

## **SUNA Grading and Regrading Policy**

### **Purpose**

To provide a framework to assist SUNA to group teams into appropriate divisions in its netball competition.

### **Goals**

To deliver a competition catering for all age, skill, and ability levels, within the resources available, which:

- encourages and promotes continuing involvement in netball.
- provides an opportunity for teams to develop skills and teamwork.
- supports the fun and participative elements of sport; and
- provides an opportunity for on-going skill development of individuals. To establish individual competition divisions which:
  - comprise teams which display a similar matching of skills.
  - offer a reasonably level standard of competition; and
  - fosters individual and team skill development.

To manage a comprehensive grading process to support the competition comprising of divisions which match the evolving needs of the Southern United Netball Association.

To comply with the various rules and by-laws of the Associations and governing bodies associated with netball and the delivery of sport.

### **Development of Players**

Players younger than the target age range for a category can participate in a higher division. Under the by-laws, only maximum ages apply (except for the senior category). In these circumstances, the club or team involved should consider the skills and maturity level of the player/s to ensure that acceleration will not negatively impact their development or enjoyment of the game.

### **Competition Structure**

The number of teams wishing to participate in each competition is the main influence on the competition structure. SUNA aims to ensure that participation is not limited and that netball in the South can continue to grow and prosper. This policy both supports participation and increases the depth of the competition - which expands the opportunities for development. The times of matches across the seasons will remain as consistent as possible in each competition, dependent on total team nominations.

### **SUNA Grading/ Re-Grading Panel**

The SUNA Grading/ Re-Grading Panel is made up of invited members drawn from our SUNA community, SUNA Board members, competition and administration staff.

### Pre-Requisites

- The SUNA Grading/ Re-Grading Panel is made up of no less than 3 and no more than 5 invited members.
- The SUNA Grading/ Re-Grading Panel meets a maximum of 4 times a year.
- Club Coaches/ Club Panel members are eligible to be invited as members of the SUNA Grading/ Re-Grading Panel; however, they must declare any potential or perceived conflict of interest.
- Panel members must acquaint themselves with any grading/ re-grading materials i.e., spreadsheets required to execute their function as members of the Panel.

### Role Responsibilities

Members of the panel must exhibit the following characteristics:

- Provide constructive and unbiased comment and assessment of ability.
- A need to maintain discreet and confidential information to the panel.
- Be prepared to make a positive and open contribution during panel discussions.
- Must not under any circumstances engage in commentary with their club or on social media regarding grading/ re-grading decisions/ discussions.

### Conflict of Interest

- A panel member must avoid any conflict of arising between their personal interest and the duties to the panel.
- Panel members should disclose any conflict or potential conflict, or the appearance of potential conflict to SUNA representatives before each meeting. Once the conflict has been declared the member should exclude themselves from participating in any debate and vote by withdrawing from the meeting during the debate and/or vote.

### Personal Attributes

- Reliable
- Trustworthy
- Contributory
- Communicative
- Team Player
- No “agendas”

## **Size of Divisions**

The size of each division is finally determined by the number of teams graded in each division. Where possible, for our minor round seasons, divisions will be made up of six or eight teams and an even number of teams to avoid byes.

## **Nomination of teams (Club Registrars)**

Full details of teams nominating for the competition need to be provided to the SUNA by the due date. The minimum information required will be set out in the registration requirements. A comprehensive grading process, and ultimately SUNA's capacity to determine a suitable division for individual teams (and minimise disruption for the competition, is highly dependent on:

- complete team and player information provided by clubs; and
- informed decisions based on a knowledge of the competition or careful consideration of the guidance provided.

If clubs fail to complete the Grading Information Sheet by the due date their teams will be placed in division 1.

Nominations/requests to be in a lower division (compared to the previous season) should firstly consider the natural age shift for 9& Unders, junior and intermediate players within the competitions in the Winter season.

Nominations/requests to be in a lower division should be supported by the previous season's results.

## **Retention of Team Identity (Original team)**

- It is preferable that teams of the same or mostly the same players retain the same team name. A team which has retained at least five players from the previous season is recognised as retaining its identity.
- Detail needs to be provided by clubs on Team Nomination form to indicate whether the team is retaining its identity or is a new team. The individual player history information sought assists to identify the composition of the team as same, similar, or different.

