

Dear All Schools,

Volleyball Australia (VA) conducted two eligibility surveys across 2015 and 2016 that were distributed to all participating schools in the Australian Volleyball Schools Cup (AVSC). The aim of the surveys was to determine whether schools would support changing player eligibility from the age group competition to a year level based competition. On both occasions, results came back inconclusive.

Annually, VA holds the AVSC review meeting in February, whereby the AVSC Events Committee (AVSC EC) are involved in all major decision making. In the review meeting that took place earlier this year, the decision to implement the following new eligibility rule was based on the following reasons:

New Player Eligibility Implemented

Honours Competition

The honours competition is age based - the following age groups shall be offered:

Open (U20)	Must be at least 16 but cannot turn 20 or older in the year of the event
Under 17	Must be at least 14 but cannot turn 17 or older in the year of the event
Under 16	Must be at least 13 but cannot turn 16 or older in the year of the event
Under 15	Must be at least 12 but cannot turn 15 or older in the year of the event

Divisional Competition

The divisional competition is school year level based - the following year levels and divisions will be offered:

Year 12	Division 1, 2, 3 or 4 – Must be in year 9, 10, 11 or 12
Year 11	Division 1, 2 or 3 – Must be in year 9, 10 or 11
Year 10	Division 1, 2 or 3 – Must be in year 8, 9 or 10
Year 9	Division 1, 2 or 3 – Must be in year 7, 8 or 9
Year 8	Division 1 or 2 - Must be in year 6, 7 or 8
Year 7	Division 1 or 2 – Must be in year 5, 6 or 7

Please note; as per the regulations:

4.1.1.1 Subject to clause 2.2.1 and 3.1.2, each player conforms to the age and gender requirements of the team for which they are nominated; If a player is outside the age/year level bracket indicated in section 2.4.1, the school must fill out the section 'Age/Year level Exemption' at the bottom of the 'Confirmation of Entry' to be signed by the Principal. By signing this, the school Principal is aware and supports the player/s participating in a higher age group/year level.

- VA has adopted the hybrid model: Divisional competition changed to year levels; Honours competition remains the same (age based). The honours competition has remained the same to keep the integrity of competition and align with qualification process with state schools cups.
- All states except for Tasmania, have transitioned or are transitioning to a financial year age cut off for their school years. This is the case in QLD, and by 2020 all six years in high schools will be based on a full financial year grouping.
- All other states have undergone this transition whereby WA finished their transition in 2014.
- The previous eligibility rule only supported Tasmania and three senior years in Queensland. This equates to only 19% of high school's years, and will reduce to 12% by 2020.
- The new system allows students to participate with their peers from the same year level, which is a huge drawcard.
- Students can play within the same age level with the same coaches and team mates at local, state and national level.
- Aligns with the national school system whereby students are enrolled into a year level and play accordingly.
- New year level based competition will make it easier for teachers and coaches to organise and train their teams.

VA along with the AVSC EC have taken into account all aspects of the competition, school opinions, qualification processes, alignment with state volleyball associations as well as alignment with state education departments and believe this change will really encourage greater participation in the AVSC.

Look forward to your attendance in 2017, for what is set to be the biggest event to date!