

Softball Queensland Inc.



**State Championship
Ground Rules**

February 2018

SOFTBALL QUEENSLAND INCORPORATED
STATE CHAMPIONSHIP GROUND RULES
Amended February 2018

Queensland Championships shall be played in accordance with the SQI Constitution (Rules, By-Laws and Polices) and:

- i) **the Official Rules of Softball, and**
- ii) **these Ground Rules**

1. BALLS

- 1.1 Each team shall provide at least two (2) **official** championship softballs in good playable condition marked with the team name. Umpires may reject any ball that is considered unsuitable for play.

The designated "championship ball" for all State Championships is **EASTON** as follows:

- **Easton 804 model 11" leather softball - Under 15 State Championship Ball**
- **Easton 888 model 12" leather softball - U17, U19 & Open State Championship Ball**

2. WARM UP

- 2.1 Each team may have use of the diamond for a period of five minutes prior to the game. The team batting first may have use of the diamond commencing 12 minutes prior to the start of the game and the team fielding first commencing 7 minutes prior to the start, or as the umpire otherwise directs.
- 2.2 Teams shall not use the infield, whilst the ground staff are engaged on preparation of that diamond.
- 2.3 The designated pitching warm-up area will be located in foul ball territory in the right & left outfield of the diamond on which the warming up pitcher's team is playing. A 'minder' (player with glove) shall stand beside the pitcher warming up to assist with the monitoring of play and protection of the pitcher warming up. The pitcher will pitch towards the home run boundary/fence.
- 2.4 'Pre-game live hitting warm up is only permitted in designated areas. Such areas to be advised at each State Championship Coach/Manager Meeting.'

3. TOSS

- 3.1 The team named first in the draw shall occupy the third base bench and shall call the toss. An official from each team shall be responsible for deciding the toss 15 mins prior to the scheduled starting time.

4. GAME

- 4.1 Games that commence after the scheduled time shall be deemed to have commenced at the scheduled time. Timing of games shall be the responsibility of the plate umpire. In timed games, a new innings will not commence with five minutes or less remaining in the game.

- 4.2 (a) **Round Fixtures for Under 15, 17, 19 and Open Championships:** Games in the round (s) of fixtures shall be limited to a regulation game or a time limit of one-and-a-half- hours except that once an innings has commenced it must be completed.
- (b) **Semi & Preliminary Finals (all championships):** Any games played that have been designated as semi & preliminary finals, shall be played as for U15/17/19/Open Championship Round Fixtures.

Note: If the score is tied at the completion of regulation time or completed innings, the tiebreaker rule shall commence immediately (regardless of the number of innings completed).

- (c) **Grand Finals:** Grand finals shall be played out, provided that if after the completion of seven (7) innings of play the score is tied, the tie breaker shall be played to determine a winning team.

- (d) **Tie Breaker Rule:** The tie breaker rule shall commence at the top of the eighth (8) innings

Note: Should any grand final, either using the tiebreaker or not, result in a drawn game, (eg. Darkness, storm) both teams shall be declared joint winners of the competition.

4.3 **Intentional Walk Rule**

Rule 6, Sec 8: Intentional Walk Rule will only be used at the Open (incl Queensland Cup) State Championships. This rule cannot be used at Underage State Championships.

4.4 **Courtesy Runner for Catcher**

In all championships, when there is two (2) out and the catcher is a baserunner, any player listed on the line-up may replace the catcher. This does not count as a substitution.

Note: if the catcher is not replaced - the pitcher will receive only 1 pitch on the changeover of innings.

4.5 **On-Deck Batter's Circle**

The On-Deck Batter may take a position within either on-deck circle so that he is behind the batter and not on the batter's open side to protect them from being hit by a foul ball.

5. **FORFEIT**

5.1. The District Association of the team at fault, when a forfeit is declared, shall be liable to forfeiture of its championship bond and fined as prescribed (Finance Policy 10.9)

5.2 At the time a forfeit is declared by the plate umpire, the score of a forfeited game shall be 7-0 or the score at the time of the forfeit, whichever gives a better defensive average, in favour of the team not at fault at the time of forfeiture.

6. **POLICIES, BEHAVIOUR AND CONDUCT**

6.1 All participants shall abide by the Softball Queensland General Code of Ethics

6.2 All participants shall abide by the Zero Tolerance Policy. *Note: Refer to Ground Rule 11 for action and procedure to be followed for alleged breaches that occur and need to be handled at a State Championship.*

6.3 Administrators shall abide by the Administrator's Code of Ethics

6.4 Coaches shall abide by the Coaches Code of Ethics

6.5 Players shall abide by the Players Code of Conduct/Ethics

6.6 Umpires shall abide by the Official's Code of Ethics.

6.7 Parents and Guardians shall abide by the Parent/Guardian Code of Ethics

6.8 Spectators shall abide by the Spectators Code of Ethics.

6.9 All participants shall abide by the SAL Concussion Policy

6.10 All participants shall abide by the Anti-Doping and Infectious Diseases Policies.

6.11 Female participants shall abide by the SQI Pregnancy Guidelines

6.12 All District Associations and teams participating in the State Championships shall abide by the Rules, By-Laws and Policies for State Championships.

6.13 All administrators shall only approach team managers or their nominated representative, between games (other than emergencies), regarding any issues that may arise in relation to District Association Teams at State Championships.

7. **DISRUPTIONS**

7.1 In the event of adverse conditions the decision to cancel or defer play shall be the responsibility of the UIC, Convenor or President of the Host Association and the SQI representative who shall be chairperson.

7.2 Any games suspended due to inclement weather may be continued from the point of suspension. For the purpose of the Championship a regulation game shall be determined by UIC, Convenor or President of the host Association, and the SQI Representative, who shall be Chairperson.

7.3 Where there has been a major disruption to a championship the determination of the winner of the championship shall be left to the SQI Representative. However, the SQI Representative may decide that insufficient games have been played to declare a winner.

