			
	Weight (kg):			
	Height (cm):			
	Is the player's physical development appropriate to positions played and level of competition? (Please circle):	YES	NO	
Skill Development:	The player's level of skill development allows the player to compete safely with players in the proposed competition (please circle)			
	Catch & Pass:	YES	NO	
	Track to Tackle competency:	YES	NO	
	Tackle competency:	YES	NO	
	Tackle Contest competency:	YES	NO	
	Set Piece (Scrum / Lineout):	YES	NO	N/A
	Assessment occurred during:	Match	Training	Both
<i>Note: It is strongly desirable that assessment take place both during training and under match conditions. If a coach identifies the player as N/A in Set Piece, then that player cannot fulfil a functional role in a scrum or lineout in the competition to which this application is made.</i>				
Standard of Competition:	Does the standard of competition allow the player to compete safely with players in the proposed competition?	YES	NO	
Safety of Participant(s):	Is the player under assessment a significant safety risk to themselves or others by <u>NOT</u> receiving Dispensation?	YES	NO	

ASSESSING COACH

Name: _____ **MyRugby No.** _____

Contact No. _____ **E-mail:** _____

Coaching Accreditation: Level [1] [2] [3] please circle **Smart Rugby Accreditation:** Expiry _____

In my opinion, the player's physical development, ability and/or experience is sufficiently high that the player can compete safely with players in the proposed grade. I have undertaken this assessment by viewing this player in training and /or match conditions. I have completed the Schedule A (and Schedule B if required) with the full knowledge of the ARU Safety Policy and Participation Policy and my responsibilities under those policies. I have explained to the player and his/her parent or guardian that the player participating against players of differing age / gender to the player and this may involve an increased level of injury risk.

Name: _____ **Signature:** _____ **Date:** _____

Schedule B - Exception for Front Row (prop or hooker)

<p>Considerations:</p>	<p>In assessing the suitability of a player to participate in the position of Front Row (prop or hooker) outside their Eligible Grades, the following factors will be considered and addressed in the Submission Form.</p> <p>(i) skill level, experience and the level of coaching received –</p> <p><i>Player experience in the Front Row (prop or hooker)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of years' experience playing in front row ➤ Did you play in the front row last year? ➤ If you missed a game through injury last year please identify the injured area (e.g. R. Shoulder, L. Knee or neck etc.) <p><i>Level of coaching received</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What Level of coaching accreditation does your current coach have? ➤ Have you received any specialist front row coaching in the last 2 years? If Yes, please outline coaching received, identify the coach who provided this coaching, and outline their coaching accreditation and experience? <p>(ii) strength –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Do you undertake a regular strength program? If Yes, how many times a week do you complete strength training, identify who provided the program and their qualifications, and provide the strength program that you have completed over the past 4 weeks. ➤ Was your strength and conditioning program developed by a qualified Strength and Conditioning Coach? ➤ How long have you been doing regular strength training? (ie months/years) <p>In addition to the above information, an objective assessment of body structure may also be required if deemed appropriate.</p> <p>(iii) body structure –</p> <p>If your skill/experience and strength levels outlined above have been considered adequate, the ARU may request additional information in the form of CT scans or MRI scans, prior to approving an exception for Front Row.</p> <p>A referral for these investigations will be posted to you if appropriate. The costs of these investigations must be borne by the athlete.</p>
<p>Submission Forms can be sent to:</p>	<p>Australian Rugby Union Fax: (02) 8005 5681; or E-mail: communityrugby@rugby.com.au</p>
<p>Approvals</p>	<p>Approvals will be granted on a case by case basis.</p>

SCHEDULE B – EXCEPTION FOR FRONT ROW SUBMISSION FORM

COMPLETED SUBMISSION FORM, ATTACHMENTS AND CONSENT FORM TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE ARU

Fax: (02) 8005 5681 or e-mail communityrugby@rugby.com.au

PLAYER (please print clearly)			
Players Name:		Club/School:	
Phone:		E-mail:	
Rugby Link No.		Date of Birth:	
1. Please enter the number of years played in front row			
2. Outline level of rugby played in front row (e.g. club/school, representative, etc. and year played)			
3. Did you play in the front row last year? (please circle)		YES	NO
4. If No, please state why:			
5. Did you miss any games due to injury in the last year? (please circle)		YES	NO
6. If Yes, how many games were missed due to injury last year?			Missed Games
List injuries causing a missed games:			
ASSESSING COACH			
<i>The assessing coach must be the same coach as in Schedule A. The assessing coach <u>must</u> hold the minimum required Coach accreditation, current Smart Rugby qualification and assess the player against the following considerations. If the answer is NO to any of these considerations, then the player shall NOT be considered capable of competing safely with players in the proposed competition at the time of this assessment. Subsequent assessments <u>may</u> take place if the coach believes competency has been gained to the considerations below by the player.</i>			
Have you received any specialised front row coaching in the last two seasons? (please circle)		YES	NO
If Yes, specify details (e.g. what coaching, identify the coach, level of coaching accreditation & experience, etc.)			
Does the player's level of skill development allow the player to compete safely in the front row with players in the proposed age grade competition		YES	NO
Does the standard of competition allow the player to compete safely in the front row with players in the proposed age grade competition?		YES	NO
<i>I declare that the information provided and attached is true and correct.</i>			
Name:		Signature:	Date:
ASSESSING STRENGTH & CONDITIONING COACH			
<i>The assessing S&C coach <u>must</u> hold a minimum qualification of ASCA Level 1 (or equivalent). If the answer is NO to any of these considerations, then the player shall NOT be considered capable of competing safely with players in the proposed competition at the time of this assessment. Subsequent assessments <u>may</u> take place if the coach believes competency has been gained to the considerations below by the player.</i>			
Name:		Contact No.	
Qualifications/ Accreditation:		E-mail:	
Does the player undertake a regular (> 2/week) strength program? (please circle)		YES	NO
If Yes, how many times a week does the player complete strength training?			Per week
How many years has the player been completing regular strength program?		Yrs	Mths
Please attach a copy of the player's current S&C program (with S&C coach sign off)			