

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