## **Nominate for Division**

- Each team is to nominate a preferred division. Clubs take primary responsibility for nominating a division that supports the goals of this policy. Club internal grading is recommended as a means of benchmarking teams and nominating a suitable division and determining an appropriate team fit for new players.

## **Grading/ Team Ranking**

Based on information available from the Grading Information Sheet and team nominations provided by clubs, teams will be graded in comparative order and allocated an initial placement in the new season's competition. The basis for placement will be a combination of the following:

- Clubs' recommendations/nominations.
- Previous season's performance - win/loss ratio and goals for/against percentage.
- The natural age shift for teams progressing through the modified, junior, and intermediate categories. This general principle does not apply equally to senior teams.

- A comparative assessment of the best fit for new teams.
- Grading is based on the last seasons performance of the players'/team's overall placings.
- Where possible, all No. 1 teams should be placed in Division 1.
- First consideration should be for 6 team divisions in each grade, then 8 team divisions. If numbers or ability of teams warrant this action.
- Two teams from one Club should be placed in the same Division if their overall construction appears stronger than any one team from any other Club.
- Rank teams according to divisions nominated by clubs.
- Consider comments on team entry sheets noting significant changes to a team's composition, change of team names, requests to shift up or down.
- Refer to the previous season's final ladder positions, including percentages. Finals results can be variable but are taken into consideration.
- Refer to the previous season's match results to identify teams with results inconsistent with the average performance of teams in a division and consider adjustments that might be necessary to improve a team's opportunities to experience wins and losses. – For teams which have lost consistently in a season, consider grading them down so that they can experience some wins.
- For teams which have won consistently throughout a season, an opportunity to challenge should be explored.
- Identify teams with an established history to provide a benchmark against which to trial new teams in grading.
- Allocate new' teams to a division based on 'best fit' and a comparison of like-age and experience teams.
- Allocate an initial rank for all teams in the category.

#### **Allocation of Divisions:**

- Divide teams into divisions of 6 where possible (nominate a division for each team).
- Allocate teams to divisions on the overall ranking within the category for the season. There may be some varied division numbers depending on the total number of teams in a category.
- Identify 'benchmark' teams with consistent competition history and team composition.
- Prepare the fixture using a typical round robin fixture. Adjust the fixture, if necessary; to avoid a situation where teams play each other twice unnecessarily during the season; and to test majority new teams (without competition history) against benchmark teams.

#### **Re-Grading**

- Re-grading shall occur only once per season after the fifth minor round of matches has been completed.
- Provide clubs with an opportunity to provide feedback and to request adjustments to divisions before the end of round 5.

### Guidelines Winning/ Losing Margins

If a team is consistently recording winning/losing margins they will be considered for regrading to be moved up/down to an appropriate Division based on the following table:

<b>Move 1 Division</b>	<b>Move 2 Divisions</b>	<b>Move 3 Divisions</b>
<b>15 goal margin</b>	<b>35 goal margin</b>	<b>60 goal margin</b>

- Attempts at goal will also be considered to determine a team's potential to improve over the remainder of the season.
- Bearing in mind that these are only guidelines and in 9 & Unders & 11 & Unders especially, they may not be able to be moved, due to the number of divisions and teams.
- Evaluate the feedback and results from the first 5 round matches and adjust teams where appropriate.
- Re-publish fixtures for round 6.
- After re-grading all teams in all Divisions affected by a new team entering or leaving are to revert to zero points and percentage. This includes all teams going up and all teams going down in grades.

Because of many variations. Season to Season, Club to Club and Team to Team, SUNA reserves the right to maintain discretion in the application of these guidelines.

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by Southern United Netball Association considering any feedback from affiliated clubs and entity teams.

Document Control

Reference Number: SUNA010  
 Policy: SUNA Grading and Regrading Policy  
 Commencement Date: 1 January 2024  
 Author: SUNA GM  
 Owner: SUNA GM  
 Approval Level: SUNA Board  
 Date Last Reviewed: 1 March 2025  
 Scheduled Review Date: Annually