

SCHOOL SPORT AUSTRALIA INCLUSION POLICY

School Sport Australia Inclusion Policy and Guidelines

A nationally consistent framework for equitable, safe and meaningful participation by students with disability

Meeting	School Sport Australia Board — 16 September 2026
Paper owner	Executive Officer
Decision sought	Approve the policy and staged implementation, subject to final consultation and legal/governance review
Status	Approved – September 2026
Proposed commencement	1 January 2027
Review cycle	Annual implementation report; formal policy review by September 2028

RECOMMENDATION That the Board approve the School Sport Australia Inclusion Policy and Guidelines as School Sport Australia's national minimum standard, authorise the Executive Officer to make non-material drafting amendments following consultation, and require an implementation report after the 2027 championship program.

1. Purpose

To establish a coherent national policy and practical implementation framework for consideration across representative school sport, representative selection pathways, and implementation of School Sport Australia Championships including the School Sport Australia Games. The proposal translates the Round 1 project commitments into enduring governance and operating requirements.

2. Strategic case

- The Play Well Project commits School Sport Australia to national inclusion policies, multiclass competition frameworks, workforce capability, school-to-sport pathways and sustainable integration into School Sport Australia operations.

- School Sport Australia's existing policies already commit the organisation to child safety, diversity, equitable participation and educational outcomes, but do not consolidate disability inclusion obligations and processes in one operational framework.
- Sport Inclusion Australia's model emphasises person-centred practice, safeguarding, eligibility education, capacity building, choice and connected pathways from school to community and high-performance sport.
- A national minimum standard reduces inconsistent practice between sports and jurisdictions while preserving Member Bodies' selection authority and applicable education department requirements.

3. Policy design

Design element	Proposed position
Scope	All School Sport Australia-controlled programs and people; Member Bodies encouraged to apply the standard when selecting, preparing and supporting School Sport Australia teams.
Priority	Disability inclusion, including physical, sensory, intellectual, neurological and psychosocial disability; with intersectional barriers considered.
Standard	Equitable opportunity and reasonable adjustment, without removing essential safety, age, eligibility or competition-integrity requirements.
Classification	Required only where a class-based competition or pathway requires it; handled confidentially through the relevant authorised system.
Accountability	Board oversight; Executive Officer implementation; National Programs Committee, sport integration; Member Body and Host delivery reporting.
Assurance	Annual data, participant voice, incident/complaint trends and implementation reporting; formal review in 2028.

4. Key governance safeguards

- The policy does not create an automatic right to selection or lower published performance standards; it requires an accessible and non-discriminatory process.
- Adjustments are determined individually, with the student, parent/carer and officials representing the relevant Member Body involved, and must be reasonable, safe and compatible with essential competition requirements.
- Disability and health information is collected on a need-to-know basis, stored securely and never used for promotion without specific consent.

- Complaints about discrimination, bullying, adjustments or accessibility are managed promptly under existing School Sport Australia and Member Body procedures, with safeguarding and mandatory-reporting obligations taking priority.
- Sport-specific technical rules remain subject to the relevant NSO/NSO-D and recognised classification rules; conflicts are escalated rather than informally resolved.
- Approval of this policy does not require every existing or future School Sport Australia sport or championship to introduce a disability-specific division, additional event category or multiclass competition. It also does not guarantee that every sport included within the Paralympic or broader disability sport system will be incorporated into the School Sport Australia national program.
- Any new sport, disability-specific division, classification or multiclass event will be considered individually, considering alignment with this policy, Member Body programs and participation pathways, anticipated student demand, workforce and operational capacity, competition viability, safety, classification requirements and available resources. Where appropriate, a pilot may be conducted and evaluated before any decision is made about ongoing inclusion in the School Sport Australia program.

5. Financial and operational implications

Initial implementation can be absorbed principally through the ASC Play Well Affiliate Inclusion Project Round 1, existing policy review processes and shared resources with Sport Inclusion Australia. Future sports-specific adjustments, accessible venues, additional support personnel or specialist classification may have cost implications and should be identified during annual championship planning and budgeting. No student or family should be charged an unplanned disability-related fee without transparent approval and communication.

