



## SENIOR RUGBY DISPENSATION PROCEDURE

### BACKGROUND

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

Any competition involving players over 18 years of age is classified as a Senior Rugby competition. Senior competitions may have age limits (e.g. Under 20's or Over 35's) and administrators may decide if they wish to allow players over the age restriction to compete in these competitions. This is a matter for the respective competition rules.

Players turning 18 years of age in the calendar year (who have not yet turned 18) may however seek approval under the *Senior Rugby Dispensation Procedure* to participate in Senior Rugby.

Rugby Australia's view is that players turning 16 or 17 years of age in the calendar year of 18 should not compete in Senior Rugby due to their physical development, maturity and experience, however it does acknowledge that may be occasions where it is appropriate for a player under the age of 18 to participate in Senior Rugby and it that it should have a robust procedure for this to be properly determined.

This procedure has therefore been created and it sets out the framework for a detailed assessment to take place.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

The procedure sets out the step-by-step process to consider participation for under 18s in Senior Rugby and it applies to all registered players except non-contact forms of Rugby including, but not limited, to Touch 7s.

Each State or Territory Union must designate an appropriate person(s) (typically the Competition Manager) and/or consider setting up an advisory panel/expert group to administer this procedure within a relevant competition.

It is the responsibility of all Coaches, Club Officials, Unions, Affiliates and Parents/Guardians to follow this procedure which has, at its heart, the primary purpose of ensuring the safety of the participant and those that he/she is playing with and against.



## STEP BY STEP PROCEDURE

STEP	DESCRIPTION OF ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	NOTES
1	<b>Player under the age of 18 wishes to play Senior Rugby</b>	Accredited Coach / Club or School Official / Parent or Guardian	A participant turning 16, 17 or 18 in the calendar year expresses a desire to participate in a Senior Rugby competition.
2	<b>Parent / Guardian obtains <i>Senior Rugby Consent Form</i></b>	Club / School Parent / Guardian	The Club / School provide the Parent / Guardian with the Senior Rugby Dispensation Consent Form OR Parent obtains from Rugby Australia Website
3	<b>Parent / Guardian of player who turns 18 in the calendar year completes form and submits to competition manager</b>	Parent / Guardian	If the participant is turning 18 during the calendar year (but has not yet turned 18), <b>ONLY</b> the parent / guardian consent form is completed, this includes accepting the associated risks.
4	<b>Player turning 17 during the calendar year is assessed by Assessing Coach</b>	Qualified Assessing Coach	If the participant is turning 17 during the calendar year and the player is <b>NOT</b> playing in the Front Row (Hooker or Prop), then the Senior Rugby Assessing Coach Report 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 and completed the Assessing Coach Module in the Rugby Learning Centre.
5	<b>Parent / Guardian of player who turns 16 in the calendar year completes Consent Form and Competition Manager forwards to Rugby AU</b>	Club / School OR Parent / Guardian	If the participant is turning 16 during the calendar year, the Competition Manager must forward the Senior Rugby Dispensation Consent Form directly to Rugby Australia for consideration (refer to step 11).

STEP	DESCRIPTION OF ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	NOTES
6	<p><b>Any player wishing to play Senior Rugby AND play in the front row has Dispensation Schedule B completed</b></p>	<p>Assessing Coach and Strength and Conditioning Coach</p>	<p><b>Please Note:</b> 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 Rugby Australia prior to participation in rugby, as outlined in <b>Dispensation Schedule B - Exception for Front Row<sup>#</sup></b>.  <sup>#</sup><i>not required for 7s Rugby</i></p>
7	<p><b>Senior Rugby Dispensation Consent Form and Senior Rugby Assessing Coach Report(s) are forwarded to competition manager</b></p>	<p>Club / School OR Parent / Guardian</p>	<p>The Senior Rugby Dispensation Consent Form and the Senior Rugby Assessing Coach Report (and Schedule B where required) are forwarded to the competition manager (or other designated State or Territory Union representative).</p>
8	<p><b>Players turning 18 in the calendar year may be requested to undergo assessment at the discretion of the competition manager</b></p>	<p>Competition Manager</p>	<p>The competition manager (or other designated State or Territory Union representative) may request that the Senior Rugby Assessing Coach Report (and /or Schedule B) be completed by an Assessing Coach at their absolute discretion for players turning 18 during the calendar year (who have not yet turned 18). 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.</p>

STEP	DESCRIPTION OF ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	NOTES
9	<b>Assessment reviewed, and decision made on Senior Rugby Dispensation</b>	Competition Manager	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• accept or decline the application; <b>OR</b></li> <li>• request independent assessment in line with the Rugby Australia Safety Policy and the Rugby Australia Participation Policy before making any decision; <b>OR</b></li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
10	<b>An Independent Qualified Assessing Coach may be appointed to undertake a further assessment</b>	Competition Manager	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.
11	<b>Rugby Australia will review applicants turning 16 during the calendar year</b>	Rugby Australia appointed Coaches	For those applicants turning 16 during the calendar year, Rugby Australia will conduct such assessments as deemed necessary to fully consider the application. Rugby Australia has discretion to accept the application, accept the application with conditions/restrictions or decline the application.
12	<b>Recommendations or Assessing Coach(es) accepted or declined and changes to registration made</b>	Competition Manager	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.
13	<b>Notifications made</b>	Competition Manager	The Club / School is notified as well as the Parent / Guardian

## OTHER INFORMATION

With the exception of a recommendation by the Rugby Australia 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.

