

## **Sydney North Rugby Referees Coaching and Grading Policy**

SNRR uses a Tier System (as do the other Sydney Referee associations) to provide GUIDANCE FOR APPOINTMENTS only. We take the view that a trained referee is better than an untrained person and our appointments will be made as best we can with the available trained referees. In order to best manage our referees and their varying attributes, SNRR grades each active referee into one of six separate groups, known as “tier grading”.

Our grading is different to that done by NSWRRRA (Seniors - gradings based A-Z). If you also referee for other organisations then this experience is useful and is included (if you tell us) in our assessment but it does not automatically affect your Tier assessment.

With variance in games and age groups, some matches are more difficult to control than others, or have greater speed and intensity. SNR Referees also bring in different levels of age, knowledge, skill, experience and ability, as well as varying degrees of physical fitness, speed and endurance.

Allocating each referee to a grading tier assists the NSW Juniors Referee Appointments Officer and our Head Referee Coach to more precisely match the referee to be appointed to an appropriately suitable fixture.

### **Referee coaches**

The role of our referee coaches is to promote the spirit of rugby according to the strategy of SNRR. Our referee coaches have the primary role of promoting the growth and development of SNRR referees through constructive feedback in applying the RA coaching guidelines in order to better develop all our referees, with the aim of individual experience and expertise while delivering a holistic consistent approach.

Their secondary role is to apply SNRR grading competencies to place the referees into the correct tiers, rather than to rank referees down to exact individual positions. While not a prime function, in the younger junior games, a visible referee coach can also be a useful deterrent in preventing referee abuse before it occurs.

### **Referee Mentors**

The mentor is a Sydney North Rugby Referee with a minimum of three years’ experience refereeing at an under 13 or above level. The mentor does not write official SNRR coaching reports and does not apply grading competencies.

The mentor can give coaching guidance and areas for improvement, providing a discussion channel for new or young referees. Mentors who become experienced in this coaching aspect, should consider becoming fully accredited Level 1 referee coaches.

### **Field Testing of for L1 Referees**

New referees will have their first two SNRR appointed matches below under 13 level, where possible, with an SNRR coach or mentor present. Ideally a Referee Coach or mentor should be present to observe a game one week prior the any field test to ensure that the referee is well prepared for the field test.

Then when ready, request a field test via the Head of Referee Coaching.

## **Grading competencies**

The key grading competencies aim to achieve consistency in decisions in SNRR, and consistency within the same match by one referee. There are key criteria in the grading database for all active Sydney North Rugby Referees. This also aligns with the Rugby Australia Referee profile and guidelines.

- Game experience (i.e., how many games has the person refereed),
- Fitness (i.e., match fitness)
- Decision accuracy throughout a game
- Law knowledge and application
- Adaptability of control and communication with regards to U10s, when compared to opens.
- Game empathy
- Age (i.e., a school aged referee can only do up to 2 years younger in XV's, Sevens has a different classification),

## **How are the grading tiers applied in practice?**

The connection between the degree of difficulty of the various match types and the referee grading tiers is summarised in two different ways in the tier grading tables below. The list provided at Annexure A summarises the match types to which referees in each of the six grading tiers will normally be appointed.

The list at Annexure B identifies the minimum grading tier a referee is required to achieve in order to be considered for appointment to a particular match type.

Referees are usually appointed to matches at or below their tier level. On occasions a referee will be appointed to a match normally associated with a different grading tier. This may be for development purposes for the individual in question or it could be to cover a shortfall in the number of available referees at that other tier level.

Based on discussions, reports and recommendations from the Referee Coaches Group (RCG), the SNRR Head of Referee Coaching then reviews the appropriateness of each active referee's grading tier. As a result of these reviews the grading of some referees may move up, while others may move down. This grading list will then be updated on the SNRR website and available for members to review.

## **What recourse do I have if I don't agree with my grading tier?**

To be allocated to a particular grading tier, a referee must demonstrate that they are capable of handling the highest-level match type in that tier. For example, as can be seen at Annexure B, matches in the under 15A age group are rated at the Tier 1 degree of difficulty. However, in order to allocate a referee a Tier 1 grading, the RCG must be satisfied that the referee has the ability to handle matches at the Junior Opens and under 16A degree of difficulty.

If you wish to change your Tier or you think your current grading is not appropriate, and it is important to us that we get this right, then please let the Head of Referee Coaching know so we can discuss with you and if required, have a referee coach assess you.

If you have recently been assessed and not changed grading tiers, then please before you ask for another assessment make changes and improvements.

## **Rugby AU Guidelines for Match Officials Under 17 Years of Age**

When considering the appointment of match officials under 17 years of age, the restrictions detailed on the [accreditation policies](#) page of the Rugby Australia website must also be taken into account. For convenience, Rugby Australia's guidelines in connection with the appointment of referees and assistant referees who are under 17 years of age are quoted below.