6. Proposed Board resolution

- Approve the School Sport Australia Inclusion Policy and Guidelines, with effect from 1 January 2027.
- Authorise the Executive Officer, in consultation with the Inclusion Project Reference Group and Sport Inclusion Australia, to make non-material amendments following Member Body and technical consultation.
- Require sport-specific changes to be incorporated progressively into the specific, selected sports, Championship Rules and Guidelines, commencing with identified pilot and multiclass sports.

- Require a progress report to the Board by December 2027, including participation, budget implications, accessibility, complaints and participant-experience measures.

Part 1 - National Inclusion Policy

Policy statement and minimum requirements

1. Policy identity

Field	Detail
Policy owner	School Sport Australia Board
Responsible officer	Executive Officer
Applies from	1 January 2027 (proposed)
Applies to	School Sport Australia Board, committees, staff, contractors, National Sport Advisors, officials, volunteers, hosts, Member Bodies when delivering School Sport Australia pathways, and all participants and spectators at School Sport Australia programs
Related framework	Operational Guidelines in Part B of this document

2. Purpose

This policy establishes national minimum standards to ensure students with disabilities can access, participate in and progress through school sport and representative school sport in a manner that is equitable, safe, welcoming, educationally valuable and consistent with the integrity of competition.

3. Scope and application

The policy applies to the School Sport Australia representative school sport participant journey: promotion and information; classification and eligibility; planning ceremonies, championship team experiences and championships rules and regulations; awards and recognition; media; complaints; evaluation; transition from school, state, national or international pathways. Assisting Member Body responsibility including providing advice to them trials and selection; team preparation and possibly travel related policies.

Where legislation, an education department requirement, child-safety rule, public-health direction or sport-specific safety rule imposes a higher standard, the higher standard

applies. Where requirements appear inconsistent, the matter must be escalated to the Executive Officer before a decision is made.

4. Definitions

Term	Meaning for this policy
Accessibility	The extent to which information, environments, systems, services and activities can be used by people with diverse access needs.
Classification	A sport-specific process that groups eligible athletes to support fair competition at representative level. Classification is not a general test of whether a student may participate in school sport at entry or exposure level.
Disability	A broad and evolving concept encompassing physical, sensory, intellectual, neurological and psychosocial disability and the interaction with attitudinal and environmental barriers.
Inclusion	Intentional action that enables people to participate, access, belong, contribute and progress with dignity and choice.
Reasonable adjustment	A change to a process, environment, communication method or support arrangement that enables equitable participation and does not create unjustifiable hardship or remove an essential safety or competition requirement.
Representative pathway	The progression from school and local opportunities through Member Body selection to School Sport Australia competition and onward sport pathways.
Student voice	The student's views, preferences and experience, sought in an accessible way and given due weight according to age and maturity.

5. Principles

- Rights, dignity and belonging - students are treated with respect and are welcomed as full members of the school representative sport community.
- Student-centred and strengths-based practice - decisions begin with the student's goals, strengths, preferences and access needs, not assumptions about diagnosis.
- Equity, not identical treatment - different supports may be required to provide a fair opportunity to participate and demonstrate ability.
- Safety and safeguarding - inclusion must be delivered consistently with child safety, duty of care, medical and integrity obligations.
- Choice and meaningful participation - participation may be recreational, competitive, officiating, leadership, volunteering or pathway-focused; students are not channeled into a separate option without consultation.

- Nothing about us without us - students with disabilities and, where appropriate, families and people with lived experience are involved in codesign with teachers and other subject matter experts as well as in decisions and review.
- Fair competition and pathway alignment - eligibility and classification requirements are transparent, sport-specific and aligned with recognised NSO/NSO-D systems.
- Cultural and intersectional safety - disability may intersect with culture, gender, language, remoteness, socioeconomic circumstances and other characteristics; compounded barriers must be considered.
- Continuous improvement - School Sport Australia uses evidence, feedback and data to remove barriers and strengthen capability over time.

6. Policy requirements

6.1 non-discriminatory and equitable opportunity

- A student must not be excluded, discouraged, segregated or treated unfavourably because of disability, an assumed disability, use of an adjustment, support person, assistive device or classification status.
- Essential eligibility, age, safety and performance requirements may be retained where they are necessary, published, consistently applied and capable of being met with reasonable adjustment.
- Open and classification-based competition divisions should, where offered, be incorporated equitably within the overall championship program, including scheduling, presentation, recognition and participant experience.

