



# **Water Polo**

## **ACT**

### **Competition Policy**

## Review History

<b>Version</b>	<b>Revision No.</b>	<b>Date Reviewed</b>	<b>Date Endorsed</b>	<b>Content Reviewed/Purpose</b>
1	2022/01	01/09/2022	01/09/2022	- Minor Updates
2	2023/01			- Minor Updates

## Contents

### Table of Contents

<b>Contents</b>	<b>3</b>
<i>Modifications to rules</i>	4
<i>Rule 1: Registration</i>	4
<i>Rule 2: Code of Behaviour</i>	4
<i>Rule 3: Conditions of entry and withdrawal from competitions</i>	5
<i>Rule 4: Game rules, duration and time outs</i>	5
<i>Rule 5: Equipment</i>	6
<i>Rule 6: Pre-game responsibilities</i>	6
<i>Rule 7: In-game responsibilities</i>	7
<i>Rule 8: Referees</i>	8
<i>Rule 9: Player eligibility</i>	8
Player nomination	9
Player nomination and eligibility – general rules	10
Player eligibility – finals	10
Player eligibility – second claim	11
<i>Rule 10: Competition points, standings and finals series</i>	11
<i>Rule 12: Representative &amp; Composite teams as invitational teams</i>	13
<i>Rule 13: Judiciary, protests and complaints</i>	13
<i>Rule 14: Responsibilities for Pool Controller (if applicable)</i>	13
<b>Schedule of fees</b>	<b>15</b>

## **Modifications to rules**

1. The Board of ACT Water Polo Incorporated (hereafter WPACT) reserves the right to review and update the rules as it deems appropriate to support competition and participation in the ACT.
2. Where modifications of the rules are required for a specific competition, the WPACT Board must provide details of rule changes to the WPACT Clubs two weeks prior to the date the changes take effect and a revised version of the rules should then be placed on the WPACT website.

**The following rules are for the Senior and Junior Summer Competitions.**

### **Rule 1: Registration**

- 1.1 All players must register with WPACT prior to participating in any WPACT sanctioned game.
- 1.2 If an unregistered player participates in a WPACT sanctioned game, the game shall be declared a forfeit.
- 1.3 All non-playing coaches and referees, if not otherwise registered as a full playing member, must register as affiliated members of WPACT through a Club.
- 1.4 A player who would like to transfer clubs, must provide to the WPACT Board upon request written confirmation from their last club that they have no financial liabilities or outstanding fees or debts with that club. If the player fails to do this, they will be deemed unfinancial and prevented from participating in the competition.
- 1.5 A second claim player must be able to provide, upon request by the WPACT Competitions Manager, written consent from their first claimed club that the player had permission for a second claim to another club.

### **Rule 2: Code of Behaviour**

- 2.1. All players, officials and spectators are required to adhere to the WPA and WPACT Codes of Behaviour and Membership Protection Policy. These policy documents are available on the WPACT website.
- 2.2. Players must respect teammates, other players, spectators and game officials.

### **Rule 3: Conditions of entry and withdrawal from competitions**

- 3.1 The WPACT Competitions Manager will call for clubs to submit team nominations at least one (1) month prior to the commencement of each competition season.
- 3.2. The number of teams a club may enter in each division is at the discretion of each club. Clubs must ensure they have the required number of eligible players (see Rule 9) for each team to avoid withdrawals or forfeits in the competition.
- 3.2. Should a club wish to withdraw a team from a competition after the commencement of the season, an application to do so shall be submitted to the Community Water Polo Committee with reasons as to why the teams withdrawal is necessary. The Community Water Polo Committee shall accept or object the application within a 7 day review period. The club will be subject to any forfeits or associated fines during the 7 day review period.
- 3.3 Should a club withdraw a team from a competition after the commencement of the season, the club shall still be liable for the full competition fee for this team.
- 3.4 Should a club withdraw a team from a competition after the commencement of the season, all games involving this team will be removed from the season results.
- 3.5 Should a club withdraw a team from a competition after the commencement of the season, players from the withdrawn team shall lose all finals eligibility games played for that team. Opposition players will not lose finals eligibility games for games played against the withdrawn team.

