AUSTRALIAN RUGBY UNION POLICY

Policy Title (Reference)	Senior Rugby (COM007)
ARU Functional Area	Community Rugby
Policy, Application, Objective and Exception	*Policy*: The age for which male and female players are eligible to participate in senior rugby shall be eighteen years of age. This Policy must be followed unless the exception below is applicable. *Application*: The policy applies to all senior rugby competitions/matches played in accordance with the Laws of the Game in Australia. *Objective:* This policy aims to protect the safety and welfare of players participating in a senior rugby competition at an age younger than eighteen years by trying to ensure that participant's physical development and skill levels are broadly compatible with and against other participants in senior rugby. *Exception:* In exceptional cases, a player's physical development, skill level and experience may be such that he or she may be allowed to participate in senior rugby competitions at an age younger than eighteen years of age. Players are only permitted to participate in a senior rugby competition younger than eighteen in the following circumstances: (a) **where the player will not play senior rugby in the front row (prop or hooker)** – he or she must comply with the procedure described in Schedule A - Exception to the Senior Rugby Policy, including completion of the Consent Form; or (b) **where the player will play senior rugby in the front row (prop or hooker)** – he or she must comply with the procedure described in Schedule A - Exception to the Senior Rugby Policy, including completion of the Consent Form; *and* – he or she must also apply to ARU for approval play in the front row (prop or hooker), as outlined in Schedule B - Exception for Front Row, including completion of the Submission Form. Such consent will be given on a case by case basis. **ARU approval to play in the Front Row must be received before the player participates in senior rugby as an exception to this Policy.**
Related Policies	ARU Insurance Scheme Policy
Approved By	ARU Board [27 February 2009].

Schedule A -
Exception to the Senior Rugby Policy

Before a player wishes to participate in a senior rugby competition at an age younger than eighteen years of age, the information in this Schedule should be carefully considered and the attached Consent Form must be properly completed and sent to the Competition Manager.

PLEASE NOTE: Players who are under eighteen and play in the Front Row (prop or hooker) must also apply for approval from the ARU prior to participation in senior rugby, as outlined in Schedule B - Exception for Front Row. The player may not play in the Front Row in senior rugby until ARU approval has been received.

Risks:	It is important that all people involved in a decision to permit a player to participate in a senior rugby competition at an age younger than eighteen years, understand that rugby is a contact sport and, like all contact sports, players are exposed to the risk of injury. This risk may be heightened where a player participates in a senior rugby competition at an age younger than eighteen years of age, where the player's physical development, skill level and experience are inferior to that of the players he or she will play against.
Considerations:	In assessing the suitability of a player to participate in a senior rugby competition at an age younger than eighteen years of age, the coach assessing the player and the player's parent or guardian should consider the following factors: ➢ What is the player's level of physical development (e.g. height, weight, build etc) when measured against potential playing colleagues? Is the player physically equipped to compete on an equal basis with players in the proposed senior rugby competition? ➢ Does the player have a high skill level; both specific to their playing position and in relation to the games fundamentals (e.g. tackle, pass, ruck, maul, scrum etc)? Will the player's skill level place the player on an equal basis with players in the proposed senior rugby competition? ➢ What is the player's level of experience? Is the player reasonably experienced and has the player gained that experience in a comparable standard of competition? ➢ What is the standard of competition in the proposed competition? Is it at a level in which the player can compete safely?
More information:	More information on player safety can be found at www.rugby.com.au/communityrugby
Role of the Coach - Player Assessment:	The suitability of a player to participate in a senior rugby competition at an age younger than eighteen years of age must be assessed and the potential risks explained to the player and his/her parent or guardian. The coach undertaking the player's assessment must: ➢ Hold both a minimum current level 2 coach accreditation, and SmartRugby qualification, and be registered on ARU's MyRugby; ➢ Consider the player's suitability to play in a senior rugby competition against the considerations described above; and ➢ Talk to the player and his/her parent or guardian to ensure that they understand that the player will be competing against older players and this may involve an increased level of injury risk.
Role of the Parent or Guardian:	A parent or guardian of a child under the age of 18 must consent to the child playing in a senior rugby competition. That consent must be evidenced by completing the attached Consent Form.
Role of the Competition Manager:	The Competition Manager must: ➢ Ensure that a copy of this Policy (complete with Schedules A & B and the Consent Form) is included in the competition rules; ➢ Do their best to ensure that the Policy is observed by all teams participating in the competition; and ➢ Keep records of completed Consent Forms.