6.2 Accessible information and entry

- Program information, registration, consent, schedules, venue details and complaints pathways must be available in accessible digital formats and plain language.
- Registration should provide a respectful, optional method for students or parents/carers to identify access, communication, medical or support needs.
- Information about disability must be requested only where relevant to safety, adjustment, eligibility, classification or service delivery.

6.3 Pathways

- With consent, students and families should receive information about relevant community, state, national and international opportunities through NSOs, NSO-Ds and other recognised partners.
- Pathway advice should present genuine choices and must not imply that a student is required to pursue high-performance sport.
- Referrals may be made only with consent and with appropriate privacy safeguards.

6.4 Classification-Based and Multi-Class Competition Frameworks

- School Sport Australia will establish an appropriate sports-specific competition framework for each approved Classification-Based Division. This may comprise a Multi-Class Division, a division for one or more specified sport classes, or a separately recognised Para or adapted sport
- The School Sport Australia Championship Rules & Guidelines for the relevant sports must identify eligible impairment groups and sport classes, entry and classification status requirements, qualifying standards where applicable, event groupings, scoring or point systems, minimum field requirements, officiating competencies, equipment modifications, protest/review processes as per the same in all divisions and or classifications, results and records rules, awards, and pathway alignment.
- The rules and guidelines should be developed with the relevant NSO, NSO-D or authorised classification body and with lived-experience input. They should not combine classes or alter recognised sport rules without an evidence-based rationale, technical approval and clear pre-event communication.
- Where participant numbers are insufficient for a viable class or event, options may include combined-class competition using an approved scoring method, exhibition or pilot status, cross-jurisdiction entries, or another meaningful format. A student should not be excluded automatically without these options being considered.
- Pilot frameworks require defined objectives, risk controls, participant information, evaluation measures and a decision point for continuation, amendment or cessation.

6.5 Classification and eligibility education

- School Sport Australia will integrate classification and eligibility education into the induction and professional development of relevant staff, selectors, coaches, managers, technical officials, convenors and Member Body officers.
- Students and families should receive accessible, plain-language education early enough to understand the purpose of classification, relevant eligibility categories, evidence requirements, application steps, likely timeframes, costs if any, privacy protections, status types and review or protest rights.

- Education must distinguish general participation, disability eligibility and sport classification; explain that diagnosis does not automatically determine a sport class; and clarify that only the authorised body and or process can determine eligibility or classification.
- Role-specific learning should address appropriate referral processes, confidentiality, respectful communication, common misconceptions, competition integrity, classification changes and how to support a student before, during and after assessment.

6.6 Privacy, data and media

- Disability, health, adjustment and classification information is sensitive and should be collected minimally, stored securely, accessed on a need-to-know basis and retained or disposed of under applicable requirements.
- Operational data should separate identity information from aggregate monitoring data wherever practicable.
- A student's disability story, diagnosis, classification, image or personal achievement must not be used for publicity without informed and specific consent. Consent may be withdrawn for future use.
- Media language should be respectful, accurate, strength-based and consistent with the individual's stated terminology preference.

6.7 Complaints, incidents and review

- Accessible complaint channels or processes must be available before, during and after an event, including support to make a complaint.
- Complaints concerning access, discrimination, bullying or adjustment decisions should be acknowledged promptly, assessed for immediate risk and referred to the correct School Sport Australia or Member Body process.
- No person may be disadvantaged for requesting an adjustment, raising a concern or participating in a review.
- Systemic issues and de-identified lessons should inform event debriefs, workforce development and policy review.

7. Roles and accountability

Role	Core responsibilities
School Sport Australia Board	Approve policy; oversee risk and strategy; receive annual assurance and evaluation reporting.
Executive Officer	Implement and interpret policy; ensure training/resources; resolve escalated conflicts; report to Board.
National Programs Committee & National Sports Advisors	Embed requirements into national program settings and sport rules & guidelines and operational manuals. Apply requirements in championship planning; brief hosts and officials; escalate eligibility, rules or adjustment issues.
Inclusion Reference Project Group	Provide lived-experience and technical advice; review implementation data and resources.
Member Bodies	Advised to consider accessible nominations and trials; determine teams under published criteria; coordinate student adjustments and jurisdictional obligations.
Host Bodies / Convenors	Complete accessibility planning; deliver accessible events and complaints pathways; record and escalate issues.
Team officials, selectors and volunteers	Should consider to complete required learning; apply adjustments; protect privacy; prevent and respond to exclusion and harm.
Sport Inclusion Australia / NSO / NSO-D partners	Provide specialist eligibility, classification, training and pathway advice within agreed roles.

