

SENIOR RUGBY DISPENSATION PROCEDURE

BACKGROUND

A player is eligible to participate in Senior Rugby when they have turned 18 years of age.

Those players turning 18 years of age in the calendar year can seek approval under this Australian Rugby Dispensation Procedure to participate in Senior Rugby.

Australian Rugby believes it would be rare for a player under the age of 17 to have the physical development in conjunction with the ability and/or experience to participate in Senior Rugby; however, it is acknowledged that there may be exceptions between players and levels of competition.

This Australian Rugby Dispensation Procedure provides the ability for those players turning 17 or 18 years of age (and in exceptional circumstances those turning 16 years of age) the ability play Senior Rugby.

RESPONSIBILITIES

This procedure defines the step by step process to enable participation for qualifying age grade players to play Senior Rugby. This procedure is applicable to all registered players except for non-contact forms of Rugby including but not limited to VIVA7s.

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.

It is the responsibility of all Coaches, Club Officials, Unions and Affiliates and Parents / Guardians to follow this procedure with primary regard for the Australian Rugby Safety Policy when considering granting dispensation to players to play Senior Rugby.

STEP BY STEP PROCEDURES

STEP	DESCRIPTION OF ACTION	RESPONSIBLE
1	A participant turning 16, 17 or 18 in the calendar year expresses a desire to participate in a Senior Rugby competition.	Accredited Coach / Club or School Official / Parent or Guardian
2	The Club / School provide the Parent / Guardian with the Senior Rugby Dispensation Consent Form.	Club / School
3	If the participant is turning 18 during the calendar year, ONLY the parent / guardian consent form is completed accepting the associated risks.	Parent / Guardian

STEP	DESCRIPTION OF ACTION	RESPONSIBLE
4	If the participant is turning 17 during the calendar year and the player is NOT playing in the Front Row (Hooker or Prop) then Dispensation Schedule A must be completed including an assessment by a Qualified Assessing Coach. An Assessing Coach must hold a minimum Level 2 Accreditation and current Smart Rugby.	Qualified Assessing Coach
5	If the participant is turning 16 during the calendar year, the Senior Rugby Dispensation Consent Form must be forwarded directly to the ARU for consideration.	Club / School OR Parent / Guardian
6	Please Note: Players who wish to utilise the Senior Rugby 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 Dispensation Schedule B - Exception for Front Row[#] . <i>#not required for 7s Rugby</i>	Assessing Coach and Strength and Conditioning Coach
7	The Senior Rugby Dispensation Consent Form and Dispensation Schedule A (and Schedule B where required) are forwarded to the competition manager (or other designated State or Territory Union representative). If the competition manager (or other designated State or Territory Union representative) receives an application by a participant turning 16 in the calendar year, he or she must promptly forward it to the ARU for consideration and next steps.	Club / School OR Parent / Guardian
8	The competition manager (or other designated State or Territory Union representative) may request that Dispensation Schedule A (and /or Schedule B) be completed by an Assessing Coach at their absolute discretion for players turning 18 during the calendar year. This may be utilised for instance where a player turns 18 late in the calendar year or the player requests to play in the Front Row.	Competition Manager
9	The competition manager (or other designated State or Territory Union representative) will review the assessment where it relates to a player turning 17 or 18 and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accept or decline the application; OR • request independent assessment in line with the Australian Rugby Safety Policy and the Australian Rugby Participation Policy before making any decision; OR • make a recommendation to the player (or their parent/guardian) as to the appropriate age grade / Senior Rugby competition for that player based on the initial assessment or the subsequent independent assessment. 	Competition Manager

STEP	DESCRIPTION OF ACTION	RESPONSIBLE
10	If the competition manager (or other designated State or Territory Union representative) determines that the application requires review, he or she can appoint an independent assessor to help determine the application.	Competition Manager
11	For those applicants turning 16 during the calendar year, ARU will conduct such assessments as deemed necessary to fully consider the application. ARU has discretion to accept the application, accept the application with conditions/restrictions or decline the application.	ARU High Performance Coaches
12	The Senior Rugby Dispensation is approved or declined and the appropriate changes are made in the Competition Management System (Rugby Link) to enable participation in a Senior Rugby competition. This may include remittance of any conversion fees from Junior to Senior Competition.	Competition Manager
13	The Club / School is notified as well as the Parent / Guardian	Competition Manager

OTHER INFORMATION

With the exception of a recommendation by the ARU High Performance Unit, this procedure does not preclude Affiliate or Member Unions from implementing Competition Rules restricting who is eligible to play Senior Rugby for the purposes of ensuring viable Age Grade Competitions.

Any grievance by players (or their parents/guardians) regarding decisions made pursuant to this Senior Rugby 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 Senior Rugby Dispensation Procedure or conduct an investigation as appropriate.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Australian Rugby Code of Conduct
- Senior Rugby Dispensation Consent Form
- Dispensation Schedule A and Schedule B
- Australian Rugby Safety Policy
- Australian Rugby Participation Policy

SENIOR RUGBY DISPENSATION - CONSENT FORM

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

PLAYER (please print clearly)			
Name:	Rugby Link No.		
Club/School:	Competition/State:		
Date of Birth:	Actual Age Grade:		(i.e. U18s)
Current Position:	Requested Senior Grade:		(i.e. Colts, First Grade)
Contact 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 Senior Rugby Dispensation Procedure and Senior Rugby Dispensation Consent Form including Dispensation Schedules A & B;
- c) It has been explained to me that the risk of injury may be increased by the player playing in Senior Rugby competition prior to turning 18 years of age; and
- d) I understand that rugby is a contact sport and, like all contact sports, players are exposed to risk of injury. I also understand that the level of risk may be heightened where a player participates in a Senior Rugby competition prior to turning 18 years of age. 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 age grade.

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

COMPETITION MANAGER OR STATE / TERRITORY UNION DESIGNATE

Player turning 18 in the calendar year: (if YES – further Schedules may not be required)	YES	NO	(please circle)
Schedule A attached:	YES	NO	(please circle)
Schedule B attached:	YES	NO	(please circle)
Competition appointed independent coach assessment required:	YES	NO	
Independent Coach Assessment Approval of Senior Rugby Dispensation	YES	NO	N/A
Notes on decision / restrictions with respect to this Senior Rugby Dispensation:			
Approved Senior Grade:			

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