### **Rule 4: Game rules, duration and time outs**

- 4.1. All games shall be played under FINA rules and the WPACT Competition Policy endorsed by the Board. WPACT retains the right to modify rules, if necessary, to suit its specific competition structures.
- 4.2. All games shall commence at the times stated in the draw.
- 4.3. Game times shall be determined prior to the commencement of the playing season by the WPACT Competitions Manager. Consideration shall be given to the amount of pool time secured for the playing season. Wherever possible, minimum game times shall be as follows:
  - a. 12 & Under – 4 x 5:00 minutes running time
  - b. 14 & Under – 4 x 5:00 minutes actual time
  - c. 16 & Under – 4 x 5:00 minutes actual time
  - d. Youth League – 4 x 6:00 minute actual time
  - e. Second grade – 4 x 6:00 minutes actual time
  - f. Premier League – 4 x 7:00 minutes actual time.

- 4.4. Where games are running behind schedule, the pool controller and/or referees (where there is no pool controller) has the authority to adjust game lengths to allow the next game to start on time.
- 4.5. Two time-outs per team shall be permitted unless advised otherwise by the Competition Manager.

### **Rule 5: Equipment**

- 5.1. All grades will use the ball designated for men and women's competitions under World Aquatics Rules.
- 5.2. Each team needs to provide two (2) match quality Mikasa or Kap7 balls to be used in warm-up and game unless WPACT has provided match balls.
- 5.3. Clubs must supply their own individually numbered caps.
- 5.4. The team named **FIRST** shall wear **WHITE** (or light coloured) caps and start from left of the score board.
- 5.5. If the referee determines that there is a clash of cap colours between the two teams, it is the responsibility of the second named team to ensure the use of contrasting coloured caps.

### **Rule 6: Pre-game responsibilities**

- 6.1. Team officials are responsible for completing the game card prior to the scheduled start of play. The match referees will not start the game without the game card being completed.
  - 6.1.1 The game card must include the legible first and last names of all players. If the table officials and referees consider that a team has not completed the game card legibly, the table official or referee shall request the team complete the card legibly. Failure by a team to complete the game card legibly by the commencement of the third quarter shall result in an automatic forfeit and fine.
  - 6.1.2 The referee reserves the right to inspect players nails at least five (5) minutes before the commencement of the match.
- 6.3. The WPACT Competitions Manager prior to the commencement of the competition season shall determine club duty assignments.
- 6.4. Each club shall be required to provide representatives for duty throughout the competition season. Duty responsibilities include: ensuring the clocks are set up correctly, the game starts on time and all players are on the game card and it is filled in correctly and legibly.
- 6.5. Any club failing to perform assigned duty (or arrange for replacement table duty officials) may be liable for a forfeit and/or fine at the discretion of the WPACT Competition Manager.

## **Rule 7: In-game responsibilities**

- 7.1. Players must be present at the pool and ready to play to have their name written on the game card.

*Note: ready to play means the players must be in the water with their caps on.*

7.1.1 A maximum of 15 players are permitted to participate in any game.

7.1.2 If the referee or the table official believes a player's name is not on the game card sheet the referee shall stop the game and the player shall exit the pool until such time as the player's name is added to the game card.

7.1.3 Referees and/or table officials shall inform the WPACT Competitions Manager if an attempt is made to deceive officials by adding a player to the game card who is not present.

- 7.2. Teams must be ready to commence play prior to the scheduled start time.

7.2.1 Teams must have six (6) players in the water at the commencement of the game. Failure to do so will result in a forfeit.

- 7.3. Eligible players may add their name to the game card and participate at any point during the game.

- 7.4. In addition to any disciplinary action commenced by the WPACT, the following actions shall result in the automatic forfeit of the game - impersonation of another player, the use of inappropriate or disrespectful terminology (such as offensive language) on the game card.

- 7.5. All bench players must be seated, outside of the pool behind the goal line.