8. Breaches

A breach may be managed under the School Sport Australia Codes of Conduct, Child Safe Policy, incident or complaints processes, contract or volunteer arrangements, and relevant Member Body procedures. Outcomes must be proportionate, procedurally fair, documented and focused on safety, accountability and prevention of recurrence. Serious repeated or deliberate discriminatory conduct may result in removal from duties or an event and referral to the relevant authority.

9. Monitoring and review

The Executive Officer will provide an annual implementation report to the Board. The policy will be formally reviewed by September 2028, or earlier following material legislative,

integrity, classification or program change, a serious incident, or evidence of systemic barriers.

Part 2 – Disability Inclusion - Technical and Operational Guidelines

10. Competition division terminology

School Sport Australia will use competition terminology that describes the applicable competition format, age category or recognised sport classification. Terminology must not distinguish participants as “able-bodied”, “disabled”, “normal” or “special”.

10.1: Non-classification-based competition

A non-classification-based competition is an event or division in which disability classification does not determine eligibility, entry, grouping, scoring or results.

In championship programs, entry systems, start lists, results and communications, a non-classification-based competition will ordinarily be identified by the sport or event name together with the applicable gender and age category. It will not require an additional division label.

Subject to the applicable age, gender, selection, qualification, safety and sport-specific requirements, a non-classification-based competition may include students with or without disability.

For example:

- Swimming - 50m Freestyle - Boys - 12 Years & Under
- Track and Field - 100m - Girls - 13 Years
- Basketball 3x3 - Boys - 16 Years & Under

The term “Open” will only be used where it has a formally adopted sport-specific meaning, such as an age-unrestricted or senior competition category. It will not be used as a general replacement for “Able-Bodied Division”.

10.2: Classification-Based Division

A Classification-Based Division is a competition division in which eligibility, entry, grouping, rules, scoring or results are determined wholly or partly by a recognised disability sport eligibility or classification system.

A Classification-Based Division will be publicly identified as:

- a **multi-Class event or division** where athletes from two or more recognised sport classes compete through an approved grouping, points, scoring or competition system;
- the relevant sport class or classes, such as an **II-3 Division**, **T20 Division** or **T40-41 Division**, where the competition is restricted to one or more specified recognised classes; or
- the official name of the Para or adapted sport, such as **Wheelchair Basketball** or **Boccia**, where the sport has an established and recognised name.

The terms “Able-Bodied Division”, “Disabled Division”, “Normal Division” and “Special Division” will not be used in School Sport Australia policies, rules, championship programs, event information, results, communications or promotional materials.

The absence of a division label does not mean that every student is eligible to enter an event. It does not override applicable age, gender, qualification, selection, safety, classification or sport-specific eligibility requirements.

10.3: Examples of competition naming

The following examples demonstrate how the terminology should be applied. They are illustrative only and do not confirm or guarantee that a particular sport, event or Classification-Based Division will be included in the School Sport Australia Championship program.

Sport or competition format	Appropriate public name
Swimming event in which disability classification does not determine entry, scoring or results	50m Freestyle _ Boys _ 12 Years & Under
Swimming event involving athletes from multiple recognised sport classes using an approved Multi-Class Point Score system	50m Freestyle Multi-Class _ Boys _ 12 Years & Under
Age-unrestricted swimming event in which disability classification does not determine entry, scoring or results	50m Freestyle _ Boys _ Open
Age-unrestricted swimming event conducted through an approved Multi-Class Point Score system	50m Freestyle Multi-Class _ Boys _ Open
Track and Field event in which disability classification does not determine entry, scoring or results	100m _ Girls _ 13 Years

Track and Field event involving athletes from multiple recognised sport classes using an approved points or scoring system	100m Multi-Class - Girls - 13 Years
Basketball 3x3 competition in which disability classification does not determine eligibility or results	Basketball 3x3 - Boys - 16 Years & Under
Basketball 3x3 competition involving athletes from multiple recognised sport classes under an approved eligibility and competition system	Basketball 3x3 Multi-Class - Boys - 16 Years & Under
Separately recognised sport with an established name	Wheelchair Basketball, Boccia or the applicable recognised sport name

10.4: Application in programs, results and medals

The approved competition name should be used consistently across championship programs, entry systems, draws, start lists, results, records and public communications.

