

SCHOOL SPORT AUSTRALIA CULTURAL INTEGRITY STATEMENT

School Sport Australia (SSA) is committed to fostering a culturally safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for every student, official, staff member, volunteer, and family participating in school sport across Australia. Our goal is to ensure that all young people—regardless of background, identity, or lived experience—can access, enjoy, and thrive within our national representative pathways.

Respect for First Nations Peoples

SSA acknowledges the **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples**, the First Peoples of Australia, as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters on which we live, learn, and play.

We honour their enduring connection to Country, culture, and community, and recognise their outstanding contributions to Australian sport.

Aligned with national reconciliation principles and leading frameworks across the education and sport sectors, SSA is committed to ensuring:

- culturally safe environments at all events;
- respectful engagement with local Traditional Owners, Elders, and community leaders;
- the celebration of First Nations cultures within our programs and championships; and
- continuous learning and cultural capability development across our organisation.

Inclusive Participation & Representation

School Sport Australia champions equitable access to school sport for students from all cultural, linguistic, socio-economic, and geographic backgrounds.

Reflecting national best practice:

- removing barriers that prevent participation;
- recognising diverse cultural practices, communication styles, and family needs;
- supporting gender equity and the inclusion of students with disability;
- ensuring uniforms, venues, event schedules, and accommodation consider cultural and religious needs; and
- amplifying the voices of students and communities who have been historically under-represented.

Cultural Safety at Events and Championships

SSA ensures cultural safety across all national championships and SSA Games through:

- respectful cultural protocols including Acknowledgements of Country and opportunities for Welcome to Country;
- environments free from racism, bias, and discrimination;
- training for staff, volunteers, and officials to support culturally responsive behaviour;
- accessible pathways for raising concerns about cultural safety;
- support for students observing cultural or religious obligations and
- authentic collaboration with diverse cultural communities.

Cultural Integrity in Conduct & Governance

All students, teachers, officials, coaches, volunteers, and supporters are expected to uphold SSA's values of cultural integrity through:

- respectful communication and behaviour at all times;
- demonstrating fairness, empathy, and understanding;
- standing firmly against racism, harassment, or discriminatory actions;
- applying the SSA Codes of Conduct consistently and without bias; and
- integrating inclusive practices into coaching, officiating, selection, and team leadership.

Our leadership and governance practices will continue to reflect national standards for cultural capability and inclusiveness across the education and sport sectors.

Partnerships with Communities & Sector Leaders

School Sport Australia will work collaboratively with:

- the eight Member Bodies. State and Territory Education Departments, and their School Sport Units and member schools.
- Assist our Member Bodies in delivering aspects of the respective Reconciliation Action Plans and or similar documents.
- National Sporting Organisations,
- Sport Inclusion Australia and other inclusion partners, and
- culturally and linguistically diverse communities, First Nations organisations, and community leaders

to strengthen inclusive pathways and ensure every student can participate with confidence and pride.

Our Commitment Moving Forward

SSA is committed to continuous improvement in cultural integrity and inclusion. We will:

- embed cultural safety across policies, training, program delivery, and championship operations;
- seek feedback from students, families, education sectors, officials, and community partners;
- review our practices annually; and
- ensure every SSA event reflects our core values of respect, fairness, integrity, inclusivity, and cultural understanding.

Short Version

School Sport Australia is committed to cultural integrity and inclusion. We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of Australia and commit to providing culturally safe, respectful, and inclusive environments for all students. We champion diversity in all forms, stand against racism and discrimination, and provide the opportunity for students to participate in Representative School Sport.