



Australian Government

Australian Sports Commission

Recognition Criteria

Revised July 2022

National sporting organisations and national sporting organisations
for people with disability



Table of Contents

1. Introduction	3
Benefits of Recognition	3
2. Recognition Assessment Process	3
2.1 Application for Recognition	4
New applications for recognition	4
Application for renewal of recognition status	4
2.2 Assessment of Application	4
Discretion	4
Decision	4
Approval	5
Provisional approval	5
Refusal	5
2.3 Multiple Sport Organisations	5
2.4 Recognition Review	5
3. Review of Recognition Criteria	5
4. ASC Recognition Criteria (July 2022)	7

1. Introduction

As part of its functions, the Australian Sports Commission (**ASC**) recognises eligible national sporting organisations (**NSOs**) and national sporting organisations for people with disability (**NSODs**). Recognised NSO/Ds are organisations the ASC supports to achieve the Australian Government's sporting objectives.

NSO/D recognition is an important function undertaken by the ASC. Organisations recognised as NSO/Ds have met the ASC recognition criteria, which assist the ASC in determining whether an organisation is considered the pre-eminent body for the sport they represent in Australia, has sufficient standing within its sport and has adequate governance. NSO/Ds are recognised for a defined recognition period.

The process for assessing whether an organisation meets the ASC recognition criteria is outlined in **section 2** of this document.

The recognition criteria used by the ASC are set out in **section 4** of this document.

The ASC periodically reviews and may update the recognition criteria and the supporting process to ensure each remains relevant and contemporary.

Benefits of Recognition

Recognised NSO/Ds are eligible to access a range of benefits. Recognition does not automatically entitle the NSO/D to receive ASC funding; however, a sporting organisation must be recognised to be eligible for ASC investment. Recognition also does not constitute an endorsement or accreditation of the quality of the organisation's sport programs or its structures, policies or operations.

Recognised NSO/Ds can access the following benefits:

- the right, subject to any directions or guidelines given by the ASC, to refer to the organisation as an NSO/D recognised by the ASC and, on the organisation's documents and website, to use an ASC logo provided by the ASC in accordance with the ASC's usage guidelines
- the opportunity to apply to use the Commonwealth Coat of Arms on playing and dress uniforms of Australian representative sports persons and by accompanying officials on their dress uniforms (requests must be made in writing to the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet)
- entry in the ASC's online Australian Sports Directory as the recognised NSO/D for the organisation's sport
- eligibility to apply to the ASC's grant programs available to recognised NSO/Ds
- invitations to attend workshops, seminars and other ASC forums conducted for recognised NSO/Ds
- access to recognised NSO/D services and information from the ASC Partner Portal and the Clearinghouse for Sport.

2. Recognition Assessment Process

A sporting organisation must be assessed by the ASC before it may be recognised as an NSO/D. The purpose of the assessment is to establish whether the organisation satisfies the recognition criteria.

The recognition process is detailed further below and involves:

- (i) application for recognition/renewal of recognition
- (ii) assessment of application.

Recognition is for a defined recognition period determined during the recognition process and specified in the respective recognition agreement. Recognition is not permanent.

Securing recognition status does not mean that the ASC has approved the internal structures or policies of the organisation or takes any responsibility for its operations.

A sporting organisation can operate in Australia without being an ASC recognised NSO/D.



2.1 Application for Recognition

New applications for recognition

An organisation must submit an application to the ASC to be considered for recognition. The application must be in the form prescribed by the ASC and must include all necessary evidence to demonstrate satisfaction of the recognition criteria (as set out in **section 4**).

Within two weeks of the date of receiving the application, the ASC will contact the applicant organisation to outline the process for assessing the application. The application will be assessed by the ASC as soon as possible and, if further information is required, the ASC will liaise directly with the applicant organisation's designated contact.

All evidence must be submitted electronically as advised by the ASC.

Application for renewal of recognition status

Near the end of each recognition period specified in recognition agreements, the ASC will notify currently recognised NSO/Ds of the need to re-apply for recognition.

Currently recognised NSO/Ds will be asked by the ASC to provide evidence for the renewal of their recognition status. The ASC may exercise discretion to assist currently recognised NSO/Ds in completing their application for renewal.

2.2 Assessment of Application

All applications will be reviewed by the ASC and assessed against the recognition criteria. Assessments will be conducted by a panel of assessors, with expertise from across the ASC.

Following receipt of an application or during the assessment process, the ASC may request additional information in relation to the applicant organisation's compliance with any criteria.

If the ASC is satisfied that the applicant meets all of recognition criteria 1 to 7, Sport Integrity Australia will be notified by the ASC. Sport Integrity Australia will then assist the applicant to adopt the required integrity and anti-doping policies and education plan/s necessary to meet recognition criterion 8. Applicants will not be eligible to be offered recognition unless and until recognition criterion 8 is met.