7.4 The following guidelines are for the assistance of the SQI Representative.

(a) Every attempt should be made to determine a winner through the playing of games.

(b) If a round cannot be completed the winner should be decided on the games played. However, consideration must be given to the number of games each team has played.

(c) If the finals can't be played the winner/s would be the team leading on points/defensive average at the end of the round.

- (d) If the finals cannot be completed, the team positioned as number one (1) would be declared the winner. If there is more than one team, the winner/s would be decided on average runs per innings.

8. DIAMONDS

- 8.1 The playing field shall have a clear unobstructed area with a radius of:
- | | | |
|------|---|--------------|
| i) | Under 15: | 200ft/60.96m |
| ii) | Female Under 17, 19 and Open divisions: | 200ft/60.96m |
| iii) | Male Under 17,19 and Open divisions: | 225ft/68.58m |

Notes: The relevant boundary shall be clearly marked.

- A batted long fly ball going beyond the marked distance will be awarded an automatic home run.
- A batted ground ball which bounces over or rolls through the boundary is played out as per an open field.

Definition: **Clearly Marked** means a boundary line must be marked on the ground and the boundary must have collapsible dome markers placed on the marked boundary line at a space of 1.5metres apart.

9. METAL CLEATS

- 9.1 Metal cleats are permitted to be worn by players in the Under 19 and higher age divisions.

Note: It is highly recommended that metal cleats are not worn on diamonds with grass infields.

10. EJECTION OF PLAYER/OFFICIAL FROM A GAME FOR OFFENSIVE CONDUCT OR LANGUAGE

- 10.1 An officiating umpire may eject a player or official for offensive conduct or language any time during a game.
- 10.2 Should any player/official be ejected from a game for offensive conduct or language, the umpire(s) concerned shall submit a written report to the SQI Representative immediately at the conclusion of the game in question. (Forms available from the SQI Rep)
- 10.3 Any player/official ejected from a game for offensive conduct or language (“the ejected person”) shall automatically receive a one (1) game suspension from the team’s next scheduled game, and shall appear before a Tribunal comprising the SQI Representative (as Chairperson), Umpire In Chief and an independent Tribunal person appointed by SQI.
- 10.4 The Umpire who ejected the ejected person shall also be in attendance at the Tribunal hearing.
- 10.5 The SQI Representative shall advise the ejected person and the umpire concerned of the time and place for the Tribunal hearing which shall be conducted as close to the end of the game in question as is possible.
- 10.6 At the Tribunal hearing the following procedures shall be adopted.
- 10.6.1 The ejected person and the reporting official(s) and their respective advisors (if any), shall be notified of their right to remain in the hearing until all evidence is presented but not to be present whilst the Tribunal considers its findings and determines an appropriate penalty (if any).
- 10.6.2 The ejected person and the reporting official(s) may be accompanied by an adult advisor but not by a legal representative.
- 10.6.3 Where a person exercises their right to have an adult advisor present in accordance with this Ground Rule, an opportunity for consultation shall be provided.
- 10.6.4 The charge(s) as contained in the report shall be read out in the presence of all persons eligible to be present.
- 10.6.5 The reporting official shall be asked whether the charge correctly represents their intention and the ejected person shall be asked whether the charge is understood.
- 10.6.6 The ejected person shall be asked whether or not they intend to contest the charge(s).
- 10.6.7 If the ejected person does not contest the charge(s), the Tribunal chairperson may read a short summary of the facts, admit the reporting official’s written report into evidence and no witnesses need be called to give evidence unless the Tribunal requires it.

- 10.6.8 If the ejected person contests the charge(s), then the Tribunal chairperson shall ask all witnesses except the reporting official(s) and the ejected person (and their respective advisors if appointed in accordance with this Ground Rule) to leave the room and to wait to be called to give their evidence.
- 10.6.9 The reporting official's report shall be tendered as the reporting official's evidence and the witnesses of the reporting official(s) shall be called upon to give his/her evidence in turn, subject to the approval of the number of witnesses to be called by the Tribunal in its discretion. The ejected person or his/her advisor may ask questions of the reporting official or any witness called but all such questions must be directed through the Tribunal chairperson.
- 10.6.10 The ejected person shall then be entitled to present their defence. Witnesses may be called subject to the approval of the number of witnesses to be called by the Tribunal in its discretion. The reporting official(s) or their advisor may ask questions of the ejected person or any witness called but all questions must be directed through the Tribunal chairperson.
- 10.6.11 The Tribunal is empowered to question any person giving evidence.
- 10.6.12 Apart from the ejected person and the reporting official (s) each witness shall leave the Tribunal hearing after giving evidence unless otherwise directed by the Tribunal.
- 10.6.13 At the conclusion of all of the evidence and submissions the Tribunal chairperson shall ask the ejected person, the reporting official and all other persons present to leave the hearing room while the Tribunal considers its findings.
- 10.6.14 The ejected person shall then be asked to return to the hearing when the decision of the Tribunal shall be stated and explained to him/her.
- 10.6.15 If there is a further penalty which includes suspension from further games at the Championship, the ejected person shall be advised that during the suspension he/she shall not be permitted to be in uniform, on the bench or in any contact with any member of his/her team while the team is playing. This shall not prevent him/her practising or warming up with his/her team prior to a game.
- 10.6.16 If this is the last game the team is scheduled to play in the Championship the automatic one game suspension cannot be served. The Tribunal should consider if the action of the ejected person warrants a penalty as set out in 11.7.
- 10.7 In addition to the automatic one (1) game suspension, the Tribunal shall have the authority to impose one of the following penalties:
- 10.7.1 no further penalty
- 10.7.2 reprimand the ejected person
- 10.7.3 further suspend the ejected person for any or all of the remaining games in the Championship (the Zero Tolerance Policy should be used as a guideline to determine the appropriate penalty).
- 10.7.4 Where the Tribunal is of the opinion that the conduct of the ejected person may warrant further suspension/disqualification a written report shall be forwarded for consideration of the SQI Chief Commissioner. Should this avenue be determined, the ejected person concerned shall be advised at the time the Championship penalty is imposed.
- Note:** The SQI Representative is to include a written account of any ejection(s) in the Championship Report, and a report of the Tribunal hearing will be submitted to the SQI Chief Commissioner and General Manager for their records
- 10.8 A decision of the Tribunal to impose a penalty under Clause 11.7 shall be final and not subject to appeal.
- 10.9 All ejected persons who are under the age of 18 years at the time of the ejection shall stay on the bench and shall become the responsibility of the Team Manager. Failure to take control of such an ejected person will result in the Manager (or person acting in that capacity) being required to take the ejected person(s) from the dugout and supervise and control the person until the completion of the game.