For example, a championship program containing parallel swimming events should use:

- 50m Freestyle - Boys - 12 Years & Under
- 50m Freestyle Multi-Class - Boys - 12 Years & Under
- 50m Freestyle - Boys - 13 Years & Under
- 50m Freestyle Multi-Class - Boys - 13 Years & Under
- 50m Freestyle - Boys - 14 Years & Under
- 50m Freestyle Multi-Class - Boys - 14 Years & Under

The words “Open Division” should not be inserted into these age-group event names because “Open” may be understood as a competition category without restriction.

Where space on medals is limited, the event name may be abbreviated provided the age category and competition format remain clear. For example:

- **50m Freestyle - Boys 12's**
- **50m Freestyle MC - Boys 12's**
- **Basketball 3x3 - Boys 16's**
- **Basketball 3x3 MC - Boys 16's**

“MC” may be used on medals, results systems or other materials with restricted space.

“Multi-Class” should be written in full in policies, championship programs and explanatory information wherever practicable. The final name of any Classification-Based Division must be consistent with the eligibility, classification, scoring and technical requirements

approved for that sport. School Sport Australia must not use a classification or multi-Class label unless the corresponding eligibility and competition requirements have been formally adopted in the relevant Championship Rules and Guidelines.

11. Reasonable adjustments

- Adjustment requests are to be considered promptly, individually and in consultation with the student, parent/carer and officials representing the relevant Member Body.
- Possible adjustments include accessible formats, additional orientation, modified check-in, communication supports, rest or sensory breaks, accessible equipment, support-person access, modified trial methods, schedule changes, venue access measures and permitted sport-specific modifications.
- A refusal must be based on evidence, identify the essential requirement or material hardship involved, consider alternatives, be documented, and include a review pathway.
- Temporary and episodic disability are considered on the same individual basis.

12. SSA information advice as a guide to Member Bodies in respect to Trials, team selection and team membership

- Trial information and selection criteria are advised to be clear, timely and accessible.
- A student's disability must not be treated as evidence that the student cannot meet travel, training, team or competition requirements.
- Approved adjustments to allow the student to demonstrate the same underlying skill or criterion, unless the sport-specific rules authorise a modified criterion.
- Selectors and team/trial officials should be briefed on approved adjustments and disability bias; only necessary information is shared.
- Selection and non-selection decisions are advised to be recorded against published criteria. Existing Member Body review or appeal processes are advised to remain available to all.

13. Eligibility and classification

- General participation in school sport does not require disability classification and should not unless the relevant event or pathway specifically requires it.
- Where classification or eligibility is required, families receive early, accurate information on evidence, timeframes, costs, privacy and review options.
- Only the relevant recognised organisation or authorised classifier determines sport class or eligibility. Coaches, teachers and event staff must not diagnose, classify or promise an outcome.

- Provisional, review or changing status is managed in accordance with the applicable sport rules and communicated sensitively. Competition and event delivery
- School Sport Australia and hosts of School Sport Australia Championships must assess venue, transport interface, field-of-play, amenities, changing facilities, seating, signage, acoustics, evacuation and digital accessibility during planning.
- Competition formats must follow the relevant Championship Rules and Guidelines and recognised sport or classification rules.
- Students in inclusive or multiclass events receive equitable access to ceremonies, championship team experiences, warm-up, coaching, medical support, officiating, results, medals, imagery and live streaming coverage.
- Contingency plans must address equipment failure, accessible transport disruption, support-person absence, sensory overload and emergency evacuation.

Part 2B — Operational Inclusion Guidelines

Practical requirements for schools, Member Bodies, hosts and School Sport Australia championship delivery

14: Inclusion planning cycle

Stage	Minimum actions	Evidence
Design	Consult lived experience; map barriers; confirm sport/classification rules; budget accessibility.	Consultation record; risk and access plan; budget line.
Promote	Use accessible formats and inclusive imagery; explain pathways, eligibility and supports.	Accessible web/PDF check; communications pack.
Register	Invite access needs confidentially; nominate a contact; seek only necessary information.	Registration fields; privacy notice; contact log.
Trial/select stage	School Sport Australia to publish rules to Member Bodies can consider the criteria; agree adjustments; brief selectors; document decisions.	Adjustment plan; selector briefing; decision record.
Prepare	School Sport Australia in respect to School Sport Australia Games and or Hosts of other championships to confirm venue, travel interface, support person, equipment, medication/medical plan and emergency arrangements.	Participant support plan; venue confirmation, risk management plan.

