



MWFA POLICY FOR PLAYING IN A TEAM MORE THAN TWO YEARS ABOVE TRUE AGE GROUP

The MWFA is adopting the FNSW age limit policy to play in a team (either as a registered or borrowed player) above a player's own age group of two years.

The Football Year corresponds with the Calendar year.

In age-restricted competitions, teams are assigned Age Groups based on a qualifying age. Unless otherwise stated, the maximum age limit in years is indicated by the team's Age Group designation, for example, Under 9 means the maximum age of a player must be nine years in the current Football Year.

The eligibility to play in an age group restricted team is determined by the player's age in the current football year.

If no minimum or maximum Age Group restriction is assigned, teams are given the designation Open Age.

The **True Age Group** of a player is the Age Group for which the player qualifies to play as determined by the player's age in the current Football Year. A **True Age Player** is a player who is playing a match in their True Age Group.

For Open Age teams, a player turning 18 years or older during the current football year qualifies as a True Age Player. This policy does not apply to Open Age Groups with a further minimum age restriction such as Over 35 or Over 45.

Minimum Age Restrictions:

1. The minimum age of any registered player is five years of age in the current football year.
2. A player may not play in any match for a team whose assigned Age Group is more than two years above the player's True Age Group unless the player has gained MWFA Approval.
3. A player is not to play in any match for an Open Age team unless their True Age Group is 16 years or greater, or the player has obtained MWFA Approval.

Application Process:

The Application Process consists of three parts:

- The *MWFA Playing Above Age Consent Form* must be completed by the player's parent or legal guardian and the player's Club.
- The reasons why the player wishes to play more than two years above their True Age Group must be given
- An assessment of the player's capability of playing more than two years above their True Age must be carried out by a suitably qualified person such as an accredited coach (often the coach of the team). The Assessment will consider the player on their strength, stamina and physique and the risks associated with playing with and against players more than two years above their age as well as the mental effect of playing at the higher level. The MWFA may also require an independent assessment.

The player's reasons and assessment must be provided in written form along with the signed Consent Form from the player's Club.

MWFA Approval:

Once the Application Process has been completed, the EC will review the circumstances and either approve or reject the player's request.

Irrespective of the completion of the above Application Process, the MWFA will only grant approval where there is a strong reason why a player is unable to or should not play in their True Age Group. Such reasons may include that there is no team available to cater for their age or their strength, stamina and physique is so advanced that there may be a duty of care issue in relation to the safety of other players in their True Age Group.

Reasons such as playing with their siblings or friends or on a different day are not considered sufficient.

Appeal:

The MWFA cannot transfer the responsibility for approval to any other organisation or individual, it is a risk management and duty of care decision for which the MWFA is responsible.

As such, an appeal against a decision regarding the approval of a player to play more than two years above their True Age must be heard by FNSW.

Player's Registered Team:

A player qualifies by Age to register in a Team in an Age Group if:

- The player's True Age is the same as the Age Group, or
- The player's True Age is no more than two years below the Age Group, or
- The player's True Age is more than two years below the Age Group and the MWFA has given Approval

The Registration of a player in a team whose Age Group is more than two years above their True Age will not be accepted unless the MWFA Approval Process has been completed.

When the player's registration is submitted by the Club to the MWFA Registrar it must be accompanied by:

- A signed MWFA Playing Above Age Consent Form for the Registering Team's Age Group
- Proof of completion of the MWFA Approval Process

The MWFA Registrar will retain this documentation in their records.

Borrowed Players:

The Registered Age Group of a player is not the only criterion for the player to qualify to be borrowed by a Borrowing Team.

A player who is an eligible borrowed player based on the Borrowing Team's Age Group and Division under the Section D6 of the MWFA Playing Rules must also qualify by their True Age to be borrowed player for a the Borrowing Team.