11. **BENCH**

- 11.1 Smoking and the consumption of alcohol are prohibited in the bench area.
Penalty: Team members will be removed from the game. Failure to comply will result in forfeiture of the game to the team not at fault.

12. **PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

In addition to Rule 3 Section 6:

- 12.1 (i) Adult male catchers must wear a body protector
- (ii) All adult catchers must wear shin guards that offer protection to the kneecaps
- (iii) Catchers in all divisions receiving warm-up pitchers from the pitching plate, in the warm up area or in their pre-game warm-up area must wear helmet, mask with throat protector, body protector and shin guards which will offer protection to the kneecap.

12.1.1 A warning will be issued at the Manager/Coach Meeting stating the penalty to be imposed for breaking the rule.

The penalty for a first offence will be the removal of the pitcher and catcher from the remainder of the current game or if in the pre-game warm up, then for the next scheduled game.

The penalty for the second offence is the batter and the coach are removed from the game.

Administration of the process: The SQI representative will have overall control. The umpires also have control over the games they have been appointed to both before and during that game.

13. **BLOOD IN SPORT and ANTI-DOPING POLICIES**

13.1 The Blood in Sport (SAL Infectious Disease Policy) and the SQI Anti-Doping Policy will be applied at State Championships (see attached).

14. **PITCHING**

14.1 (a) Pitching distances shall be:

Under 15 girls	40ft	12.19m	Under 15 boys	43ft	13.11m
Under 17 girls	43ft	13.11m	Under 17 boys	46ft	14.02m
Under 19 women	43ft	13.11m	Under 19 men	46ft	14.02m
Senior women	43ft	13.11m	Senior men	46ft	14.02m

(b) If a pitching mat is used, it must extend 61cms beyond the front of the pitching circle and 30.5cms behind the pitching plate. If the mat becomes unsuitable during the course of the game it may be removed at the discretion of the plate umpire as predetermined by the SQI Rep, UIC and Championship Convenor at the Coach/Manager Meeting.

15. **UNDER 15 PITCHING AND CATCHING**

Refer to the SQI Under 15 State Championship Participation and Pitching & Catching Policy

15.1 Pitchers and catchers shall be limited to fifty (50) pitches per game, with the exception of Grand Finals (refer 15.4).

15.2 A pitcher cannot play in the catching position and vice-versa in the same game once they reach their 50 pitch threshold.

15.3 When a pitcher and/or catcher has reached the pitch count limit, that pitcher/catcher must be removed from that position

15.4 The 50 pitch limit does not apply in Grand Finals.

Note: Each team is to appoint a 'pitch count recorder' (PCR). This need not be the team scorer and may be a non-team member. If a non-team member has this role, they must not be in the dugout during the game.

The PCR will use the official record sheet to count the pitches and must provide the current pitch count for their pitcher and/or catcher when requested by either the team coach or plate umpire.

Violation of the pitch count rule: Any District Association deliberately, or on two (2) or more occasions during the same championship, breaching this rule will forfeit their final placing in the Championship. The Head Coach of the District Association team will automatically be suspended from officiating in any capacity at a Queensland Championship for the next 12 month period.

Note: To comply with the catcher speed-up rule, and to satisfy the requirement at the U15 Championships to replace the catcher after they reach the 50 pitch threshold, the coach may advise the plate umpire of the incoming catcher during the offensive innings. This will allow the incoming catcher to come off base to get ready. This change can then officially be advised to the plate umpire in the change of innings without penalty. If there is an appeal for an unreported substitute this is a correctable offence.

16. EQUIPMENT

16.1 Equipment checks shall be enforced at each championship for all teams. Additional checks may be instigated at the discretion of the Umpire In Chief.

16.2 Procedure For Removal Of Illegal Equipment From A Game

1. Game Umpire checks equipment as per 16.1 and removes illegal equipment from the game. The equipment is left with the Team Manager for the remainder of the game. The Team Manager is responsible for ensuring that it isn't used in the game. The Game Umpire notes the removed equipment on the back of the scorecard.
2. At the completion of the game, the Game Umpire takes the confiscated equipment to the UIC who checks it, completes the label which is affixed to the item and signs it over to SQI Rep.
3. The SQI Rep places the confiscated equipment in a safe place, provided by the host association.
4. The Team Manager is responsible for collecting the confiscated equipment from the SQI Rep at the completion of the championship.
5. The Confiscated Equipment Register must be signed by all parties where applicable.

Note 1: Only the SQI Rep has the authority to return the equipment to the Team Manager

Note 2: Should a helmet be removed for 'padding' reasons, the owner of the helmet may repair it under the supervision of an umpire approved by the UIC. After repairs have been completed and the helmet has been deemed legal by the UIC, the owner may sign the item out with the authority of the SQI Rep.

Note 3: Any equipment not collected by the Team Manager at the completion of the championship will be left at the Host Association where it can be collected by the owner or dispatched to the owner at the owner's expense.