Intentional or reckless disregard for the Rugby Australia Safety Policy, Rugby Australia Participation or this procedure **may result in disciplinary action under the Rugby Australia Code of Conduct or the Rugby Australia Member Protection Policy.**

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 Rugby Australia has the discretion to review any decision made pursuant to this Senior Rugby Dispensation Procedure or conduct an investigation as appropriate.

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

- [Rugby Australia Code of Conduct](#)
- Senior Rugby Dispensation Consent Form
- Senior Rugby Assessing Coach Report
- [Dispensation Schedule B](#)
- [Rugby Australia Safety Policy](#)
- [Rugby Australia Participation Policy](#)

**SENIOR RUGBY DISPENSATION - CONSENT FORM**

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

<b>PLAYER</b> (please print clearly)			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Rugby Link No.</b>		
<b>Club/School</b>	<b>Competition/State</b>		
<b>Date of Birth</b>	<b>Actual Age Grade</b>		(i.e. U18s)
<b>Current Position</b>	<b>Requested Senior Grade</b>		(i.e. Colts, First Grade)
<b>Contact No.</b>	<b>E-mail</b>		

**PARENT / LEGAL GUARDIAN**

I confirm that:

- a) I am a parent or legal guardian of the above-mentioned player;
- b) I have read and accept the provisions of the, Senior Rugby Dispensation Procedure.
- c) It has been explained to me that the aim of the Senior Rugby Dispensation Procedure is for Rugby participants with comparable physical development in conjunction with ability and/or experience to play with and against each other;
- d) I consent to my contact details being provided to a Qualified Assessing Coach for the purpose of the player undergoing a Coach Assessment (including for arranging a suitable time and day to undertake the assessment); and
- e) I understand that rugby is a contact sport, and, like all contact sports, players are exposed to a risk of injury. In addition to understanding these risks, I also agree, to the extent permitted by law, to waive my right to bring any claim for liability against any participant (including players, coaches, volunteers and administrators) and release all participants from any liability that may be incurred in connection with the player's participation in the requested or recommended age grade.

**Name:**

**Signature:**

**Date:**

**COMPETITION MANAGER OR STATE / TERRITORY UNION DESIGNATE**

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

**Name:**

**Signature:**

**Date:**

## SENIOR RUGBY DISPENSATION ASSESSING COACH REPORT

This Assessing Coach Report is to be completed as required via the **Senior Rugby Dispensation Procedure**:  
 For **Age Grade Dispensation and Mixed Gender Dispensation, Disability and Gender Identification Dispensation Procedures** please use *Specific Assessing Coach Reports*.

<b>Player Name</b>		<b>Assessment Date</b>	
<b>LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE</b>			
The player's level of experience allows the player to compete safely with players in the proposed competition:			
<b>Enter the number of years played</b>		<b>Proposed Playing Position(s)</b>	
<b>Was the player granted Dispensation the previous season (please circle)</b>		YES	NO
If Dispensation was granted last year, please provided details:			
<b>PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT &amp; FITNESS</b>			
The player's level of physical development and fitness relative to the players in the proposed Senior competition			
<b>Measured Weight (kg)</b>		<b>Measured Standing Height (cm)</b>	
<b>Does the player's level of physical development and / or fitness allow the player to compete safely with players in the proposed Senior competition?</b>		YES	NO
<b>SKILL DEVELOPMENT</b>			
The player's level of skill development allows the player to compete safely with players in the proposed competition (please circle)			
<b>Catch &amp; Pass:</b>	YES	NO	Notes:
<b>Track to Tackle</b>	YES	NO	Notes:
<b>Tackle competency:</b>	YES	NO	Notes:
<b>Tackle Contest</b>	YES	NO	Notes:
<b>Set Piece (Scrum / Lineout):</b>	YES	NO	Notes:
<b>Assessment occurred during:</b>	Match	Training	Both
N/A			
<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>			
<b>PLAYER SAFETY AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>			
<b>Standard of Competition</b>	<b>If the player remains in their current Age Grade, do they pose a significant safety risk to themselves or others?</b>		YES
			NO
<b>Safety of Participant(s)</b>	<b>Does the standard of the competition allow the player to compete safely with players in the proposed Senior competition?</b>		YES
			NO
<b>Recommendation of Assessing Coach</b>	Stay in actual age grade (Senior Rugby Dispensation not approved)	Play in a <u>specific</u> senior grade (e.g. U19,Colts)	Play in <u>any</u> senior grade
<b>Restrictions / Specific Senior Grade(s)</b>			
<b>Assessing Coach Name</b>			
<b>Current Accreditation (please circle)</b>	Level 2	Smart Rugby	Assessing Coach
	<b>MyRugbyID</b>		