The player qualifies by True Age if:

- The player's True Age is the same as the Age Group of the Borrowing Team or
- The player's True Age is no more than two years below the Age Group of the Borrowing Team,
- The player's True Age is more than two years below the Age Group of the Borrowing Team and the MWFA has given Approval

If the True Age of a player is more than two years below the Age Group of the Borrowing Team, then the player must complete the MWFA Approval Process. Once the Approval Process has been completed before the player can be used by the Borrowing Team, the player's ID card must be endorsed "UXX Reserve" by the MWFA Registrar (Where UXX is the Age Group of the Borrowing Team).

The following must be submitted to the MWFA Registrar in order to get their ID Card endorsed:

- A signed MWFA Playing Above Age Consent Form for the Registering Team's Age Group
- Proof of completion of the MWFA Approval Process

The MWFA Registrar will retain this documentation in their records.

A player who plays for a Borrowing Team whose Age group is more than two years above the player's True Age who does not complete the MWFA Approval Process and who does not have their ID Card endorsed will be regarded as an ineligible player.

For example, the U14-1 want to borrow a player from the U12-1. The player they borrow is registered in the U12-1 but is a playing up a year and so has a True Age of U11. This player may only be borrowed if the player has MWFA approval to play in the U14 Age group.

Additional MWFA Playing Rule Changes:

- The U18 Age Group may only borrow an U15 Age Group player if that player has MWFA Approval to play in the U18 Age Group. The table below highlights this fact:

| Borrowing Team | Borrowing Option A | | Borrowing Option B | | Borrowing Option C | |
|-----------------|--------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | Age Group | Limit | Age Group | Limit | Age Group | Limit |
| U6 | U6 | NO | | | | |
| U7 | U7 | NO | U6 | NO | | |
| U8 | U8 | NO | U7 | NO | U6 | NO |
| U9 & Womens U10 | U9 | NO | U8 | NO | U7 | NO |
| U10 | U10 | NO | U9 | NO | U8 | NO |
| U11 | U11 | NO | U10 | NO | U9 | NO |
| U12 | U12 | 4 | U11 | 4 | U10 | 4 |
| U13 | U13 | 4 | U12 | 4 | U11 | 4 |
| U14 | U14 | 4 | U13 | 4 | U12 | 4 |
| U15 | U15 | 4 | U14 | 4 | U13 | 4 |
| U16 | U16 | 4 | U15 | 4 | U14 | 4 |
| U18 | U18 | 4 | U16 | 4 | U15 | 4 |
| U21 | U21 | 4 | U18 | 4 | U16 | 4 |
| PL | AL | 4 | U21, O35, O45, O30, O40 | 4 | U18,U16* | Unlimited |
| AL1 | AL | 4 | U21, O35, O45, O30, O40 | 4 | U18,U16* | Unlimited if no PL side, otherwise 4 |
| AL | AL | 4 | U21, O35, O45, O30, O40 | 4 | U18,U16* | 4 |
| O35 | O35 | 4 | AL | 4 | O45 | 4 |
| O45 | O45 | 4 | O35 | 4 | AL | 4 |
| WO30 | WO30 | 4 | WO40 | 4 | WAL | 4 |
| WO40 | WO40 | 4 | WO30 | 4 | WAL | 4 |

- A Player who has a True Age of 15 years or younger must have MWFA Approval to play in Open Age competitions.
- Under the MWFA Playing Rules, where a Club has no eligible team in either Option A, B or C, a Borrowed Player may come from a team registered in the next MWFA Age Group in which the Club has a team. Under this option the True Age of all potential Borrowed Players will be more than two years below the Age Group of the Team and the MWFA Approval must be obtained for all Borrowed Players.

An example is where a Club may only have teams in U16 and U13. Under the current rule the Club may borrow players from the U13 team, however under this policy any Borrowed Player must obtain MWFA Approval before being borrowed because their True Age of 13 is more than two years below the U16 Age Group of the borrowing team.