



## **School Sport Australia Sport Participation Policy**

### ***Rationale***

Where considered appropriate, provision can be made for the granting of any one, or more, of the following sport participation strategies in the effort to enhance the participation experience and engagement of students attending School Sport Australia Championships.

The strategies outlined in this policy can be granted and implemented based on a number of reasons including;

- a reduced population of appropriately aged students in a specific sport.
- a small general population from which to select students from in the State/Territory seeking approval.
- a specific sport is in growth phase of development, with further work with the State Sporting Organisation (SSO) required.

### ***Sport Participation Strategies***

1. Consult with the Nat Sec for approval to create a mixed “development team”. This team should always be represented by a majority of eligible players/competitors from the “home” state/territory and invitation for additional competitors should first be extended to the host state/territory in alignment with current SSA Policy.
2. The inclusion of amendments or modifications to the rules and guidelines of a sport, as agreed by the National Secretary and SSA Board, in an effort to equalise competition and enhance the positive experience of participants. These amendments could include;
  - a points/margin, seeding and/or handicap system,
  - inclusion of a ‘mercy rule’ to enable both teams a scoring opportunity, or
  - changes to the restart of a game after scoring
3. Age dispensation of between 6 – 12 months can be granted to States and Territories where the provision is deemed necessary. Age Dispensation would be granted on a sport by sport basis.

*Note: Age Dispensation is not approved for the contact sports of Australian Football and Rugby League.*

### ***Application Process***

States or Territories wishing to implement any form of sport participation strategy, must follow the procedures outlined below;

- Use the School Sport Australia Sport Participation Strategy Application form to apply to NPAG to request the implementation of a specific strategy.
- Applications must be individualised for each sport / team addressing specific details regarding rationale and request.
- The application must be submitted to NPAG at least 3 months prior to the relevant Championship for consideration at the following year's Championship.

School Sport Australia's National Programs Advisory Group (NPAG), in consultation with the specific sport's National Secretary, will consider each request and determine the most appropriate sport participation strategy to be utilised.

Once a determination has been made, the request will be sent to the SSA Board for final approval.

If approved the National Secretary will ensure the host state officer informs attending officials and parent community of the implementation of a strategy in Championship Bulletins and Program.

The implementation of a specific strategy will be reviewed after no more than 3 years.

### ***Reporting***

Any State or Territory, having been granted permission to implement a sport participation strategy, must provide an annual brief written summary report of use and outlining any progress or improvements. The summary report is to be shared with the NPAG and the sport specific National Secretary by the end of each respective calendar year.

A full review of all implemented sport participation strategies will be required after no more than 3 years and a report shared with the NPAG and sport specific National Secretary.

Failure to meet any of above mentioned procedural requirements may jeopardise future approvals and any further utilisation of a sport participation strategy.