



GRADING POLICY

OBJECTIVE

To provide a framework to group teams into appropriate divisions in the 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 team work;
 - 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 competitive; 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 Kalamunda and Districts Netball Association (KDNA).

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

SCOPE

The scope of the grading policy will be limited to the KDNA Competition. The policies and principles apply primarily to the competitive netball categories. (An outline of the policies applied for modified netball is at [Attachment A](#)).

The KDNA competition comprises the following categories:

CATEGORY	Target Age Range	Maximum Age (as at 31 December)
NetSetGO Modified	5 – 7 years	7
NetSetGo Full Rules	8 - 10 years	10
JUNIORS (Div 16 – 21) NO FINALS	10 - 12 years	16
JUNIORS (Div 7 - 15 FINALS	12 – 18 years	UP TO 18 (Attending school)
SENIOR (Div 1 – 7)	16+ OPEN	Nil

DEVELOPMENT OF PLAYERS

Players younger than the target age range for a category are able to participate in a higher division. Under the by-laws, only maximum ages apply (except for the open category). In these circumstances, the club or team involved should give careful consideration to 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 category is the main influence on the competition structure.

The competition is played at Ray Owen Sports Complex to ensure that participation is not limited and that netball in the Kalamunda and Districts Association 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 and venues of matches will vary for most divisions in each category, with the majority of divisions scheduled to play for 15 rounds. Dependent on total team nominations for each category, the proposed categories will be grouped into the following divisions:

CATEGORY	Target Age Range	Maximum Age (as at 31 December)
NET Separate Comp	5 – 6 years	6 or apply for exemption
SET Modified	7 – 8 years	8
GO Full Rules	8 - 10 years	10
JUNIORS (Div 16 – 21) NO FINALS	10 - 12 years	16
JUNIORS (Div 7 - 15 FINALS	12 – 18 years	UP TO 18 (Attending school)
SENIOR (Div 1 – 7)	16+ OPEN	Nil

*To determine a suitable division to nominate, clubs should refer to the guidance available which provides a broad description of the general age and school years of teams in each division.

SIZE OF DIVISIONS

The size of each division is finally determined by the number of teams graded in each division. Where possible, for a 15 round season, divisions will be made up of 6 or 8 teams (an even number of teams) to minimise (avoid) byes. The number of rounds is determined by the Saturdays available outside of school holidays or long weekends and Netball WA schedule.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by KDNA taking into account any feedback from affiliated clubs and entity teams.

GRADING PROCESS STEP 1: PLANNING

- Calculate the maximum number of games able to be played each Saturday based on the WA calendar and the number of courts available for grading and season rounds.
- Finalise the number of teams entered and determine the number of byes required if any (ideally none).
- Calculate division sizes, i.e. 8 teams, 6 teams, dependent on the number of rounds in the season and byes - endeavouring to equalise the number of times teams play each other.
- Determine split rounds needed to maximise the number of times teams play each other.

STEP 2: NOMINATION OF TEAMS

- Full details of teams nominating for the competition needs to be provided by Clubs by the due date. The minimum information required will be set out in the registration requirements. A comprehensive grading process, and ultimately the Associations' capacity to determine a suitable division for individual teams (and minimise disruption for the competition as a whole, 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.
 - Clubs which have more than one team in the same category are advised to grade their teams to avoid having divisions comprising multiple teams from the same club, if possible and if this is a consideration for the club.
 - Requests to move down (comparative to the previous season) should firstly consider the natural age shift NetSetGo Modified, Full Rules, Juniors and Seniors (on average, two to three whole divisions move up to the next category each year).
 - Requests to move down 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 registration forms 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.

Request for Division

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

STEP 3: PAPER GRADING INITIAL TEAM RANKING

Based on information available from the previous season and information provided by clubs, teams will be ranked in comparative order and allocated an initial ranking in the new season's competition. The basis for ranking will be a combination of the following:

- Clubs' recommendations/nominations; See Appendix A. Team nomination criteria
- Previous season's performance - win/loss ratio and goals for/against percentage;
- The natural age shift for teams progressing through the NSG modified, full rules, Juniors and Seniors categories. This general principle may not apply equally to senior teams.
- A comparative assessment of the best fit for new teams.
- NetSetGo: Competition guidelines & grading criteria as per NetSetGo modification table (Appendix B)

Ranking Procedures:

- Rank teams according to divisions nominated by clubs.
- Apply the by-laws that set out automatic progression for players (for teams of five of the same players).
- 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.

Preliminary Allocation of Divisions

- Divide Allocated Club grading categories into divisions.
- Identify 'benchmark' teams with consistent competition history and team composition.
- Nominate a division for each team.
- Check and confirm all teams have been assigned a division

Step 4: PREPARE SEASON FIXTURES

- Prepare the season fixture using the MyNetball platform - entering teams into the participation module and allocating teams from each category into a division and creating a competition draw.

Step 5: FINAL ALLOCATION OF DIVISIONS

- KDNA will not be regrading teams in the competition, all games will be considered in the ladder.
- An opportunity will be provided for clubs to request changes, after round 5 this will not guarantee a regrade will occur.
- Based on team's performances for rounds 1 –5, and after all teams have played each other at least once, the Grading Committee will review the divisions and determine any circumstances that warrant an adjustment, that is consistent with this policy and without disadvantage to other teams.
- Adjustments to draws after the commencement of competition rounds can negatively impact on the competition standing of other teams and cause considerable inconvenience, so re-grades will be determined by what is best for the teams and competition.

APPEALS

- With the exception of teams participating in the non-competitive category, the draws will not be adjusted after the final fixtures are published.
- Requests to move divisions after the fifth round of competition will not be considered. Notwithstanding this, the Associations maintain the discretion to review grading decisions based on ongoing match evaluation and make adjustments in accordance with the by-laws.

GRADING COMMITTEE

- The Grading Committee will be appointed at the start of season, with a Competition Co-ordinator nominated and accepted to govern the Grading Committee.
- The number of committee members should be no more than 8 and no less than 4 (excluding co-ordinator)

Committee Obligations

- To assign teams to appropriate divisions without bias or prejudice
- To provide information regarding teams, without motivation to assign teams into divisions that are not fair and equitable or can be advantageous or disadvantageous to other teams in the division.
- To ensure the primary objectives and goals of the grading policy are met – aiming to achieve a successful competition for all teams and clubs.