Date	Item	Team Name	Umpires Name	Given to SQI Rep	Received by SQI Rep	Returned to team	Team Manager Signature	In the presence of the SQI Rep
		Owners Name		UIC signature	SQI Rep Signature	Manager Name	SQI Rep Signature	

17. STATISTICIANS

17.1 District Association Statisticians must hold an Australian Level Three Scoring Accreditation. Failure to comply will result in a fine of \$50.00. An official team statistician will not be recognised as a team member and will not be permitted to sit on the bench unless they have the required accreditation. If an unaccredited statistician accompanies your team no information from your scorebook will be recognised by the Queensland Softball officials.

Note: Development Associations shall not be penalised, but may ask for assistance from the SQI Scoring Committee in obtaining the services of an appropriately accredited statistician. Their own statistician can continue to score with the guidance from the SQI approved statisticians.

18. UNIFORMS

18.1 All team members in a District Association team shall wear only that uniform as per the SQI uniform register. *A fine of \$50 per day will be imposed on District Association's whose officials do not wear correct uniform. The SQI Representative shall have the authority to waive the penalty in extenuating circumstances.*

- (a) A warm up jacket shall be consistent with the playing uniform colours. Members of combined District Association teams may wear the approved warm up jacket of their home association. A number, of contrasting colour at least 15.2cm (6 inches), shall be on the back of a warm up jacket if worn on the diamond during a game.

Note: SQI Representative Team jackets are NOT to be worn on the bench or playing field during State Championships.

- (b) Team Officials uniform shall be:
 - (i) identical to the players' uniform, except a number is not required; or
 - (ii) the SQI approved District Association official's shirt, with skirt, slacks, tailored dress shorts or ¾ length tailored dress pants for women and slacks or tailored shorts with socks for men; or
 - (iii) the team tracksuit.

Note: *Bike pants, board shorts, ruggers, cargo pants, basketball/airflow shorts and similar styles of clothing are not acceptable*

- (iv) Headwear: Wide brimmed hats are permitted provided the brim width does not exceed 15cm. Hat colour may be in accordance with the colour code of the team or of a neutral colour eg straw/cream/grey. Wide brimmed hats must be of the same style.
- (c) Behaviour and dress with respect to bench areas.
The team members on the bench **MUST** be attired in Full Team Uniform, correctly worn, while any player who is not on the Team Sheet for that game and is not on the Team Bench is **NOT PERMITTED** to be in Team Uniform.

Note: In the event of an Under 14 player who is not participating in a game (eg injury, suspension), such player is permitted to be on the bench either in playing or travel uniform but cannot be entered on the Team Sheet for that game.
- (d) Dress Standards
 - i) All members of all participating teams shall be present and participate appropriately in the Closing Ceremony
 - ii) Team members shall wear their District Association designated playing or travel uniform closed footwear.

Penalty: Any District Association Representative Team which fails to attend the Closing Ceremony without permission from the SQI Rep, shall receive a fine of \$100.

The District Association Team Manager is responsible for ensuring their team members attend the Closing Ceremony in the correct uniform. Any District Association found to be in breach of this rule shall receive a fine of \$50.

19. **LINE UP CARDS AND CHAMPIONSHIP ROSTERS**

- 19.1 Scorecards to be exchanged fifteen- (15) minutes prior to the scheduled commencement of all games.
- 19.2 The Plate umpire is responsible for the accuracy of the result of the game as recorded on the scorecards of both teams before signing them at the conclusion of each game.
- 19.3 Completed scorecards, showing the result of the game and signed by the team's coach and all umpires, shall be returned by the game umpires and handed to the championship Umpire In Chief **WITHIN 15 MINUTES** after the conclusion of each game.
- 19.4 A \$20.00 fine will apply for each infringement where District Association scorers fail to correctly complete **all** details on scorecards.

Note: A warning will be issued at the **Statistician's** Meeting. After the first infringement the SQI Representative will notify the offending team's manager as soon as possible. For any further infringements a \$20.00 penalty will be imposed per scorecard. Invoices will be forwarded to the relevant District Association after the State Championships.

20. **BRIEFINGS** **Pre Championship Briefings**

- 20.1 A coaches/managers pre-championship briefing shall be held at the grounds or designated venue on the evening prior to the first game of the championship. Attendance at this meeting is compulsory for a coach and/or manager of each participating District Association team. A fine of \$100 will apply to District Associations that are not in attendance at the meeting.
- 20.2 An umpires' pre-championship briefing shall be held at the grounds one (1) hour preceding the first game of the Championship. This meeting is compulsory for all participating umpires.
- 20.3 A statisticians' pre-championship briefing shall be held at the grounds one (1) hour preceding the first game of the Championship. This meeting is compulsory for all participating scorers.

21. **PROTESTS**

- 21.1 The Protest Committee shall be the U.I.C. and 2 highest qualified umpires not involved in that game.
- 21.2 All protests during the round games will be recorded by the Plate umpire and team statisticians and the SQI Representative notified at the conclusion of the game. (Protest forms available from the SQI Representative.
- 21.3 During round games protests shall be submitted within 30 minutes of the completion of the game.
- 21.4 During play-off games, protests will be heard by appointed umpires (depending on availability of personnel).

- 21.5 The SQI representative shall be responsible for ensuring proper procedure is maintained on the handling of all protests.
- 21.6 The Protest Committee will hear the protest as soon as possible. The decision of the Protest Committee shall be final and binding providing that the umpire and a representative of each team which competed in subject game shall attend a Protest Committee meeting simultaneously and shall be heard in respect of the protest before any decision is made by the Protest Committee.
- 21.7 Qualifications for protest committee will be on levels gained by SAL umpiring accreditation.

22. DISCRETIONARY POWER/SQI REPRESENTATIVE

- 22.1 The Softball Queensland Representative shall have discretionary power to deal with any matter that may arise at a State Championship not otherwise covered by the rules, by-laws and policies & procedures.

23. CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING TEAM PLACEMENTS FOR FINALS

- 23.1 Two (2) points shall be awarded for each win in first round games.
- 23.2 One (1) point shall be awarded for each draw in first round games.
- 23.3 No (0) points shall be awarded for each loss in first round games.
- 23.4 In the event of teams being equal on points for any position following the completion of the first round, the following process is to be used to determine team placement for the final round:
 - 23.4.1 If two or more teams are tied on points, the team with the best Defensive Run Average for the entire round robin shall take the higher ladder position.
The defensive run average is the calculation of the average runs scored against per innings. The formula used to determine the defensive run average is:

$$\frac{\text{Runs Against}}{\text{Number of Defensive Innings}}$$
 - 23.4.2 In the case that two teams are tied on points and Defensive Runs Average, the team that won the first round robin match between those two teams shall take the higher ladder position.
 - 23.4.3 If three teams are tied on points and Defensive Runs Average, the head-to-head results played between those three teams in the first round of the round robin shall be considered. Where one team has won both matches against the other two teams it is tied with in the first round of the round robin, this team shall take the higher ladder position. The next two ladder positions between the remaining two tied teams would be determined by the head-to-head match between those two teams in the first round.

GENERAL CODE OF ETHICS

As a member and participant of Softball Australia Ltd (SAL), Softball Queensland Inc (SQI), a Member District Association or Affiliated Club, you must meet the following requirements in regard to your conduct during any activity held by or under the auspices of Softball Australia Ltd, Softball Queensland Inc, a Member District Association or Affiliated Club and in any role you hold within Softball Australia Ltd, Softball Queensland Inc, a Member Association or Affiliated Club:

1. Respect the rights dignity and worth of others;
2. Be fair, considerate and honest in all dealing with others;
3. Be professional in, and accept responsibility for your actions;
4. Make a commitment to providing quality service;
5. Demonstrate a high degree of individual responsibility especially when dealing with persons under 18 years of age, as your words and actions are an example;
6. Be aware of, and maintain an uncompromising adherence to SAL standards, rules regulations and policies;
7. Operate within the rules of softball including national and international guidelines which govern SAL and the Member States;
8. Understand your responsibility if you breach, or are aware of any breaches of this Code of Conduct & Ethics;
9. Do not use your involvement with SAL or a Member State to promote your own beliefs, behaviours or practices where these are inconsistent with those of SAL and the Member States;
10. Avoid unaccompanied and unobserved activities with persons under 18 years of age, wherever possible;
11. Refrain from any form of abuse towards others;
12. Refrain from any form of harassment towards, or discrimination of, others;
13. Provide a safe environment for the conduct of the activity;
14. Show concern and caution towards others who may be sick or injured;
15. Be a positive role model.

OFFICIAL'S CODE OF ETHICS

In addition to Softball Australia Ltd's and Softball Queensland Inc's General Code of Ethics, you must meet the following requirements in regard to your conduct during any activity held or sanctioned by Softball Australia Ltd (SAL), Softball Queensland Inc (SQI), a Member District Association or an Affiliated Club and in your role as an official appointed by Softball Australia Ltd, Softball Queensland Inc, a Member Association or an Affiliated Club:

1. Place the safety and welfare of the players/participants above all else.
2. Accept responsibility for all actions taken.
3. Be impartial.
4. Avoid any situation which may lead to a conflict of interest.
5. Be courteous, respectful and open to discussion and interaction.
6. Value the individual in sport.
7. Encourage inclusivity and access to all areas of officiating.

PLAYERS CODE OF CONDUCT/ETHICS

As a participant in any activity held by or under the auspices of Softball Australia Ltd (SAL), Softball Queensland Inc (SQI), a Member District Association or Affiliated Club, you must meet the following requirements in regard to your conduct during any such activity or event:

1. Be a positive role model for Softball at all times, and accept responsibility for your actions.
2. Participate within the competition conditions and rules, and in the spirit of fair play.
3. Respect opposition players and officials and treat them with proper regard for their rights, obligations and position held in Softball or the community.
4. Refrain from offensive or abusive language and gestures.
5. Accept victory and defeat with dignity.
6. Comply with Umpires' decisions in a professional manner.
7. Maintain high standards of personal hygiene and appearance.
8. Cooperate with all official requests to promote and market Softball in a professional manner.
9. Behave with dignity and respect when in public.
10. Refrain from making sexist or racist jokes, jokes about a particular sexual orientation, or jokes about an athlete, coach's or other participant's ability.
11. Refrain from making derogatory or demeaning remarks about any athletes, coaches or participants.
12. Refrain from using profane, insulting, harassing or otherwise offensive language.
13. Refrain from making sexual innuendoes towards any athletes, coaches or participants.
14. Do not tolerate or respond to acts of aggression.
15. Players should, at all times, avoid intimate relationships with their coach.
16. Perform any duties and responsibilities where you are a representative of Softball Queensland Inc and/or Softball Australia Ltd in a mature, fair and professional manner.
17. Refrain from engaging in any behaviour as listed under the definitions of harassment and discrimination, outlined in the SQI/SAL Member Protection Policy.

COACH'S CODE OF ETHICS

The purpose of this code is to establish and maintain standards for members and participants of Softball Australia Ltd (SAL), Softball Queensland Inc (SQI), a Member District Association or Affiliated Club who undertake coaching duties. Coaching is a deliberately undertaken responsibility and as a coach appointed by Softball Australia Ltd, Softball Queensland Inc, a Member District Association or Affiliated Club you must meet the following requirements in regard to your conduct during any activity held by or under the auspices of Softball Australia Ltd, Softball Queensland Inc, a Member District Association or Affiliated Club and in any role you hold within Softball Australia Ltd or Softball Queensland Inc.

1. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every human being regardless of age, gender, ethnic origin, religion or ability.
 - *Refrain from any discriminatory practices on the basis of age, gender, religion, ethnic origin or ability of athletes.*
2. Endeavour to ensure the athlete's time spent with you is a positive experience.
 - *Respect the talent, development stage and goals of each individual athlete.*
3. Treat each athlete as an individual and help him or her reach their full potential.
 - *Provide training programs that are planned and sequential and suitable for the age, experience and ability of the athletes.*
4. Be fair, considerate and honest with athletes.
 - *Be reasonable in your demands on your athletes' time and ensure there is an appropriate balance between sporting involvement, education and career objectives.*
 - *Implement clear rules for athletes in training and general conduct.*
5. Be professional in your appearance and manner and accept responsibility for your actions.
 - *Display high standards in language, manner, punctuality, preparation and presentation.*
 - *Display control, respect dignity and professionalism to all involved with softball (including opponents, coaches, officials, umpires, scorers, administrators, the media, parents, and spectators) and encourage your athletes to demonstrate the same qualities.*
6. Make a commitment to providing a quality service to your athletes, your State and SAL, by continually improving your coaching knowledge and skill.
 - *Maintain and improve your NCAS accreditation.*
 - *Seek continual self-improvement through performance appraisal and ongoing education.*
7. Operate within the rules and spirit of the sport.
 - *Abide by and respect the regulations governing softball and sport generally and the organisations and individuals administering those regulations.*
 - *Reject the use of performance enhancing drugs in sport and abide by the regulations of the relevant National and International Sporting organisations and government regulatory bodies.*
8. Ensure physical contact with athletes is appropriate to the situation and necessary for the athlete's skill development.*
 - *Inappropriate physical contact is a form of sexual harassment.*
9. Refrain from any form of personal abuse towards your athletes.*
 - *This includes verbal, physical and emotional abuse.*
10. Refrain from any form of sexual harassment towards your athletes.*
 - *This includes explicit, implicit, verbal and non-verbal sexual harassment.*
 - *Refrain from initiating a relationship with an athlete and also discourage, in a sensitive manner, an attempt by an athlete to initiate a sexual relationship with you.*
11. Provide a safe environment for training and competition.
 - *Ensure that equipment and facilities meet safety standards and are appropriate for the age and ability of the athletes.*
12. Show consideration and caution towards sick and injured athletes.
 - *Provide a modified training program where appropriate.*
 - *Allow further participation in training and competitions only when appropriate.*
 - *When necessary, follow the advice of a reputable doctor or physiotherapist when determining when a sick or injured athlete is ready to recommence training or competition.*
13. Be a positive role model for Softball and your athletes.

*Please refer to the Softball Australia Ltd & Softball Queensland Inc Member Protection Policy for more information.

ADMINISTRATOR'S CODE OF ETHICS

As an administrator of Softball Australia Ltd (SAL), Softball Queensland Inc (SQI), a Member Association or Affiliated Club, you must meet the following requirements in regard to your conduct during any activity held by or under the auspices of Softball Australia Ltd or a Member State and in any role you hold within Softball Australia Ltd or a Member State:

1. Be fair, considerate and honest in all dealing with others.
2. Be professional in, and accept responsibility for your actions. Your language, presentation, manners and punctuality should reflect high standards.
3. Demonstrate a high degree of individual responsibility especially when dealing with persons under 18 years of age, as your words and actions are an example.
4. Resolve conflicts fairly and promptly through established procedures.
5. Maintain strict impartiality.
6. Maintain a safe environment for you and others.
7. Be aware of your legal responsibilities.
8. Be a positive role model for others.

PARENT/GUARDIAN CODE OF ETHICS

In addition to Softball Australia Ltd's (SAL) and Softball Queensland Inc's (SQI) General Code of Ethics, as a parent/guardian of a player/participant in any activity held by or under the auspices of Softball Australia Ltd, Softball Queensland Inc, a Member District Association or an Affiliated Club, you must meet the following requirements in regard to your conduct during any such activity or event:

1. Remember that your child participates in sport for their own enjoyment, not yours.
2. Focus on your child's efforts and performance rather than winning or losing.
3. Never ridicule or yell at your child and other children for making a mistake or losing a competition.
4. Show appreciation for good performance and skilful plays by all players (including opposing players).
5. Respect officials' decisions and teach children to do likewise.
6. Do not physically or verbally abuse anyone associated with the sport (player, coach, umpire etc).
7. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

SPECTATOR'S CODE OF ETHICS

In addition to Softball Australia Ltd's (SAL) and Softball Queensland Inc's (SQI) General Code of Ethics, as a spectator in any activity held by or under the auspices of Softball Australia Ltd, Softball Queensland Inc, a Member District Association or an Affiliated Club, you must meet the following requirements in regard to your conduct during any such activity or event:

1. Applaud good performance and efforts from all players and teams. Congratulate all players on their performance regardless of the game's outcome.
2. Respect the decisions of officials and teach young people to do the same.
3. Never ridicule or scold a young player for making a mistake. Positive comments are motivational.
4. Condemn the use of violence in any form, whether it is by other spectators, coaches, officials or players.
5. Show respect for your team's opponents. Without them there would be no game.
6. Encourage players to follow the rules and the officials' decisions.
7. Do not use violence, harassment or abuse in any form (ie do not use foul language, sledge or harass players, coaches, officials or other spectators).
8. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

Preamble

Softball Queensland Inc (SQI) recognises the importance of providing a safe and enjoyable environment for all those who participate in softball in Queensland.

The SQI does not tolerate abuse in any of its forms, and has developed this policy to clearly outline the processes and penalties to be applied.

This policy is to be read and applied, where applicable, in conjunction with the SQI/SAL Codes of Conduct/Ethics, Member Protection Policy, SQI Constitution Rules 12, 13, 14 and By-Law 14.

