

CHNA— Grading Policy

Version	Ratified into effect date
1.1	April 2025
1.2	November 2025
1.3	February 2026 (<i>change to clause 3.1.3.2</i>)

1. Purpose

Coffs Harbour Netball Association (“CHNA”) believes that our netball courts should be a friendly and welcoming space for all.

This Policy is intended to provide clear guidelines and processes for Affiliated Clubs and Players with the following objectives in mind:

To enable CHNA to properly assess the skill and ability of Players and place them in teams that best represent their level of skill and ability;

- To ensure that all Players are placed in teams in a fair and equitable manner;
- To maximise opportunities to develop and improve the skills of Players;
- To foster player enjoyment and love of netball through fair play and grading; and
- To govern the process of grading Teams each season.

This Policy is intended to be read in conjunction with CHNA Local Rules and Policies and is subject to the CHNA Constitution.

2. Definitions

Ability – means level of skill or proficiency of any Player.

Affiliated Club – means a Netball Club affiliated with CHNA from time to time in accordance with the Constitution.

CHNA – means Coffs Harbour Netball Association Incorporated.

CHNA Council – means the Council of CHNA as defined in the Constitution.

CHNA President – means the incumbent President of CHNA as elected from year to year or if the President is unavailable a member of the Executive Committee nominated by the CHNA President is to stand in for the CHNA President in any matter relating to Grading.

Club President - means the incumbent President of any Affiliated Club, or in their absence, the Club Vice President.

Club Registrar – means the incumbent Registrar of any Affiliated Club.

Club Representative – means a person nominated by an Affiliated Club to represent that Affiliated Club’s interest during Grading.

Club Vice President – means the incumbent Vice President of any Affiliated Club.

Grading – means the process of assigning Players to teams or Teams to Divisions based on their age or ability pursuant to the terms of this Policy.

Grading Committee – means a committee formed to represent CHNA for the purpose of grading Players or Teams each season and consists of the Competition Co-Ordinator, Junior Registrar, Senior Registrar, Mixed Registrar, CHNA President and two Club Representatives from each Affiliated Club.

Grading Game – means a netball game that takes place at the beginning of any Season which does not count toward Competition Points and is used for the purpose of Grading Teams into Divisions.

Grading Meeting – means a meeting of the Grading Committee to determine the Grading of Players into Teams or Teams into Divisions or Pools or any associated business.

Injured Player – means a Player who has suffered an injury and is certified medically unfit to play a Game.

Junior Competition – means the competition run by CHNA for Junior Players in each Season.

Junior Player – means a Player under the age of 21 years who is registered to and participating in CHNA's Junior Competition.

Junior Registrar – means the incumbent Junior Registrar elected by Council who is responsible, under the direction of the Competition Co-Ordinator, for the running of the Junior Competition.

Junior Umpire Convenor – means the incumbent Junior Umpire Convenor elected by Council who is responsible, under the direction of the Competition Co-Ordinator, for the assigning and overseeing of umpires in the Junior Competition.

Medical Exemption – means certification from any doctor or allied health professional acceptable to the Competition Co-Ordinator (in their absolute discretion acting reasonably) indicating or explaining that a Player was not fit to play any specific Game or Round.

Mid Court Player – means a Player who usually plays in the Position of WA, C or WD and displays competent skills in that Position.

Mixed Competition – means the competition run by CHNA for mixed gender of Players.

Mixed Player – means a Player registered to and participating in CHNA's Mixed Competition in each Season.

Mixed Registrar – means the incumbent Mixed Registrar elected by Council who is responsible, under the direction of the Competition Co-Ordinator, for the running of the Mixed Competition.

Netball Association – means any Netball Association affiliated with NNSW.

New Player – means a Player who is new to netball or who has not been a Player at any Netball Association in the previous Year.

NNSW – means Netball New South Wales.

Net Coordinator – means the incumbent Net Coordinator elected by Council who is responsible, under the direction of the Competition Co-Ordinator, for the running of the 10- week Net Set Go programme.

Net Player – means a player aged 5 – 7 years who is registered under the Net Set Go division as determined by NNSW

Set Go Player – means a Player aged 7 – 9 years who is registered under the Net Set Go division as determined by NNSW.

Other Association – means a Netball Association other than CHNA.

Penalty - means a financial penalty of \$200.00 or such other penalty as is ratified by CHNA Council from time to time. All Penalties must be paid by Round 14 of the Competition otherwise the Affiliated Club shall not be entitled to participate in Finals.

Player – means a person registered with CHNA to play netball in any Year. Pool – means a part of a Division and consists of at least four teams. Position - means netball position (GA, GS, WA, C, WD, GD or GK). Registration – means a Player registered as a member of CHNA in the current Year.

Representative Player – means a Player who has been selected to represent any Netball Association at State Level in the current Year or a Player who represented any Netball Association at State Level in the two Years leading up to Grading.