*Note: at the referee's discretion, where teams play on cold nights, players are able to remain in the water behind the goal line.*

- 7.6. Table duty assignments shall be determined by the WPACT Competition Manager prior to the commencement of the competition season.

- 7.7. Each club shall be required to provide representatives for table duty throughout the competition season. Two individuals are required for table duty: 1 – timekeeper, 2 – secretary.

- 7.8. Any team/club failing to perform assigned table duty (or arrange for replacement table duty officials) may be liable to a forfeit and/or fine at the discretion of the WPACT Competitions Manager. The game cannot proceed until table officials are present.

- 7.9. It is the responsibility of club officials to ensure their club performs their required duty.

## **Rule 8: Referees**

- 8.1. In accordance with World Aquatics rules, referees shall have absolute control of the game and have the power to order the removal of any player, spectator or official from the pool precincts if their behaviour affects the referee's ability to or prevents the referee from carrying out their duties. The referee shall have the power to abandon a game at any time if circumstances prevent it from being brought to a proper conclusion.
- 8.2. Referees shall ensure that the Competition Rules are adhered to.
- 8.3. Where possible, all referees in training should referee with accredited referees.
- 8.5. No game (scratch or real) shall commence without two (2) referees. A refereeing duty will override a coaching or playing duty. That is, if a referee is needed from one of the competing teams and there is no other available and suitably qualified referee on pool deck, a suitably qualified coach or player must fulfil this duty, or the game shall not commence.
- 8.6. Wherever possible WPACT will appoint two (2) appropriately experienced referees to each game. Wherever possible referees shall be neutral, however the level of competition and experience of the referee required will take precedence over referee neutrality.
- 8.7. If WPACT does not appoint referees to a game or they do not arrive for any reason, it is the responsibility of the two teams to agree on who will referee the match. In the event of no agreement can be reached between the two teams, the match shall be abandoned and no points awarded for the game.
- 8.8. After the match, referees must write their name and sign clearly on the game card. If the referee name is illegible the referee will not be paid.
- 8.9. Referee remuneration will be communicated by the WPACT Competition Manger prior to the commencement of the competition season.
- 8.10 All referees must be correctly attired for refereeing. They should wear a white or WPACT Referees shirt and have a whistle and red/yellow cards. Failure to do this may result in the referee not being paid for that game.

## **Rule 9: Player eligibility**

- 9.1. In accordance with Water Polo Australia regulations, age groupings are defined by the players' age on 31 December of the year in which the competition finishes. In the case of a 'Summer Competition', WPACT realises that the competition may begin in one calendar year and finish in the next. Consequently, the age definition shall rely on the second calendar year.
- 9.2. Age groupings will be "X years and under". Therefore, teams will be 14 years and under, 16 years and under etc.
- 9.3. Players are only permitted to play within a 4-year age window to reduce risk of harm towards a player. Applications for exemption to this rule can be applied for



by completing the Risk Acknowledgment Form (appendix B) and submitting it to the Competition Manager a minimum 1 week (7 days) prior to participating in the grade outside of the 4-year age window. All players aged 17 years or younger must complete a Risk Acknowledgement Form prior to playing in a senior age division.

9.4. Unless otherwise agreed by the WPACT Board, the senior competition shall consist of the following grades:

- PLM – Premier League Men
- M2 – Men’s second grade
- PLW – Premier League Women
- L2 – Women’s second grade

9.4.1 Where there is only one playing grade in a senior competition it shall be considered a ‘Premier League’ competition and all applicable eligibility rules shall apply.

9.5. Unless otherwise agreed by the WPACT Board, the Junior competition shall consist of the following grades:

- YLM – Youth men aged 19 and under
- 16B – Boy’s 16 and under
- 14B – Boy’s 14 and under
- YLW – Youth women aged 19 and under
- 16G – Girl’s 16 and under
- 14G – Girl’s 14 and under

### ***Player nomination***

9.6. Each team shall nominate its top five (5) players. These players are not permitted to play in another team within that grade or in a lower grade.