Stage	Minimum actions	Evidence
Deliver	School Sport Australia in respect to School Sport Australia Games and or Hosts of other championships to check access daily; provide trusted contact; implement adjustments; record incidents and changes.	Daily checklist; issue/incident log.
Review	School Sport Australia, where appropriate, and or Member Body to seek accessible student/family feedback; analyse participation and barriers; assign improvements.	Survey/consultation; debrief actions; annual data.

15: Reasonable adjustment process

- Invite the request. Provide a named contact and more than one communication method.
- Listen and clarify. Ask what barrier exists, what has worked previously and what outcome is sought; do not require unnecessary diagnostic detail.
- Assess essential requirements. Identify safety, eligibility, age, performance and sport-rule requirements that genuinely apply.
- Explore options collaboratively. Consult the student (where appropriate), parent/carer and relevant technical or medical expertise with consent.
- Decide promptly. Confirm the agreed adjustment, responsibilities, review date and contingency arrangements in accessible writing.
- Implement discreetly. Share only the information required by those delivering the adjustment.
- Review effectiveness. Revisit the arrangement if conditions, venues, schedules, classification or student needs change.
- If refused, explain and review. Give reasons, alternatives and the relevant internal review or complaint pathway.

DECISION TEST

- Is the requirement essential?
- Does the proposed adjustment remove the barrier while preserving safety and competition integrity?
- Is there a less restrictive alternative?
- Has the student's voice been heard?
- Is the decision evidence-based and documented?

16: Eligibility and classification practice

- Commence education early; evidence gathering and formal eligibility can take time.
- Use the terminology and eligibility categories of the relevant authorised body; do not invent local classifications.
- Explain that eligibility/classification protects fair class-based competition but does not define a student's worth, potential or right to general participation.
- Keep documentation confidential and avoid displaying diagnosis or sensitive status on public start lists or results.
- Plan for review, protest or status-change procedures in the sport rules; identify the decision-maker before the event.

For disability specific pathways, use the relevant NSO/NSO-D or recognised classification authority, for example for intellectual impairment pathways - seek guidance from Sport Inclusion Australia

Workforce capability

People with relevant responsibilities must receive role-appropriate learning before delivery and periodic refreshers. Training consideration by Member Bodies, Families or Carers, Students and Coach should have the consideration of be co-designed or reviewed with people with disability and or peak bodies or NSO or NSOD such as Sports Inclusion Australia include:

- disability awareness, respectful language, unconscious bias and intersectionality;
- reasonable adjustment and accessible communication;
- child safety, safeguarding, bullying and complaint response;
- eligibility and classification boundaries;
- inclusive coaching, officiating and event management;
- privacy and consent; and
- practical scenarios relevant to the sport and role.

17: Complaints and escalation guide

- Ensure immediate safety and wellbeing; call emergency services or make mandatory reports where required.
- Listen without judgment, thank the person, record the concern accurately and explain next steps in accessible language.
- Notify the appropriate Team Manager, Convenor, National Sport Advisor, Member Body or Executive Officer according to responsibility and seriousness.

- Protect privacy and prevent retaliation. Do not promise secrecy where reporting is required.
- Provide interim adjustments or supports while the matter is assessed.
- Communicate the outcome and review rights to the extent permitted, then capture de-identified learning.

Part 3 — Technical Tools and Templates

18: SSA to Member bodies advice guides in respect to accessible trials and selection checklist

- Venue route, parking/drop-off, toilets, seating, lighting, acoustics and emergency access checked.
- Instructions available in advance and in accessible/alternative formats.
- Extra processing time, demonstration, communication aid or support person considered.
- Warm-up, rest, medication, hydration and sensory regulation needs planned.
- Selectors assess published performance attributes rather than eye contact, speech, movement style or unsupported assumptions about independence.
- Where a criterion cannot be observed in the standard method, an equivalent method is used where reasonable.
- Adjustment information is separated from scoring and selection deliberations unless directly relevant.
- Outcome communication is timely, respectful and includes review/feedback information.