Representative Team – means a team of Representative Players.

Request – means a request made in writing by an Affiliated Club to the Competition Co-Ordinator.

Returning Player – means a player who has recently been an Injured Player but has been medically cleared to return to playing netball but may not be able to play at full capacity.

Round – means a group of Games played on a particular day by all of the Teams in a Division (including any Bye).

Season – means a competition made up of a minimum of 14 Rounds and a maximum of 15 Rounds in any Year.

Senior Competition – means the competition run by CHNA for Senior Players in each Season.

Senior Player – means a Player over the age of 14 years who is registered to and participating in CHNA's Senior Competition.

Senior Registrar – means the incumbent Senior Registrar elected by Council who is responsible, under the direction of the Competition Co-Ordinator, for the running of the Senior Competition.

Senior Umpire Convenor – means the incumbent Senior Umpire Convenor elected by Council who is responsible, under the direction of the Competition Co-Ordinator, for the assigning and overseeing of umpires in the Junior Competition.

Shooter – means a Player who usually plays in the Position of GA or GS and displays competent skills in that Position.

Similarity Report - means a report prepared in the form annexed.

Special Exemption - means an exemption from participating Grading due to special circumstances. Special Exemptions may only be granted with the approval of the Grading Committee in circumstances that warrant the Player not being available to attend Grading.

Team – means a group of between 5 and 12 Players who form a team for the duration of a Season to align with local rules and Netball NSW.

Travel Exemption – means documentary evidence of interstate or overseas travel acceptable to the Competition Co-Ordinator (in their absolute discretion acting reasonably) indicating or explaining why a Player was not able to play any specific Game or Round.

Year – means calendar year commencing on 1 January and ending on 31 December.

3. Pre-Grading Responsibility of Clubs

3.1 Affiliated Clubs must:

3.1.1 be courteous in their communications and act in good faith to cooperate with the Grading Committee in order to ensure that the Grading process is fair and equitable to all Players, Teams and Affiliated Clubs.

3.1.2 follow the direction of the Competition Organisers in preparing Teams for Grading.

3.1.3 allocate players based on their age division initially, then ensure all representative players or development players are equally spread out amongst teams in the division as per policy, then assess the Ability of Players and allocate Teams of equal ability and skill into Divisions for approval by the Grading Committee.

3.1.3.2 Ensure that there are only 3 players in a team from existing club players from a different CHNA affiliated club.

3.1.4 ensure that Teams in the same Division or Pool are of equal strength.

3.1.5 comply with any timeframes set by the Competition Organisers.

3.1.6 all CHNA affiliated clubs must have their registration period open on PlayHQ for the time frame determined by CHNA.

3.1.7 Representative or development players (present or past) should be placed in their age division or above (Junior). For Seniors, overall team performance shall be assessed as to the impact of the representative player on the team performance and may result in raising the teams division.

3.2 At least 8 days prior to the first Grading Game Affiliated Clubs are to:

3.2.1 Have all Players

registered at that time allocated to appropriate Teams;

3.2.2 Have all Teams consisting of more than 5 Players allocated to an appropriate Division. Teams with less than 5 Players must be combined with a Team or Teams of a higher Division.

3.2.3 Name all Teams so that they can be easily identified by the Grading Committee during Grading.

3.2.4 Nominate in writing to the Competition Co-Ordinator two Club Representatives who are to Represent the Affiliated Club throughout the Grading Process.

3.3 If an Affiliated Club fails to comply with their pre-grading responsibility as set out herein:

3.3.1 The Affiliated Club shall receive a written warning from CHNA Executive providing 48 hours to rectify their failure.

3.3.2 If an Affiliated Club fails to fulfil its pre-grading responsibilities as directed by the CHNA Executive within the 48 hours provided, without a reasonable excuse (as determined by a vote of the Executive Committee), the Club must relinquish its vote on the Grading Committee to the CHNA President.

4. Method of Grading

4.1 In making any Grading Decision the Grading Committee must take into account:

4.1.1 The age of Players

4.1.2 The Ability of Players;

4.1.3 The overall number of Players in a Team;

4.1.4 The ordinary Position played by Players in a Team;

4.1.5 The number of New Players in a Team;

4.1.6 The number of Representative Players in a Team;

4.1.7 The number of Developing Players in a Team;

4.1.8 The number of Injured Players or Returning Players in a Team; 4.1.9 The ability or seniority of the Team's coach or coaches; and

4.1.10 Any other matter which the Grading Committee believes to be relevant to Grading.

4.2 In making any Grading Decision the Grading Committee may (but is not obliged) to take into account:

4.2.1 Any requests of Players to play with friends;

4.2.2 Any requests of Players to not play with other Players;

4.2.3 Any requests of Players to play in a lower Division than they would ordinarily play for safety and wellbeing reasons.