*Note: the nominated players shall be deemed as the best players that play in that team. A club may challenge another clubs’ nominations if they believe they have not nominated the top players for that team. The challenge needs to be submitted to the WPACT Community Water Polo Committee in writing by the club delegate within two (2) weeks of the named players being published. The WPACT Community Water Polo Committee shall review and make a decision on the challenge and respond in writing to the respective club delegates.*

9.6.1. Current Australian Waterpolo League or current Australian and/or other National Senior & Junior Representative team players are not permitted to play below the first grade division.

*Note: Junior National team includes the top Under 18 and Under 20 only. It does not include squad members, Under 16 national team or second/third teams.*

### ***Player nomination and eligibility – general rules***

- 9.7 Where a nominated player does not play in any of the first four (4) weeks of the season, clubs must nominate a replacement player.

*Note: the WPACT Board may approve an exemption to this rule in the case of proven injury or illness. The Club must provide written evidence to the WPACT Board when requesting an exemption to this rule.*

- 9.8 In the event a nominated player does not continue in the season and does not play four (4) games for a team, a new nominated player must be submitted by the club to the WPACT Competition Manager for endorsement.

- 9.9 Clubs must provide player nominations to the WPACT Competition Manager **one week prior** to the start of the competition. Failure to nominate players by this time shall result in the team forfeiting games until nominations are received and endorsed by the WPACT Competition Manager. If the WPACT Competition Manager requests a club to change their nominations due to a player not adhering to Rules 9.6, 9.7 or 9.11 or a decision relating to a club challenge, the club shall be required to comply within five (5) days. If a club fails to comply within this period, the team shall forfeit all subsequent games until the change is made and endorsed by the WPACT Competition Manager. Clubs can choose to challenge the ruling of the WPACT Competition Manager through application to the WPACT Board.

- 9.10 Nominated players must play a minimum of four (4) competition games in a team to be eligible for finals in that team.

- 9.11 A player may play in an age group higher than their own but not in lower age group.

### ***Player eligibility – finals***

- 9.12 A player may only play in one team in a single grade in the finals series. This includes semi-final and grand final games.

- 9.13 All players (nominated and unnamed) must play a minimum of four (4) competition games for that team, in that competition, at that grade during the regular playing season to be eligible to play in the finals series in that team.

*Note: No exemptions to this rule shall be given. This includes players who join the competition midway through the season.*

*Note: where a player meets eligibility requirements for more than one team in the same grade, they must nominate the team they will play with in the finals series. Players are only allowed to play for one team during the finals series, which includes semi-final and final.*

*Note: Where a player is called upon to play, coach or officiate for a WPACT sanctioned representative team, in the Australian Waterpolo League or National representative duties which results in them missing a club game they would have*

*otherwise played in, that game counts towards finals eligibility. The player's club must apply in writing for approval outlining the representative duty being undertaken, the duration and the number of games that will be missed within seven (7) days of the players absence. Exemptions can be requested by following the guidelines set out in appendix C.*

- 9.14 Players 18 years and under can be nominated in first grade, however, this will result in that player being ineligible to play in a second grade division or lower. Players 18 years and under can be nominated in senior teams and/ or junior grades higher than their own and are subject to the same eligibility rules by being a nominated player. However, being nominated in senior teams or in junior grades higher than their own does not prevent them from playing in their own age grade/ group.

*Note: players nominated in higher grades would also be expected to be nominated in their own age grade if required.*

#### **Player eligibility – second claim**

- 9.15 The WPACT Competitions Manager will review and approve a player's request to play second claim for another club in a higher grade on the basis that it will promote the growth of Water Polo in the ACT. Nominated club delegates must agree to the arrangement and the club using the 'second claim' player must submit a request to the WPACT Competitions Manager for approval. The club must provide the WPACT Competitions Manager with the player's name, grade and reason for the second claim request.