This policy is adopted by all member District and Affiliated Associations within SQI to ensure a common acceptable standard of behaviour, processes and penalties are applied.

The penalties associated with this policy are outlined and should be followed as a component of this policy. Penalties may change and/or categories added at the discretion of the Board of SQI.

Objective

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Remove personal abuse and unsportsmanlike behaviour from all aspects surrounding the game of softball in Queensland
- Protect all participants from exposure to such behaviour.
- Provide a consistent application of processes and penalties for breaches to the Codes of Conduct/Ethics

Who does this policy apply to?

This policy applies to:

- (a) Administrators of softball in Queensland at State, District Association and Club level, be they employed or volunteer
- (b) Players in activities and events held by or under the auspices of SQI and member District Associations
- (c) Coaches of teams and players in activities and events held by or under the auspices of SQI and member District Associations
- (d) Umpires of games in activities and events held by or under the auspices of SQI and member District Associations
- (e) Managers of teams participating in activities and events held by or under the auspices of SQI and member District Associations
- (f) Scorers of games in activities and events held by or under the auspices of SQI and member District Associations
- (g) Registered participants when involved as a spectator of games in activities and events held by or under the auspices of SQI and member District Associations
- (h) Spectators of games in activities and events held by or under the auspices of SQI and member District Associations.

Definitions

“Match” A match is defined as an officially organised softball game that is part of a schedule, roster or draw regardless of competition level that the player would normally or had normally participated in.

“SQI Commissioner” Refer SQI By-Law 14.3

“Member District Association” Refer to SQI Constitution Rule 5.3

“Associate Members” Refer to SQI Constitution Rule 5.6

“Category” Is the Category of Violation as listed in this Policy.

“Penalty” Is the punishment imposed as stated in this Policy or imposed by the SQI Commissioner or Judiciary Committee

“Official” Is any person appointed to an official position of SQI, its Affiliated or Member District Associations or their Registered Clubs.

“Registered Participant” Is any person registered with SQI through their club, District Association or SQI.

“Spectator.” A person observing a game of softball or its associated activities including training, from a position in the immediate vicinity (defined as within ear shot) of those activities.

Policy

A registered participant in organised softball within Queensland or any spectator will not indulge in any unsportsmanlike behaviour towards another participant or spectator involved in a recognised softball activity including organised training and will adhere to the relevant Code of Conduct/Ethics and Member Protection Policy.

Unsportsmanlike behaviour will include, but not be limited to:

- Verbal abuse and threats
- Physical abuse and/or assault
- Discrimination (as described in the Member Protection Policy)
- Harassment (as set out in the Member Protection Policy)
- Making derogatory statements or gestures
- Cheating
- Visible dissent of a decision of an umpire or official in an unsportsmanlike manner
- Equipment Abuse

(NOTE: Unsportsmanlike behaviour applies to both the instigation of and response to any incident.)

Categories of Offence & Penalty

Unsportsmanlike behaviour has been broken up into a number of categories of violation to determine the most appropriate penalty to be applied for breaches to this policy. These penalties may change from time to time. Applicable penalties (match suspensions) for each category of offence are also shown.

These categories are:

Category of Violation	Incident	Penalties		
		1 st Offence	2 nd Offence	3 rd Offence
P1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use of audible* foul language• Disputing judgment or decision of an umpire• Minor Equipment Abuse• Frivolous complaints (first incident)	Warning	1 match	2 match
P2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rough play, barging, pushing etc• Displays of inappropriate aggressive behaviour• Disparaging or insulting remarks and/or the use of foul language directed toward another player/official/umpire.• Answering back an umpire• Failing to carry out a lawful direction of an umpire	1 match	2 match	4 match
P3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Answering back an umpire on multiple occasions• Abusing an umpire or official• Deliberately barging with force• Displays of excessive aggressive behaviour• Frivolous complaint (second and further incidents)• Major Equipment abuse where there is potential to injure participants and/or spectators	2 match	4 match	8 match
P4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fighting after being provoked• Provoking a fight but no further involvement	3 match	6 match	12 match
P5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provocation and/or involvement in physical violence• Threatening an umpire, official or player	6 match	Full year	Refer Tribunal
P6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physically attacking an umpire, official or player	1 year	Refer Tribunal	Refer Tribunal
P7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Melee*	\$500 fine per club involved and game forfeited	Refer Tribunal	Refer Tribunal
P9	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Other as determined by the SQI Commissioner			

Note 1: Melee involves multiple players per team involved in the incident

Note 2: Items P2-P6 shall invoke an automatic ejection from the match involved

Note3: Any suspension applies to the next match/s which the offender would otherwise normally have participated in (ie grade registered in) regardless of level of competition including representation.

Note 4: Note special provisions apply in relation to offences involving trainee and club appointed (non-accredited) umpires and junior and /or trainee officials (eg coaches, scorers).

Note 5: Audible' means able to be clearly heard by spectators.

PROCESS AND HANDLING:

1. On Field (The Game) Incidents

Team Members (Players & Officials): The incident is to be reported to the SQI Commissioner and processed as per SQI By-Law 14.3.

Other Official or Umpire: The incident is to be reported to the SQI Commissioner and processed as per SQI By-Law 14.3.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES – TRAINEE/CLUB APPOINTED (NON-ACCREDITED) UMPIRES AND TRAINEE AND JUNIOR OFFICIALS (COACHES, SCORERS ETC)

SQI does not tolerate abuse of trainee and club appointed (non-accredited) umpires, nor junior and/or trainee officials participating in softball in any capacity. For incidents of abuse involving junior, trainee and club umpires and officials, the penalties prescribed above are doubled and the first offence for P1 is one **subsequent** match.

Teams will be advised at the pre-game meeting or consultation that a trainee or club umpire is officiating at that match.