5. Allocating Divisions

Junior Competition

5.1 Junior Teams will initially be divided into the following Divisions: 5.1.1

Division	Age at 31 December in any Year
Set Go (Division 7)	7 – 9 years
Division 6	9-10 years
Division 5	11 years
Division 4	12 years
Division 3	13 years
Division 2	14 – 17 years
Division 1	14 years +

5.1.2 Generally, all Players are to play within Teams of their own age. However, the Grading Committee may identify a Player for whom a Team of similar Ability does not exist within their own age group, then that player may be offered the opportunity to play up an age group/ division and/ or down an age group/ Division.

5.1.3 Should an Affiliated Club have insufficient player registrations in an age group to form a full Team, players may be requested to play up an age group in order to form a Team of composite age. In such instances, the players will be asked to play up an age group.

Senior Competition

5.2 For Senior Grading each Affiliated Club shall be given the opportunity to nominate Teams into a preferred Division.

5.2.1 Affiliated Clubs should take primary responsibility for nominating Teams into a Division that supports the goals of this policy. Club grading is recommended as a means of benchmarking Teams and nominating a suitable Division and to determine whether an appropriate Team will be able to accommodate additional players.

5.2.2 Prior to the commencement of Grading, Affiliated Clubs must provide to the Grading

Committee a Similarity Report which accurately shows changes to teams from last Season.

5.2.3 Affiliated Clubs must act in good faith in preparing Similarity Reports. If the Grading Committee discovers that an Affiliated Club has not acted in good faith when preparing a Similarity Report the Grading

Committee may recommend to CHNA Executive to impose a Penalty (as per Definition above) to the Affiliated Club.

5.3 Based on information available from the previous season and information provided by Affiliated Clubs, the Grading Committee must rank Teams in comparative order and allocate an initial ranking in the new season's competition. The basis for ranking will be a combination of the following:

5.3.1 Clubs' recommendations/nominations;

5.3.2 Previous season's performance - win/loss ratio and goals for/against percentage;

5.3.3 The natural age shift for Teams progressing through different levels of development.

5.3.4 A comparative assessment of the best fit for New Players or additional Teams.

6. Meeting Procedure and Voting

6.1 A Grading Meeting is to be chaired by the Competition Co-Ordinator.

6.2 A quorum shall be formed when there is at least one Club Representative from Each Club and two members of the Competition Committee present.

6.3 Each Affiliated Club is permitted one vote on Grading matters regardless of how many Club Representatives are present at the Grading Meeting.

6.4 The Competition Committee is permitted one vote on Grading matters regardless of how many members of the Competition Committee participate in the Grading Process or are present at the Grading Meeting.

6.5 Voting at Grading Meetings may be taken by a show of hands or, if requested by a Club Representative or member of the Competition Committee present at the meeting, by secret ballot, the results of which are to be read out by the chair of the meeting.

6.6 If any of the Grading Committee are a player in the division being discussed, a parent of a child playing in the division being discussed, or a coach in the division being discussed, this will be deemed a conflict of interest and they will leave the room for this discussion. In this instance they are able to be replaced by another delegate.

7. Representative Players

7.1 Affiliated Clubs must identify all Representative Players and Development Players in each Team.

Senior Competition

7.2 Teams with three (3) or more Representative or Development Players will be assessed on a case by case basis based on ability to move up a Division.

Junior Competition

7.3 Representative Players and Development Players from any Netball Association must be evenly distributed between Teams based on skills, Ability and position, subject to approval by the Competition Committee.

7.4 If a Team consisting of three (3) or more Representative or Development Players is particularly strong then the Competition Committee may make a decision to move that Team and/ or specific players to a higher Division. The Competition Committee's decision on this will be final.

8. Grading Games and Grading Meetings

8.1 Grading Games shall consist of two (2) twelve-minute halves in which scores shall be recorded, along with the Positions played by each Player during the game.

8.2 Players shall play their ordinary Position during Grading Games. If a Player is found to be playing out of Position without reasonable excuse the Competition Coordinator and Registrar (for that competition) may order that the Grading Game is replayed with the Player or Players out of position being put back in their usual playing position. This rule shall not apply where it can be shown that a Player must play out of their ordinary position to make up deficit positions (for example where a team does not have two Shooters, a Mid Court or Defender may be put into a shooting position or where there are too many Defenders in a Team one of the Defenders may play in the position of Shooter or Mid Court as long as the other Defenders in their Team play in their ordinary Position).

8.3 Following any Grading Game the Grading Committee may recommend that:

8.3.1 an Affiliated Club move players between teams in a Division to make an equal distribution of ability between Teams from the same Affiliated Club in the same Division;

8.3.2 any particular Team is to be put into another Division based on Ability of the Team and the number of Teams required in each Division.