19: Championship and School Sport Australia Games checklist

Area	Operational check
Venue	Continuous accessible route; appropriate toilets/change; seating and shade; signage; quiet space where practicable; emergency egress.
Program	Inclusive scheduling; sufficient transition time; no avoidable clashes; equitable ceremonies and team experience access.
Competition	Correct eligibility/classification list; sport-approved equipment and rules; trained technical officials; transparent results.
Workforce	Named inclusion lead; officials briefed; medical and safeguarding contacts known; support-person credentials arranged.

Area	Operational check
Communication	Accessible bulletins, maps, announcements and digital content; changes sent through agreed channels.
Participant support	Individual arrangements confirmed; equipment charging/storage; medication and personal-care responsibilities clear.
Recognition	Equivalent medals, podium presentation, results publication, photography and commentary.
Feedback	Accessible student/family feedback option and prompt escalation pathway available.

20: Minimum multiclass sport framework

Framework component	Minimum content
Governance	Technical owner; approving authority; partner roles; review date; conflict/escalation process.
Eligibility and classification	Eligible classes; accepted status; evidence and deadlines; late or changing status; privacy; protest/review rules.
Entry and qualification	Age and school eligibility; qualifying standards; entry limits; exceptional-entry process; minimum field requirements.
Competition model	Events offered; class grouping; heats/finals; approved scoring or points method; ties; records; team points where applicable.
Technical delivery	Rules, equipment and modifications; field-of-play access; officiating and classifier requirements; safety and medical arrangements.
Participant experience	Integrated scheduling; warm-up; ceremonies; championship team experience; results, medals and recognition; accessible communications.
Education	Family information; workforce modules; pre-event briefing; authorised referral contacts; rule-change updates.
Evaluation	Participation and experience measures; incidents/protests; technical review; pilot success criteria; expansion decision.

21: Classification and eligibility education pathway

Audience	Required learning outcome	Delivery point
Students and families	Understand purpose, process, evidence, privacy, timeframes, costs, status and review rights; know who can provide authorised advice.	Before nomination and again before assessment/competition .
School and Member Body officers	Identify when eligibility/classification may apply; make appropriate referrals; support documents without diagnosing; protect information.	Annual induction and sport-specific update.
Selectors, coaches and managers	Separate selection from classification; prevent bias; support approved adjustments; respond appropriately to changing status.	Before trials and team preparation.
Convenors and technical officials	Verify status lawfully; apply class, grouping, scoring, protest and results rules consistently; escalate technical questions.	Pre-championship technical briefing.
Media and communications personnel	Use accurate language; protect sensitive information; explain multiclass competition without stereotyping.	Before publication or broadcast.
School Sport Australia Board, NPC and NSAs	Understand governance, integrity, risk, pathway and framework approval responsibilities.	Induction and material rule change.

22: Inclusive communication guide

Use	Avoid
Open Division and Multi-Class Division	Able-Bodied Division and Disabled Division
Open and classification-based competition	Normal and disability competition
The recognised sport or class name	Informal or locally invented classification labels
Ask the person what language they prefer; use person-first language by default where preference is unknown.	Assuming everyone prefers the same terminology.
Describe the athlete, role and achievement first.	Defining a student solely by disability or presenting participation as inspirational merely because of disability.
Accessible, inclusive or multiclass competition, where accurate.	Special competition or normal athletes.

Use	Avoid
Uses a wheelchair / wheelchair user.	Wheelchair-bound or confined to a wheelchair.
Support needs or access requirements.	Suffers from, victim of, or burden.
Clear, literal and respectful instructions.	Jokes, euphemisms or public discussion of diagnosis.

23: Measurement framework

Domain	Indicative measures	Reporting
Access	Championships or Events, where appropriate, offering inclusive or multiclass formats; accessible communications and venue plans completed.	Annual
Participation	Students with disabilities participate by sport and pathway stage, using equitable voluntary and privacy-protected data.	Annual trend
Experience	Student/family sense of safety, belonging, respect and quality of support; satisfaction target to align with School Sport Australia program measures.	Post-event / annual
Capability	Staff and officials completing inclusion learning; confidence before/after involvement with teams of individuals.	Annual to Member Bodies or School Sport Australia
Adjustments	Requests received, implemented, modified or refused; timeliness and themes, de-identified.	Annual
Safety/equity	Complaints and incidents involving exclusion, bullying, harassment or accessibility; response time and systemic actions.	Annual
Pathways	Warm referrals and partnerships with NSOs/NSO-Ds; continued participation where data and consent permit.	Annual

Data must not be used to rank or penalise Member Bodies without considering context, data quality, privacy, population and program maturity. Small-cell reporting must be suppressed or aggregated where identification is possible.