2. Off Field (Non-Game) Incidents

Registered Participant: Any person witnessing or aggrieved by any unsportsmanlike acts or alleged breaches of codes of conduct/ethics by any registered participant shall report the incident to:

- (a) The District Association Secretary for incidents at the local level and/or
- (b) SQI General Manager (including incidents relating to SQI personnel including representative team/squad members) and/or
- (c) SQI Representative for incidents at a State Championship or SQI conducted events.

Such report should be lodged immediately in person or in writing to the relevant authority. On receipt of the report, an enquiry will be undertaken by a person appointed by the District Association, SQI General Manager or at a SQI Event, undertaken personally by the SQI Representative. A report is to be provided to the relevant authority and the offending party together with any recommendations and/or penalties to be applied.

Parents and Spectators: Any person witnessing or aggrieved by any unsportsmanlike acts or alleged breaches to the codes of conduct/ethics, by any spectator may report the incident to the SQI or District Association official on duty immediately upon witnessing the incident.

The SQI or DA official will investigate the complaint immediately following the procedures as set out in the Spectator/Parent Policy.

3. Harassment/Discrimination Incidents

A person who is aggrieved by the actions of another person in terms of harassment or discrimination shall lodge a complaint as per the procedures set out in the SQI/SAL Member Protection Policy.

DISPUTING AN UMPIRE'S DECISION

Disputing an umpire's decision is not permitted in any circumstance. Questions on interpretation should be quickly resolved or a protest entered. Protracted haggling about interpretation is also not permitted.

SPECIAL PENALTY – TRAINEE AND CLUB APPOINTED (NON-ACCREDITED) UMPIRES

If a team member disputes the decision of a Trainee or Club Appointed Umpire, a Category P2 penalty is applied.

QUERYING AN APPLICATION OF THE RULES

If a team coach or captain believes a decision regarding an application of a rule is incorrect, he/she may lodge an 'Intent to Protest' in accordance with Rule 11 of the SAL Rule Book and/or the District Association or SQI State Championship Ground Rules.

If an umpire is of the opinion that he/she may have made an error, they may seek assistance from the other umpire/s on the game and if necessary, reverse their previous decision.

The process to lodge an 'Intent to Protest' is as follows:

The Coach/Team Captain must **request** "time" and approach the Plate Umpire for formal notification. The Plate Umpire must grant 'time' at an appropriate time in play and follow the procedures as set out in Rule 11. Another umpire and/or opposition team official must be in attendance to witness the notification of 'Intent to Protest'.

TRAINEE UMPIRE - MENTORING

A trainee umpire must have an accredited umpire or DA official (mentor), in attendance at a match either on or off the field to provide the necessary support to enable them to learn and develop without the pressure of being 'left alone' to deal with situations out of their level of experience.

The 'mentor' umpire/official may enter the field of play to assist and/or apply a correct rule/process in the best interests of the game and trainee umpire. This should only be done in circumstances where the trainee umpire is 'out of their depth' and in danger of being overwhelmed by the situation. The trainee umpire may seek advice from the 'mentor' at any time during a match.

ACKNOWLEDGE AND ACCEPTANCE

Where a person is reported for an offence under the parameters contained within this document, he/she may desire to accept the automatic penalty (as prescribed within penalties) without a hearing or appeal. The person must acknowledge written acceptance of the incident and the resulting penalty. The SQI Commissioner must receive this notification no later than 24 hours following advice of the Commissioner's decision regarding the offence and accompanying penalty.

In these cases the penalty will be halved with the exception of Category P6 which remains unchanged, P2 which remains at 1 game and P4 the penalty will be reduced to 2 games.

APPEAL

Appeals against penalties must be lodged and handled in accordance of SQI Rule 14. A person will remain suspended until the appeal against such finding has been adjudicated upon.

SERVING OF PENALTIES

Penalties apply to the next match/s which the offender would otherwise normally have participated in regardless of level of competition. This includes when a person is dual registered within one association, plays in more than one association (home association and permit association/s) and includes SQI/District Association representation.

Penalties not completed by the end of the current playing season shall carry over to the next and if necessary, to a subsequent playing season.

TRANSFER OF PENALTIES

Any penalty invoked by SQI or a member District Association is transferable to another. Where a player clears, transfers or permits to another State or District Association, a check must be completed on existing penalties during the clearance/transfer/permit process to ascertain any outstanding penalties/suspensions. Any portion of a penalty NOT served at one association will be deemed to apply to the next association and the person under suspension must not be permitted to participate until the full suspension has been served. ***Penalty: An additional eight (8) match suspension on the offending person/s, \$500 fine on the District Association and \$500 fine on the club, plus forfeiture of the game/s points, which knowingly permits a person to participate whilst under suspension.*** Note: SQI office to notify District Associations of multiple match suspensions.

REGISTER OF SUSPENSIONS/PENALTIES

The SQI Commissioner, SQI Database Manager and each District Association must maintain a register of penalties or suspensions which is to detail the persons full name and address, the category of offence, penalty invoked, the date invoked and the date penalty will be served out.

A persons' record will be cleared after the following time has been served:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Suspension from 0 – 4 matches | 1 year from completion of last penalty served |
| 2. Suspension from 6 – 12 matches | 2 years from completion of last penalty served |
| 3. Suspension for 1 year | 5 years from completion of last penalty served |

If a person re-offends after his/her record has been cleared, it will be reactivated from the time the new penalty is applied.

Note: A persons' file on the register will remain active for all time.

UNFAIR ACTION

Where an official or umpire has, in the opinion of the coach, team or club official, not adjudicated or administered fairly then a complaint may be lodged with SQI for investigation and, if necessary, further action. The SQI General Manager will appoint an independent person to conduct the investigation.

FRIVOLOUS OR MALICIOUS COMPLAINTS

Upon investigation of a complaint, should the person conducting the complaint find that it is frivolous, a warning will be given in the first instance. If a complaint is deemed to be malicious the person making the complaint shall be brought to appear before the SQI Tribunal.