Discretion

While the ASC expects applicants for recognition to be able to satisfy each part of all recognition criteria, the ASC may apply its discretion in determining recognition. This may include offering recognition where an organisation can demonstrate substantial compliance with a criterion or determining that an organisation is significantly progressed towards meeting a criterion and is expected to be compliant in the near future. Such discretion will only be applied in exceptional circumstances.

Decision

Once the assessment of the application has been completed, a recommendation will be made to the ASC General Manager responsible for overseeing the NSO/D recognition process. The recommendation may be that the General Manager:

- (i) approve the application for recognition
- (ii) provisionally approve the application for recognition, or
- (iii) refuse the application for recognition.

The General Manager will make the decision as to recognition in their discretion after considering the recommendation.

The ASC's Executive will be advised of any decision relating to the recognition of an NSO/D.



Approval

If recognition is approved, the organisation will be notified in writing and granted recognition, subject to executing the ASC recognition agreement setting out the benefits and obligations associated with recognition.

The ASC may publicly announce organisations which are recognised as NSO/Ds.

Provisional approval

Recognition may also be approved on a provisional basis, in which case the relevant organisation will be required to meet certain conditions stipulated in its recognition agreement by a nominated deadline to be fully recognised as an NSO/D.

Refusal

If an application is refused, the ASC will provide written notification to the organisation advising of the refusal and which recognition criterion was not satisfied. The applicant organisation will be granted an opportunity to submit any additional information to the ASC (within a nominated period of at least four weeks from the date of the communication) that:

- (i) is relevant for the ASC to consider in connection with the application, or
- (ii) explains how the organisation satisfies the recognition criterion.

Applicant organisations which seek feedback on any decision made under this recognition criteria document may request a meeting with relevant representatives of the ASC. The ASC reserves its discretion to decline to meet with an applicant organisation.

2.3 Multiple Sport Organisations

The ASC will not recognise more than one NSO/D for a sport. Should two organisations assert influence within a sport in Australia, the ASC may elect not to recognise one or both or, alternatively, may propose a course of action or structure that allows the sport to operate under one entity that is supported by each of the organisations.

2.4 Recognition Review

From time to time the ASC may elect to review whether a recognised NSO/D still complies with the recognition criteria and with the obligations under its recognition agreement. The ASC maintains a right under the recognition agreements with NSO/Ds to withdraw recognition at any time, including, but not limited to, circumstances where an organisation is in breach of its recognition agreement.

A recognised NSO/D is required under its recognition agreement to advise the ASC of any matter that might affect its entitlement to recognition, following which the ASC may initiate a review as to whether to withdraw its recognition.

An organisation that ceases to be recognised as an NSO/D may re-apply for recognition. Organisations that re-apply are expected to satisfy each part of all recognition criteria. The ASC may also request further information which addresses any known issues relating to an applicant organisation (such as the reasons for withdrawal of past recognition).

3. Review of Recognition Criteria

The recognition criteria against which the eligibility of all NSO/Ds are assessed are designed to assist the ASC to assess whether an organisation is considered the pre-eminent body for the sport they represent in Australia, has sufficient standing within its sport and has adequate governance.

Periodically, an ASC working party reviews the recognition criteria. Such reviews encompass international benchmarking and wide consultation with Commonwealth and State/Territory stakeholders, including the relevant ASC business areas and Commonwealth/State/Territory sporting agencies.



Any revised version of the recognition criteria is approved by the ASC General Manager responsible for overseeing the NSO/D recognition process.



4. ASC Recognition Criteria (July 2022)

To be eligible for recognition by the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) as a National Sporting Organisation (NSO)/National Sporting Organisation for people with Disability (NSOD), an organisation must:

- (i) meet all the following recognition criteria; and
- (ii) provide all requested evidence to aid in substantiating compliance with the recognition criteria.

CRITERION 1 – SPORT DEFINITION

The described activity of the organisation is a sport and is not prohibited in any way by law within Australia. For the purposes of recognition, a sport is “a human activity capable of achieving a result requiring physical exertion and/or physical skill which, by its nature and organisation, is competitive and is generally accepted as being a sport.”

CRITERION 2 – INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

The organisation is recognised as the pre-eminent organisation for that sport in Australia by an International Federation which is a member of the [Global Association of International Sports Federations](#) (GAISF). Alternatively, the organisation is recognised as the pre-eminent organisation for that sport in Australia by an International Federation which is pre-eminent but is not a GAISF member (and there is no competing International Federation which holds GAISF membership).

Evidence required:

- a) Confirmation of International Federation membership
- b) Confirmation of GAISF membership of International Federation

CRITERION 3 – SPORT DEVELOPMENT AND ELITE RESPONSIBILITY

The organisation is the pre-eminent organisation responsible for the development of the sport in Australia and:

- 3.1 can demonstrate it represents all forms of the sport from grassroots/community to high performance
- 3.2 is accountable for the selection or nomination of teams to represent Australia in events recognised by its International Federation
- 3.3 is accountable at the national level for providing its members with sound sports programs, policies, and services, and
- 3.4 has a documented strategy for the development of the sport.