*Note: Any player, playing for two clubs under the second claim arrangement is still subject to all eligibility requirements as if they were playing for the one club. This includes nominated player eligibility and requirements.*

#### **Rule 10: Competition points, standings and finals series**

- 10.1. Competition points shall be awarded as follows: Win – 4 points, Draw – 2 points, Loss – 1 points, Forfeit – 0 points.
- 10.2. Position on the competition table shall be determined by the total points. If two or more teams are equal on points, then position shall be determined by goal difference, with the team with the highest difference between goals for and against placing higher on the ladder. If two teams are still equal then the points gained from the game/s between the equal teams shall determine the position. If still equal, the total goals scored when the two teams played each other (the team with the most goals progresses) will be used to determine the higher position on the table.
- 10.3. In a competition division with three (3) teams or fewer, the top two (2) teams shall contest the grand final. Semi finals shall not be played in competition divisions with three (3) teams or fewer.

In a competition division with four (4) teams or more, semi finals shall be played.

The semi finals shall be between 1<sup>st</sup> v 4<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> v 3<sup>rd</sup>. The winners of the semi finals will progress to the grand final.

## **Rule 11: Rescheduling and forfeiting of games**

- 11.1. Where a team is unable to compete at the assigned time, the team's club must provide notice in writing to the WPACT Competition Manager at least **24 hours** prior to the scheduled game time.
- 11.1.1. Failure to advise WPACT and the opposition team with 24 hours notice will result in an automatic forfeit.
- 11.1.2. The club providing notification may arrange to reschedule the game if the opposing club is in agreement (if advance notification is given, the opposing club must do everything in their power to agree to a rescheduled game time). The club requesting to reschedule the game shall be responsible for arrangements including any additional expenses, such as pool bookings. This same club is responsible for organising duty and referees and must complete the game in accordance with the WPACT Competition Rules.
- Note: The club arranging the reschedule must notify the WPACT Competition Manager of the reschedule arrangements within 14 days of the original schedule time of the game.*
- 11.1.3. Where the game is not able to be rescheduled, the game shall be declared a forfeit.
- 11.2. Where a game is abandoned due to inclement weather:
- prior to commencement of the game or before the half time break, the WPACT Competition Manager will assist the two teams affected to arrange a rescheduled game time within three weeks. WPACT will cover any additional expenses for the rescheduled game. Where the game cannot be rescheduled, the game will be considered a draw, which includes games within 2 weeks of the final series.
  - where the game is abandoned after the half time break, and the score difference is five (5) goals or more the result will stand. Where the score is four (4) goals or fewer the game will be considered a draw.
- 11.3. Where a team provided less than 24 hours notice to the WPACT Competition Manager that they are unable to compete in their scheduled game, the team will forfeit the game.
- 11.4. All teams shall be subject to the fines for forfeited games. These can be found in Appendix A: Schedule of fees
- Note: if the team forfeiting provides a scratch match, the team is still subject to a fine, which can be found in Appendix A: Schedule of fees*
- 11.5. If a team forfeits a semi-final or grand final the club shall be fined \$500. If the club has other teams in that age group/division that have qualified for finals, those teams will be disqualified from the remainder of the finals.

## **Rule 12: Representative & Composite teams as invitational teams**

- 12.1. The WPACT Competitions Manager may on occasions invite teams to compete in a grade, this shall include, but not be limited to ACT Representative teams, teams from regional NSW (Albury, Wagga etc) or composite club teams. This will be at the sole discretion of the WPACT Competitions Manager and they may apply special eligibility exemptions for these teams.

*For example: ACT representative teams may be invited to play in a grade higher than their age classification as part of the selection and development process. The WPACT Community Water Polo Committee shall apply special exemptions for these teams, which could include making the team eligible or ineligible for the finals series or exempt from naming players to promote participation for their club team.*

- 12.2. Players may compete for their club and the representative team in a single grade.
- 12.3. A player's first obligation is to their club. When a player's club and the representative team are playing each other, the club team has first claim to the player. However, should the club team have sufficient players, the club has the option to release players to the representative team.