24: Implementation roadmap

Timing	Action	Lead
Sep 2026	School Sport Australia Board to consider and approve after any changes proposed.	EO / Board
Dec 2026	Publish final policy, templates and accessible summary; confirm 2027 priority sports.	School Sport Australia Office
Jan–Jun 2027	Train key workforce; require inclusion/access planning in championship documentation; implement pilot sport plans.	School Sport Australia / Member Bodies
Jul–Dec 2027	Review of School Sport Australia Games and Championship experience; report to Board; amend tools and sport rules where needed.	EO / NPC / IRPG
2028	Expand across remaining sports, strengthen pathway agreements and complete formal policy review.	Board / EO / NPC

Supporting templates to be developed

- Participant Access and Adjustment Plan (student/family-facing).
- Advisory Accessible Trial and Selection Checklist.
- Championship Accessibility and Inclusion Plan.
- Eligibility and Classification Information Sheet.
- Inclusive Communications and Media Checklist.
- Post-event Student and Family Feedback Form in accessible formats.
- Annual Inclusion Dashboard and Board Assurance Report.

Appendix 1 — Alignment with existing School Sport Australia policy

Existing School Sport Australia instrument	How this policy aligns
Child Safe Policy / Child Safe Code of Conduct	Reinforces welcoming students with disability, student voice, cultural safety, privacy, reporting and trained adults.
Codes of Conduct and penalties for breach	Extends fair and equitable participation and prohibits disability-based bullying, harassment, vilification and retaliation.
Student Eligibility Policy	Retains age, school affiliation and attendance requirements; adds accessible process and adjustment safeguards.
Championship Attendance Guidelines	Retains full-program expectations and current exemption process; requires disability-related barriers and adjustments to be considered fairly.
Sport Participation Policy	Complements mixed teams, modified rules and age dispensation; adds disability inclusion planning and class-based competition principles.
Exceptional Circumstances Entry Policy	Does not replace exceptional-entry decisions; ensures requests and supporting information are handled accessibly and without bias.
Injury Management Policy	Retains medical, first aid, concussion and return-to-play standards; distinguishes medical safety from disability-based assumptions.
Live-Streaming, Photography, Media and Social Media policies	Adds specific consent, privacy and respectful disability-representation requirements.

Appendix 2 — Source and reference framework

The policy has been developed with reference to the following materials. Current external requirements and sport rules should be rechecked at implementation.

- School Sport Australia and Sport Inclusion Australia, Building Inclusive & Representative School Sport Pathways for Students with a Disability — Round 1 Project Plan and ASC Play Well Affiliate Grant application (2025–2026).
- School Sport Australia, National Programs Policies, including Child Safe Policy, Child Safe Code of Conduct, Codes of Conduct and penalties for breach, Student Eligibility Policy, Championship Attendance Guidelines, Sport Participation Policy, Exceptional Circumstances Entry Policy and Injury Management Policy.
- Sport Inclusion Australia, Included Through School Sport Program; What We Do; Athlete Eligibility and National Integrity Framework information.
- Australian Sports Commission, Play Well: Australia's Sport Participation Strategy and Disability Sport Action Plan materials.
- Applicable Commonwealth, State and Territory discrimination, disability, education, privacy, child-safety and work-health-and-safety requirements, as advised through legal/governance review.
- Relevant NSO, NSO-D and international federation competition, eligibility and classification rules.

Public source links

- **School Sport Australia policies:** <https://www.schoolsportaustralia.edu.au/policies/>
- **School Sport Australia National Programs Policies:** <https://www.schoolsportaustralia.edu.au/national-programs-policies/>
- **Sport Inclusion Australia:** <https://sportinclusionaustralia.org.au/>
- **Included Through School Sport Program:** <https://sportinclusionaustralia.org.au/school-sport-program/>
- **ASC Play Well Strategy:** <https://www.ausport.gov.au/playwell/strategy>
- **ASC Disability Sport Action Plan:** <https://www.ausport.gov.au/playwell/disabilitysport>