



SPECIAL CONSIDERATION POLICY

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Person responsible for review:	Operations Manager

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the factors that should be considered when assessing a request for special consideration, in relation to existing competition rules and protocols.

The overarching aim is to keep the competition fair, safe, and equitable, while trying to balance the needs of all participants.

Definition

Special consideration means considering making an exception, adaptation, or adjustment for an individual or group so that they can take part in a match/competition, or so no one is unfairly disadvantaged because of unavoidable circumstances.

This could include rule adjustments, changes to equipment, or other reasonable support.

Scope

Only designated Officials can submit a request for special consideration. This includes Saturday Club Secretaries or Evening Competition Team Managers/Captains.

How to Make a Request

- Requests should be made in writing to the competition administrator.
- Provide enough detail about the situation on the pro-forma provided.
- If relevant, include any documents or evidence, such as a medical note, school letter, or other support materials.
- Requests should be made as early as possible to allow time for assessment: in accordance with the specific competition's timeline.

POLICY

When a request for special consideration is made, the following factors will be reviewed:

The Individual's Circumstances

Consider the specific needs and situation of the person asking for support. Is there a temporary or ongoing challenge, such as an injury, illness, disability, or personal event? Are there physical, mental, or cultural reasons involved?

Type of Adjustment Needed

What exactly is being requested? Is it a change in rules or something else? Ensure the request is clear, detailed and reasonable.

Impact on Fairness and Safety

Will making this change be fair to ALL participants? Does the adjustment affect the safety of anyone involved? The needs of the individual must be balanced with the need to keep competition fair and all participants safe. For example, can a team safely take the court in a Final with 5 or 6 players?

Duration of the Adjustment

Is this a one-off request, or will it continue over time? Temporary adjustments may be easier to make than long-term changes, but all requests should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Precedent

Has a similar request been made in the past? What was the outcome? Consistency is important, but each situation should still be looked at on its own merits. The only precedent that must be upheld is that each application is considered on its own merits.

Confidentiality and Privacy

Respect the privacy of the person making the request. Only share information with those who need to know to assess the request.

Consultation and Communication

Talk openly with the individual's Club and, if appropriate, the individual themselves, or other teams/Clubs who will be impacted by the decision. Make sure the person understands the process and the decision.

Examples

- Allowing an unqualified player to participate in a team during finals
- Allowing a player with an injury to take additional breaks during a game.
- Giving an extension to submit paperwork or join a team because of illness or other personal issues.
- Adjusting times for someone with religious commitments.
- Making equipment or other resources available for participants with disabilities.

PROCEDURE

- All requests should be submitted in writing as soon as possible, within the agreed timeframe.
- The Association will review the request using the factors listed above.
- More information may be requested if needed.
- A decision should be made within a reasonable timeframe, and the outcome should be clearly explained to the person making the request.
- If the request is declined, reasons should be given, and, if possible, alternative options or supports should be suggested.
- If the applicant disagrees with the outcome, the decision may only be appealed if the decision breaches By-laws, Constitution or other relevant governance such as anti-discrimination legislation.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Club/Team Managers:** Provide honest information and make requests as early as possible.
- **Association Managers:** Be open-minded and supportive. Assist in assessing requests and provide recommendations upon request.
- **Competition Administrators:** Manage the process, make fair decisions, and ensure good communication.

Confidentiality and Record-Keeping

Personal information related to special consideration requests must be kept private and only shared with those directly involved in assessing and implementing the decision. All decisions, supporting documents, and communications should be recorded and stored securely.

Review

Data shall be collected and analysed with a view to improving the process.