## **Rule 13: Judiciary, protests and complaints**

- 13.1. Referees, officials and clubs and players must also acquaint themselves with their duties under the Water Polo ACT Judiciary Policy.
- 13.2. All protests or complaints in relation to any match conducted by WPACT shall be submitted in writing with a fee of \$250 by the designated club delegate to the Secretary of the WPACT within **48 hours** of the disputed match. The Community Water Polo Committee shall convene a tribunal made up of members of the WPACT Community Water Polo Committee, WPACT Board or WPACT Staff that have no direct affiliation to any club involved.

*If the protest is upheld, the \$250 fee will be refunded.*

## **Rule 14: Responsibilities for Pool Controller (if applicable)**

The pool controller and/or referees shall be responsible for:

- 14.1. Supervising the duty clubs to perform the complete set up of the venue thirty (30) minutes before the scheduled starting time of such fixtures. As such, they are responsible for ensuring that all team set-up duties have been completed.
- 14.2. Ensuring team sheets are completed legibly and completely (signed and filled in appropriately – see rule 6.1) after each match. The game card must then be provided to the WPACT Competitions Manager for upload into the competition management software.
- 14.3. Ensuring that referees sign the sheet as a correct record of the game.
- 14.4. Ensuring that referees complete the relevant offence report form where a player is excluded for the match for misconduct or violent action.

- 14.5. Supervising duty clubs to clear the pool of all equipment and seeing that it is stored neatly in areas allocated for equipment.
- 14.6. Ensure all spectators position themselves in the grandstand or seated area. All other areas of the pool area are for competing players, team officials and competition officials. There should be no person positioned behind the goals during a game.
- 14.7. Assisting referees, spectators, players and coaches abide by the WPACT Water Polo Code of Behaviour for players, spectators, and officials.

## Schedule of fees

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>FEE</b>
<b>Team withdrawal from competition</b>	<b>\$Entry fee</b>
<b>First forfeited game (without giving 24 hours notice)</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Second forfeited game or any forfeit thereafter (per game)</b>	<b>\$100</b>
<b>Failure to complete game card (per match)</b>	<b>\$100</b>
<b>Failure to perform club duty (match set-up and pack down)</b>	<b>\$100</b>
<b>Failure to perform table duty (per game)</b>	<b>\$100</b>
<b>Disputes, protests and judiciary tribunals (per challenge)</b>	<b>\$250</b>



## RISK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FOR U18 PLAYERS COMPETING OUTSIDE THE 4-YEAR AGE WINDOW

<i>PLAYER DETAILS</i>			
Name:	National ID:		
Email:	Mobile Phone:		
Club:	Date of Birth:		
Competition wishing to compete in:			
<i>PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT</i>			
Height (cm)	Weight (kg)		
<i>LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE</i>			
Number of years played:	Experience at State:	National:	
Outline the representative level of experience below: (ie. Teams and years played – last 5 years)			
<i>ASSESSING COACH</i>			
Name:	National ID:		
Email:	Mobile Phone:		
Coaching Level (please circle) minimum Development [ <del>Community</del> ] [Development] [Advanced] [Elite]			
<i>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.</i>			
Physical Development	Does the player's level of physical development allow the player to compete with players in the proposed senior (open grade) competition	Yes	No
Skill Level	Is the player's skill level comparable with other players in the proposed senior (open grade) competition?	Yes	No
Level of Experience	Does the player have the experience to compete with other players at the comparable standard competition?	Yes	No
Standard of Competition	Is the standard of competition in the proposed senior (open grade) 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 (open grade) 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:			
<i>PARENT/GUARDIAN</i>			
I confirm that:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) I am a parent or legal guardian of the above mentioned player;</li> <li>b) 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 competitions involving players 4 years or older than them</li> <li>c) It has been explained to me that the risk of injury may be increased by the player playing in the proposed senior (open grade) competition and;</li> <li>d) I understand that water polo is a contact sport and, like all contact sports, players are exposed to risk of injury. I understand that the level of risk may be heightened where a player participates in a senior (open grade) competition in circumstances where the player's physical development, skill level and experience are inferior to that of the player 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 (open grade) competition.</li> </ul>			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	



## Appendix C

**Guidelines for Exemptions****Purpose**

This document is to provide clarity and transparency to exemption guidelines for individuals or teams who compete in WPACT competitions. These guidelines are to be applied to enhance the local competition for all participants, and to ensure a safe and fair competition environment.