8.3.3 that any Grading Game is to be replayed (either before or after the movement of Players) or that any particular teams are to play each other in the next Grading Game.

8.3.4 where a Division has more than eight (8) Teams the Division is to be split into Pools.

8.4 At the conclusion of Grading, the Teams shall be recorded by the Competition Coordinator and Registrar (for that competition) and there shall be no movement of Players after Grading has been completed except as set out in this policy.

8.5 Should a Team take the Court in any Round with Players who were not graded in that Team by the Grading Committee then the Team shall lose 4 points in the Competition and the Competition Coordinator shall have authority to notify the Affiliated Club and Player to return to original graded Team. This will not apply to a Player who is playing up in a higher Team to cover absences. This does not apply to new or out of town players.

9.1 All Players must have current Registration prior to playing any Grading Game.

9.2 All Registered players must participate in at least 50% of Grading Games unless they have been granted a valid Exemption permitting the Player to miss Grading.

9.3 If a Player (other than a New Player) plays a Game in any Round without having been graded or being granted an Exemption then the Affiliated Club responsible for the Player shall receive a Penalty (as per the definition above).

10. Objections

10.1 If an Affiliated Club disagrees with the Decision of the Grading Committee as to the placement of any particular Player in a Team, or any Team in a Division or Pool, then the Club may make a Request to the Competition Co-Ordinator and Registrar (for that competition) for a review of the Decision.

10.2 A Request:

10.2.1 must in the first instance be received in writing by the Competition Co-Ordinator through the CHNA email account within 3 days of the date of the Decision;

10.2.2 must set out the basis on which the Affiliated Club disagrees with the Decision of the Grading Committee providing clear reasons based on new evidence;

10.2.3 must set out what outcome the Affiliated Club is seeking with sufficient specificity to enable the Competition Coordinator and Registrar (for that competition) to determine the matter.

10.3 Upon receipt of a valid Request, the Competition Co-Ordinator must review the Request with the Registrar (for that competition) to review the decision of the Grading Committee and vote on the outcome proposed by the Affiliated Club in their Request. If both parties do not agree on a decision, the CHNA President shall receive a vote. Such a decision to be made within 5 days.

10.4 If there is insufficient detail in the Request to enable the Competition Coordinator and Registrar (for that competition) to decide on the objection they may refuse to amend the decision and the original Decision of the Grading Committee shall stand.

11. New Players

11.1 Only New Players shall be added to Teams after Grading has been completed. Out of area players/ experienced players will be considered at the discretion of the Competitions Coordinator.

11.2 Affiliated Clubs must seek the approval of the Competition Coordinator and Registrar (of that competition) to the inclusion of additional Players to teams after the completion of Grading. The inclusion of additional Player(s) who are not New Players, being those experienced or out of area players, shall be at the sole discretion of the Competition Coordinator and Registrar (for that competition).

11.3 Any Team playing a Game in any Round of the Season in breach of this rule 11.1 shall be

deducted four (4) competition points.

12. Discretion of Competition Organisers

12.1 If at the conclusion of Round 5 of the Season the Competition Organisers identify a particular Player or Team who does not display an appropriate Ability to remain in the Division or Pool in which they have been Graded, then the Competition Co-Ordinator may direct that the Player or Team is to be moved into the appropriate Division or Pool based on Ability.

12.2 Affiliated Clubs may make a Request (as per 10.2) to the Competition Organisers for the review of a particular Player or Team's ability at any time up until the conclusion of Round 5.

12.3 Upon receipt of a Request from an Affiliated Club to review the Ability of a particular Player or Team the Competition Co-Ordinator must call a meeting with the Registrar (for that competition) to review the Grading of that Player or Team. The Decision of the Competition Organisers shall be final.

13. Set Go

13.1 Players in the Set Go Division shall be graded into Teams of equal Ability according to:

13.1.1 height;

13.1.2 physical development/motor skills/athletic ability;

13.1.3 social maturity;

13.1.4 number of previous Seasons played;

13.1.5 ball control – passing/catching technique;

13.1.6 footwork;

13.1.7 shooting accuracy;

13.1.8 teamwork and attitude;

13.1.9 ability to follow direction;

13.1.10 ability to understand the game;

13.1.11 potential to improve during the Season.

13.2 Set Go Players shall be placed in a team with at least one friend where possible.

13.3 Affiliated Clubs are to ensure that Set Go Players are aware of the rules of the game and the nature of their positions prior to the commencement of Grading and should have at least played one game during training prior to Grading to ensure that the Grading process is fair and as accurate as possible for each Season.

14. Confidentiality

14.1 All Grading assessments, score sheets, directions and discussions (including player evaluation

reports from coaches or the Competition Organisers or Grading Committee) are the confidential property CHNA.

15. Exemptions

15.1 Exemptions to the terms and clauses of these policies are at the discretion of the competitions coordinator.