SENIOR RUGBY - CONSENT FORM

COMPLETED FORM TO BE SUBMITTED TO YOUR COMPETITION MANAGER

PLAYER *(please print clearly)*	
Name:	**MyRugby No.**
Club:	**Competition / State:**
Date of Birth:	**Actual Age Grade:** _____ (ie. U17's)
Playing Position:	**Senior Grade Level:** _____ (ie. U20's, 4th Grade)
Phone.	**E-mail:**

ASSESSING COACH	
Name:	**MyRugby No.**
Contact No.	**E-mail:**
Coaching Qualification: **Level** [2] [3] please circle **Expiry** _____	**SmartRugby Qualification:** **Expiry** _____

Coach to assess the player against the following considerations. If the answer is NO to any of these considerations, then the player shall NOT be considered capable of competing safely with players in the proposed competition.

PLEASE NOTE: Players who are under eighteen and play in the Front Row (prop or hooker) must also apply for approval from the ARU prior to participation in senior rugby, as outlined in Schedule B - Exception for Front Row.

Physical Development:	Does the player's level of physical development allow the player to compete with players in the proposed senior rugby competition?	yes	no
Skill Level:	Is the player's skill level comparable with other players in the proposed senior rugby competition?	yes	no
Level of Experience:	Does the player have the experience to compete with other players at a comparable standard of competition?	yes	no
Standard of Competition:	Is the standard of competition in the proposed senior rugby competition suitable to allow the player to compete safely?	yes	no

In my opinion, the player's physical development, skill level and experience is sufficiently high that the player is capable of competing safely with players in the proposed senior rugby competition.

I have explained to the player and his/her parent or guardian that the player will be competing against older players and this may involve an increased level of injury risk.

Name: **Signature:** **Date:**

PARENT / LEGAL GUARDIAN

I confirm that:

a) I am a parent or legal guardian of the abovementioned player;
b) I have been provided with a copy of the ARU's Senior Rugby Policy including Schedules A & B of that Policy;
c) The coach has explained to me that, in his/her opinion, the player's physical development, skill level and experience is sufficiently high that he/she is capable of competing safely with players in senior rugby competition;
d) It has been explained to me that the risk of injury may be increased by the player playing in the proposed senior rugby competition; and
e) I understand that rugby is a contact sport and, like all contact sports, players are exposed to risk of injury. I also understand that the level of risk may be heightened where a player participates in a senior rugby competition in circumstances where the player's physical development, skill level and experience are inferior to that of the players he or she will play against. In addition to understanding these risks, I also agree, to the extent permitted by law, to waive all claims for liability against any participant (including players, coaches, volunteers and administrators) and release every such participant from all liability that may be incurred in connection with the player's participation in the proposed senior rugby competition.

Name: **Signature:** **Date:**

COMPETITION MANAGER

I confirm that:

a) A copy of this Policy (complete with Schedules A & B and the Consent Form) is included in the competition rules; and
b) Records of completed Consent Forms are kept.

Name: **Signature:** **Date:**

Schedule B -
Exception for Front Row (prop or hooker)

A player younger than eighteen years of age wishing to participate in a senior rugby competition in the Front Row (prop or hooker) must also apply for approval from the ARU prior to participation in senior rugby. The player may not play in the Front Row in senior rugby until ARU approval has been received.

The player and parents/guardian should consider the information provided in:

- Schedule A - Exception to the Senior Rugby Policy; and complete the Consent Form.
  [Competition Manager approval is not required until ARU approval to play in the Front Row is granted], and
- Schedule B - Exception for Front Row and complete the Submission Form.

NOTE: Both Consent Form and Submission Form must be submitted to the ARU for consideration of this exception.