**Pre-season****Individual player exemptions**

1. Exemptions to the playing age can be requested if:
  - 1.1 The club does not have a team in a higher grade for the individual to participate in, or;
  - 1.2 The club does have a team in a higher grade, however playing in the grade would pose a safety risk for the individual due to their inexperience.
2. The player qualifies for an exemption if:
  - 2.1 The individual is in their first year of participation, or;
  - 2.2 The individual is within 12 months of being the correct age to participate in the lower grade.
3. Once Individual exemptions are granted:
  - 3.1 The player will lose their exemption if they do play in the age group/grade above at any point.
  - 3.2 The exemption is reviewed at the midway point of the season.
4. Other provisions
  - 4.1 The individual must play in an "A" grade competition if there are two grades in the relevant age group.
5. Process of applying and granting a pre-season individual exemption:
  - 5.1 It is the responsibility of the club to apply for age exemption for any given competition.
  - 5.2 Exemption requests are to be submitted to the WPACT Community Water Polo Committee via the WPACT Executive Officer. Players are not permitted to participate until there is a decision on the exemption request.
  - 5.3 The WPACT Executive Officer will provide a copy of the exemption request to the Community Water Polo Committee for decision. Exemption requests require a majority vote.
  - 5.4 The WPACT Executive Officer will formally respond to the exemption request via email.

**Team Exemption**

6. Exemptions for teams to avoid forfeits can be requested if:
  - 6.1 The team has fewer than 8 registered players at the commencement of the season, but the club is committed to fielding a team in this grade for the benefit of the competition.
  - 6.2 There are no other players that the club can draw upon to make up numbers for the team (i.e., drawing 14&U players up to fill 16&U positions).
7. Once Team exemptions are granted:
  - 7.1 The team will lose their exemption once they reach any benchmark set by the WPACT Community Water Polo Committee.
  - 7.2 The exemption is reviewed at the midway point of the season.
8. Process of applying and granting of exemptions

- 8.1 It is the responsibility of the club to apply for a team exemption for any given competition.
- 8.2 Exemption requests are to be submitted to the WPACT Community Water Polo Committee via the WPACT Executive Officer. Teams are liable for forfeits until there is a decision on the exemption request.
- 8.3 The WPACT Executive Officer will provide a copy of the exemption request to the Community Water Polo Committee for decision. Exemption requests require a majority vote.
- 8.4 The WPACT Executive Officer will formally respond to the exemption request via email.

#### Finals Exemptions

9. Finals eligibility exemptions can be requested for the following reasons:
  - 9.1 Where a player is called upon to play, coach or officiate for a WPACT sanctioned representative team, in the Australian Waterpolo League or National representative duties which results in them missing a club game they would have otherwise played in, that game counts towards finals eligibility. The player's club must apply to the WPACT Competitions Manager in writing for approval outlining the representative duty being undertaken, the duration and the number of games that will be missed prior to the player's absence. The club does have a team in a higher grade, however playing in the grade would pose a safety risk for the individual due to their inexperience.
  - 9.2 Where a player can produce a medical certificate to indicate they would have participated in a game if it wasn't for an injury or illness.
10. Process of applying and granting of exemptions
  - 10.1 It is the responsibility of the club to apply for age exemption for any given competition.
  - 10.2 Exemption requests are to be submitted to the WPACT Community Water Polo Committee via the WPACT Executive Officer within seven (7) days of the player missing a game under rule 9.1 or 9.2. Players are not permitted to participant in finals matches until there is a decision on the exemption request.
  - 10.3 The WPACT Executive Officer will provide a copy of the exemption request to the Community Water Polo Committee for decision. Exemption requests require a majority vote.
  - 10.4 The WPACT Executive Officer will formally respond to the exemption request via email.