



**WELLINGTON  
SECONDARY  
SCHOOLS**

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Wellington Secondary Schools  
WSSRU Life members  
Wellington Rugby Football Union

**FROM:** Wellington Secondary Schools Rugby Union (WSSRU) Executive

**DATE:** 6 April 2020

**RE:** Updated National Policy - Age Bands for Age Grade Rugby

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**1. BACKGROUND**

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- 1.1. NZ Rugby recently updated the national policy on Age Bands for Age Grade Rugby ("**Age Band Policy**") on 21 February 2020.
- 1.2. The change to the policy was implemented to ensure that there were suitable safety measures in place, without unnecessarily and negatively affecting participation.
- 1.3. The new policy provides clarity in the form of:
  - Expanded age bands for teenage males and female rugby players.
  - An enhanced process for screening and assessing players who are playing under an Exceptional Circumstances Case.
  - Consideration for dispensations of overage players, to have regard for those Exceptional Circumstances Case players within the same competition.
- 1.4. The full policy can be found here: <https://www.nzrugby.co.nz/get-involved/national-rugby-policies/age-policies/>

**2. FURTHER INFORMATION**

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- 2.1. At the recent Wellington Secondary Schools Rugby Union (WSSRU) AGM, delegates asked that the WSSRU Executive apply the age band policy to WSSRU Grades, and send a memo to the schools.
- 2.2. The WSSRU Executive have discussed the age band policy and have noted below how it affects each grade in the College Sport Wellington (CSW) rugby competition.

### 3. APPLICATION OF AGE BAND POLICY TO CSW RUGBY COMPETITIONS

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3.1. The table below outlines the age restrictions to each grade in the CSW rugby competition, based on the Age Band Policy. **NOTE:** all ages below relate to as at 1st January of current playing year.

Grade	Gender	Age limit	Minimum Age	Maximum Age	Assessment required	Dispensation required
Premiership	Male	Under 18	15	17	14	18
Premier 2	Male	Under 18	15	17	14	18
Premier 3	Male	Under 18	15	17	14	18
Premier 4	Male	Under 18	15	17	14	18
Under 80kg	Male	Under 18	15	17	14	18
Under 65kg	Male	Under 16	13	15	12	16
Under 55kg	Male	Under 15	12	14	11	15
Under 15	Male	Under 15	12	14	11	15
Premier 1	Female	Under 18	14	17	13	18
Premier 2	Female	Under 18	14	17	13	18
U15 Dev	Female	Under 15	11	14	n/a	15

3.2. A description by grade is provided below. **NOTE:** all ages below relate to as at 1st January of current playing year.

#### 3.2.1. **Boys Premier 1 – 4**

Currently an Under 18 grade

- Players who are 18 must get dispensation from CSW & WRFU.
- Players who are 14 must get an exceptional circumstances assessment completed by WRFU appointee.
- A 14 year old and an 18 year old cannot play against each other. 14 year old gets preference.
- A 13 year old or younger **cannot play** in this grade.

#### 3.2.2. **Girls Premier 1 & 2**

Currently an Under 18 grade

- Players who are 18 must get dispensation from CSW & WRFU.
- Players who are 13 must get an exceptional circumstances assessment completed by WRFU appointee.
- A 13 year old and an 18 year old cannot play in the same game. 13 year old gets preference.
- A 12 year old or younger **cannot play** in this grade.

### 3.2.3. **Boys Under 80kg**

Currently an Under 18 grade

- Players who are 18 must get dispensation from CSW & WRFU.
- Players who are 14 must get an exceptional circumstances assessment completed by WRFU appointee.
- A 14 year old and an 18 year old cannot play in the same game. 14 year old gets preference.
- A 13 year old or younger **cannot play** in this grade.

### 3.2.4. **Boys Under 65kg**

Currently an Under 16 grade

- Players who are 16 must get dispensation from CSW & WRFU.
- Players who are 12 must get an exceptional circumstances assessment completed by WRFU appointee.
- A 12 year old and a 16 year old cannot play in the same game. 12 year old gets preference.
- A 11 year old or younger **cannot play** in this grade.

### 3.2.5. **Boys Under 55kg**

Currently an Under 15 grade

- Players who are 15 must get dispensation from CSW & WRFU.
- Players who are 11 must get an exceptional circumstances assessment completed by WRFU appointee.
- A 11 year old and a 15 year old cannot play in the same game. If the 11 year old is year 9, he is given preference over the older player.
- A 10 year old or younger **cannot play** in this grade.

### 3.2.6. **Boys Under 15**

Currently an Under 15 grade

- Players who are 15 must get dispensation from CSW & WRFU.
- Players who are 11 must get an exceptional circumstances assessment completed by WRFU appointee.
- A 11 year old and a 15 year old cannot play in the same game. If the 11 year old is year 9, he is given preference over the older player.
- A 10 year old or younger **cannot play** in this grade.

### 3.2.7. **Girls Under 15**

Currently an Under 15 grade

- Players who are 15 must get dispensation from CSW & WRFU.
- There are no exceptional circumstances assessment allowed in this grade

## **4. SCHOOL ACTION**

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4.1. If a school has a player who requires age dispensation from CSW & WRFU:

- 4.1.1. The school must apply for player dispensation by completing a WSSRU dispensation form and be cleared BEFORE the player can take the field (appendix 1).
- 4.2. If a school has a player who is wishing to play in age windows that qualify as Exceptional Circumstance Case for their respective age and gender, they are required to undertake an Exceptional Circumstance Case assessment before being cleared to play in the desired grade or competition. Assessments are to be completed in accordance with NZR Age Band Exceptional Case Assessment form
- <https://www.nzrugby.co.nz/assets/NZR-Exceptional-Circumstances-Case-Assessment.pdf> and require:
- Parental / caregiver consent,
  - Provision of individualised medical advice to the player and legal guardians,
  - A technical assessment by an independent and currently qualified Developing Rugby Coach Level 2, and
  - Principal approval.

## **5. CSW & WRFU ACTION**

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- 5.1. WRFU and CSW will collate the age dispensations and Exceptional Circumstance cases, and provide this to all schools prior to the start of the season.

If you have any questions in regards to the memorandum, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards

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## APPENDIX 1: AGE DISPENSATION REQUEST

All dispensation requests must be lodged through and signed by the School Rugby Convenor. Dispensations are considered on a case by case basis and you will be advised appropriately.

Email to [david@collegesport.org.nz](mailto:david@collegesport.org.nz)

<b>School:</b>			
<b>Players Name:</b>			
<b>DOB:</b>		<b>Weight (Kg):</b>	
<b>Year Level:</b>		<b>Height (kg):</b>	
<b>What grade and team did the player play in 2018?</b>			
<b>What grade and team are you applying dispensation for in 2019?</b>			
<b>Reason for seeking dispensation</b>			
<b>Signed (School Rugby Convenor)</b>			
<b>signed (School Head of Sport)</b>			