*"No Referee under the age of 17 should be appointed to a 15s match within 2 years below their own age group e.g., if a referee is in the U15 age group, they may appoint to referee the U13s and below.*

*No Referee under the age of 17 should be appointed to a 7s match at a level above their own age group. e.g., if a referee is in the U15 age group, they may appoint to referee the U15s and below.*

*No Assistant Referee under the age of 17 should be appointed to a match more than 2 years above their own age group. e.g., if a referee is in the U13 age group, they may be appointed to assistant referee in the U15s and below.*

*Exceptions to the above may be made in rare cases where a referee may benefit from a development experience in a controlled environment with appropriate support from ARs and referee coaches. Under no circumstances may a referee be regularly appointed outside of these guidelines."*

### **Matters related to grading that all members need to know**

- Members who are new to refereeing and others for whom a precise grading tier has not yet been determined, will initially be allocated to Tier 6. Following an assessment of their on-field performance by a referee coach, referees will be re-graded in accordance with their demonstrated proficiency, fitness level and development requirements.
- On occasions, a second or third grading assessment may be required for some new referees prior to them progressing to the next stage of their development.
- A referee assessed as being suited to refereeing the under 6 to under 9 age groups only will maintain their Tier 6 grading.
- RKR Pathway referees can only be appointed to the under 6 to under 12 age groups. RKR Pathway referees can only be graded into Tiers 4, 5 and 6.
- Accredited referees (i.e., those holding or seeking Rugby AU level 1 accreditation or higher) can be appointed to games across all match types and all age groups. An accredited referee can be graded into any of the Tiers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.
- Any SNRR member whose Smart Rugby has expired; all associated accreditations will be lapsed until their Smart Rugby has been renewed (required every 2 years).
- Any SNRR member whose referee accreditation has lapsed, will be allocated a Tier 6 grading until such time as those deficiencies have been rectified. Only then will that referee be considered for appointment to matches.

Andrew Winslade  
SNRR Head of Referee Coaching  
[refcoach@snrr.org.au](mailto:refcoach@snrr.org.au)

## SNRR Tier Grading Chart

MATCH TYPE	MATCH TYPE BY REFEREE TIER LEVEL					
	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 5	Tier 6
<b>Senior Law (adult players)</b>	X	X				
<b>Junior Law (Under 19 Rugby)</b>						
Junior Opens U19, U18, U17	X					
Under 16A	X					
Under 16B	X					
Under 16C and lower	X	X				
Under 15A	X					
Under 15B	X	X				
Under 15C and lower	X	X				
Under 14A	X	X				
Under 14B	X	X	X			
Under 14C and lower	X	X	X			
Under 13A	X	X	X			
Under 13B	X	X	X			
Under 13C and lower	X	X	X			
<b>RKR Pathway Law (U6 to U12)</b>						
Under 12A	X	X	X	X		
Under 12B	X	X	X	X		
Under 12C and lower	X	X	X	X		
Under 11A	X	X	X	X		
Under 11B	X	X	X	X	X	
Under 11C and lower	X	X	X	X	X	
Under 10A	X	X	X	X		
Under 10B	X	X	X	X	X	
Under 10C and lower	X	X	X	X	X	
Under 9	X	X	X	X	X	X
Under 8	X	X	X	X	X	X
Under 7	X	X	X	X	X	X
Under 6	X	X	X	X	X	X

**NOTE:** Referees appointed to senior law matches and to matches in the under 13 to under 19 age groups must hold full and current referee accreditation (i.e., Rugby AU level 1 referee accreditation or higher). Referees holding full accreditation may also be appointed to RKR Pathway matches.

The minimum requirement to referee matches in the under 8 to under 12 age groups is attendance at the Refereeing Kids Rugby U8-U12 course together with a pass in the online Refereeing Kids Rugby law exam.

It is a mandatory requirement of Rugby Australia that all active referees MUST hold current Smart Rugby Certification. Without it they cannot and will not be appointed to matches.

MATCH TYPE	MINIMUM TIER LEVEL REQUIRED TO REFEREE MATCH TYPE (referees will normally be appointed to matches at or below)					
	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 5	Tier 6
<b>Senior Law (adult players)</b>		X				
<b>Junior Law (Under 19 Rugby)</b>						
Junior Opens U19, U18, U17	X					
Under 16A	X					
Under 16B	X					
Under 16C and lower		X				
Under 15A	X					
Under 15B		X				
Under 15C and lower		X				
Under 14A		X				
Under 14B			X			
Under 14C and lower			X			
Under 13A			X			
Under 13B			X			
Under 13C and lower			X			
<b>RKR Pathway Law (U6 to U12)</b>						
Under 12A				X		
Under 12B				X		
Under 12C and lower				X		
Under 11A				X		
Under 11B					X	
Under 11C and lower					X	
Under 10A				X		
Under 10B					X	
Under 10C and lower					X	
Under 9						X
Under 8						X
Under 7						X
Under 6						X

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