Risks:	It is important that all people involved in a decision to permit a player to participate in a senior rugby competition at an age younger than eighteen years, understand that rugby is a contact sport and, like all contact sports, players are exposed to the risk of injury. This risk may be heightened where a player participates in a senior rugby competition at an age younger than eighteen years of age, where the player's physical development, skill level and experience are inferior to that of the players he or she will play against. Medical studies support that players in the Front Row (prop or hooker) are exposed to a higher level of serious injury than players in other positions.
Considerations:	In assessing the suitability of a player to participate in the position of Front Row (prop or hooker) in a senior rugby competition at an age younger than eighteen years of age, the following factors will be considered and addressed in the Submission Form. **(i) skill level, experience and the level of coaching received –** *Player experience in the Front Row (prop or hooker)* ➢ Number of years experience playing in front row ➢ Did you play in the front row last year? ➢ If you missed a game through injury last year please identify the injured area (eg R. Shoulder, L. Knee or neck etc) *Level of coaching received* ➢ What Level coaching qualifications does your current coach have? ➢ Have you received any specialist front row coaching in the last 2 years? If Yes, please outline coaching received, identify the coach who provided this coaching, and outline their coaching qualifications and experience? **(ii) strength –** ➢ Do you undertake a regular strength program? If Yes, how many times a week do you complete strength training, identify who provided the program and their qualifications and provide the strength program that you have completed over the past 4 weeks. ➢ How long have you been doing regular strength training? (ie months/years) ➢ Provide maximum number of lifts for (i) Bench Press – at 60% of body weight (ii) Squat – at 75% of body weight ➢ Provide current height and weight In addition to the above information, an objective assessment of body structure may also be required if deemed appropriate. **(iii) body structure –** If your skill/experience and strength levels outlined above have been considered adequate, the ARU may request additional information in the form of MRI or CT scan, prior to approving an exception for Front Row. A referral for these investigations will be posted to you if appropriate. The costs of these investigations must be borne by the athlete.
Submission Forms can be sent to:	Australian Rugby Union Fax: (02) 8005 5681; or E-mail: communityrugby@rugby.com.au
Approvals	Approvals will be granted on a case by case basis.

australian RUGBY

FRONT ROW EXCEPTION – SUBMISSION FORM

COMPLETED SUBMISSION FORM, ATTACHMENTS AND CONSENT FORM TO BE SUBMITTED TO AUSTRALIAN RUGBY UNION

Fax: (02) 8005 5681 or e-mail communityrugby@rugby.com.au

PLAYER *(please print clearly)*

Players Name: **Club/School:**

Phone: **E-mail:**

ASSESSMENT (attached further information if required)

In assessing the suitability of a player to participate in the position of Front Row (prop or hooker) as an exception to this Policy, the player must complete this Submission Form addressing the considerations outlined in Schedule B.

Playing skill and experience in front row

1. Please enter the number of years played in front row _____

2. Outline level of rugby played in front row (eg club/school, representative, etc and year played)

_____

_____

3. Did you play in the front row last year? YES or NO (circle)

If No, please state why: _____

_____

4. Did you miss any games due to injury in the last year? YES or NO (circle)

If Yes, how many games were missed due to injury last year? _____ missed games

List injuries causing a missed games: _____

Level of coaching and training received in front row

1. Have you received any specialised front row coaching in the last two seasons? YES or NO (circle)

If Yes, specify details (eg what coaching, identify the coach, level of coaching qualifications & experience, etc)

_____

_____

_____

2. Provide your current coach's name, coaching and SmartRugby qualifications

Name: _____ Coaching Qual. level _____ SmartRugby Expiry _____

Strength and Conditioning

1. Do you undertake a regular (> 2/week) strength program? YES or NO (circle)

If Yes, how many times a week do you complete strength training? _____ per week

2. How many years have you been completing regular strength program? _____ years _____ months

3. Outline who wrote the strength program and their S&C qualifications

Name: _____ S&C qualifications _____

Attach copy of the strength program completed over the past 4 weeks. YES or NO (circle)

4. Provide maximum number of lifts for (i) Bench and (ii) Squat

(i) Bench Press: _____ kgs (at 60% of body weight) _____ (reps / number of lifts)

(ii) Squat: _____ kgs (at 75% of body weight) _____ (reps / number of lifts)

5. Player's Current: _____ kgs (weight) _____ cm (height)

OFFICE USE ONLY

S/E: ☐ FRC: ☐

S/C: ☐ SP: ☐

BP: _____ ☐

SQ: _____ ☐

APP: Y ☐ N ☐

I declare that the information provided and attached is true and correct.

Name: **Signature:** **Date:**