Evidence required:

- a) Constitution
- b) Current strategic plan

CRITERION 4 – LEGAL ENTITY STATUS

The organisation has been incorporated for a minimum of three years, has not-for-profit status and is an Australian company limited by guarantee.

Evidence required:

- a) Registration certificate/s showing date of incorporation and registration as an Australian company limited by guarantee
- b) Evidence of not-for-profit status



CRITERION 5 – GOVERNANCE AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The organisation:

- 5.1 has sound governance, and has governance policies and practices that are aligned with the ASC Sport Governance Principles
- 5.2 has sound financial policies and practices, and has produced annual financial reports and directors' reports in accordance with any applicable requirements under the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth), and
- 5.3 is financially sustainable and remains a going concern.

Evidence required:

- a) Constitution (provided under Criterion 3)
- b) List of current directors (including director identification numbers)
- c) [Board charter](#)
- d) [Code of conduct](#)
- e) [Risk management policy](#)
- f) Financial statements for the past three reporting periods, that:
 - are prepared in accordance with the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth), along with required prescribed notes, directors' declarations and auditors' opinions, or
 - if the organisation is not required to prepare its financial statements in accordance with the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth), at a minimum are accompanied by a declaration from its board that:
 - i. the financial statements give a true and fair view of the organisation's financial position as at each period date and of its financial performance for the period ended on that date, and
 - ii. there are reasonable grounds to believe the organisation will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable
- g) Directors' reports for the past three reporting periods (if required under the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth))

CRITERION 6 – NATIONAL REACH

The organisation can demonstrate it has a national reach, with active members or affiliate bodies collaborating with the organisation for the sport nationally and locally.

Where a sport has a federated structure, the organisation must achieve a minimum of four State/Territory affiliates. Winter (snow) sports must achieve a minimum of two State/Territory affiliate members from Victoria, New South Wales, or the Australian Capital Territory

or

Where a sport operates in a national model of governance (unitary, hybrid), the organisation must demonstrate conduct, control, and management in a minimum of four States/Territories. Winter (snow) sports must demonstrate conduct, control and management in a minimum of two of Victoria, New South Wales, or the Australian Capital Territory.

Evidence required:

- a) Constitution (provided under Criterion 3)
- b) Description of the membership structure
- c) Description of key activities delivered by or on behalf of the organisation in each State/Territory, via a calendar or otherwise



CRITERION 7 - MEMBERSHIP

The sport (the organisation and/or its member affiliates) has in total a minimum of 1,000 active members (exception being current Olympic or Paralympic sports) and has a system in place to register and maintain member details (including but not limited to name, date of birth, gender, email, and postal addresses). The ASC defines an active member as an individual athlete competitor, coach or official who is registered with the organisation directly or with member affiliates.

Evidence required:

- a) Report from database or equivalent, or alternatively a statutory declaration from the Chair/President confirming membership numbers by State/Territory breakdown

CRITERION 8 - INTEGRITY

The organisation is accountable at the national level for establishing, maintaining and enforcing the key policies and connected education plans that underpin integrity in their sport and apply to all levels, including:

- 8.1 adopt, implement and enforce national integrity policies, approved by Sport Integrity Australia, which address:
 - member protection
 - child safeguarding
 - improper use of drugs and medicine
 - competition manipulation and sports wagering, and
 - complaints management
- 8.2 adopt, implement and enforce an anti-doping policy, approved by Sport Integrity Australia, that complies with the World Anti-Doping Code, the NAD Scheme, the Australian National Anti-Doping Policy and applicable International Federation anti-doping requirements, and
- 8.3 adopt and implement anti-doping and integrity education plan/s approved by Sport Integrity Australia.

Evidence required:

Confirmation from Sport Integrity Australia of:

- a) approved national integrity policies which cover the areas of member protection, child safeguarding, improper use of drugs and medicine, competition manipulation and sports wagering and complaints management
- b) an approved anti-doping policy
- c) an approved education plan in place to provide education and awareness to members about integrity threats
- d) an approved anti-doping education plan which complies with the World Anti-Doping Code International Standard for Education and Sport Integrity Australia requirements on required and recommended education for individuals.

Please note that once all other recognition criteria are met and Sport Integrity Australia is notified by the ASC, Sport Integrity Australia will assist you to adopt the required integrity and anti-doping policies and education plan/s.

In relation to a), approval of integrity policies can be achieved by adopting the National Integrity Framework or meeting Sport Integrity Australia Integrity Policy Standards.

In relation to c) and d), education plan requirements can be met through a single or two separate Sport Integrity Australia approved education plans.

NOTE

The ASC may request additional evidence where such evidence is required to substantiate compliance with any recognition criteria.



While the ASC expects applicants for recognition to be able to satisfy each part of all recognition criteria, the ASC may apply its discretion in determining recognition. This may include offering recognition where an organisation can demonstrate substantial compliance with a criterion or determining that an organisation is significantly progressed towards meeting a criterion and is expected to be compliant in the near future. Such discretion will only be applied in exceptional circumstances.

