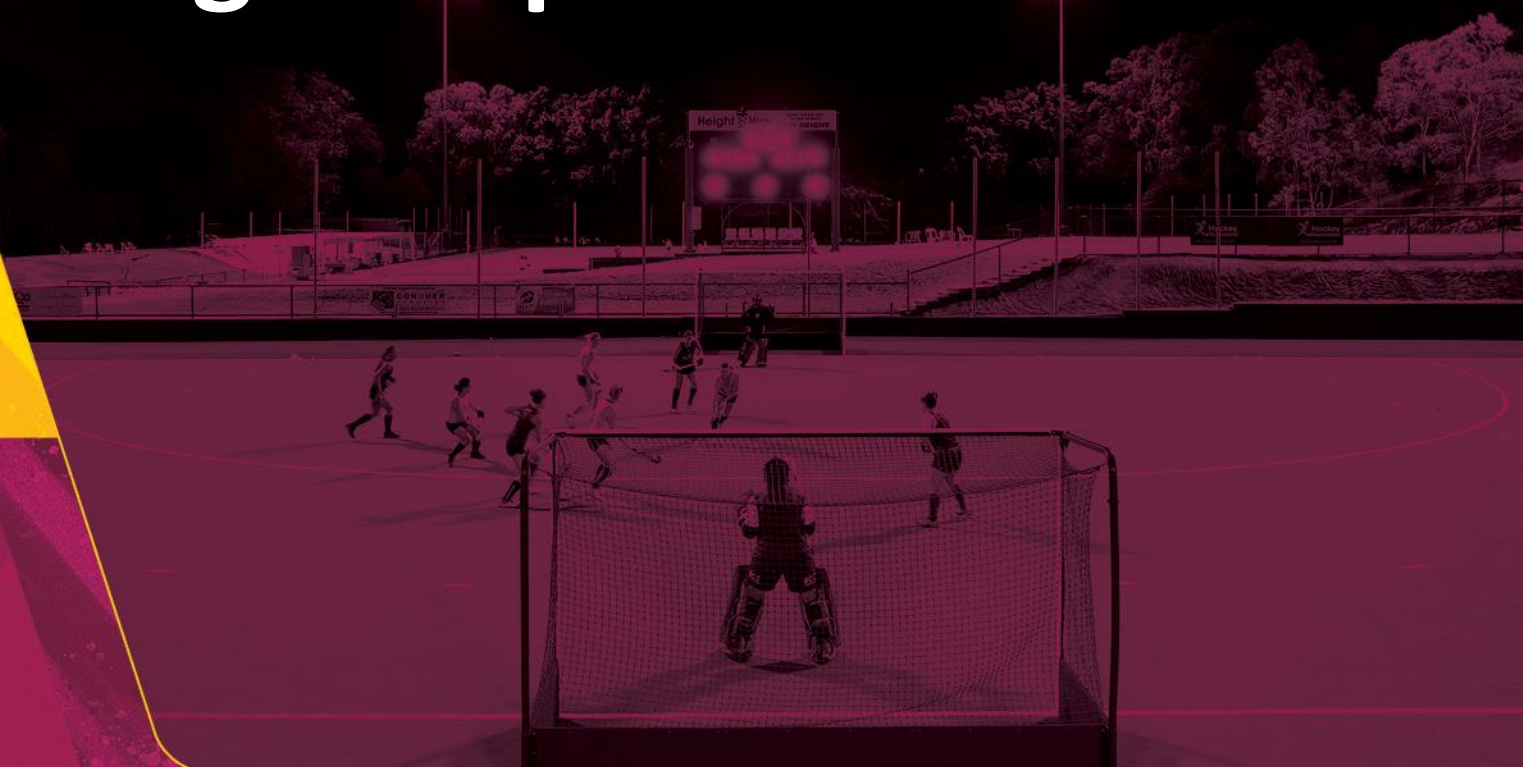


HOCKEY QUEENSLAND

Age Requirements



State Championships Age Requirements (2024)

Hockey Queensland (HQ) is committed to ensuring all Associations have representative teams at all State Championships and securing the long-term development and participation growth within each age group in every Association. HQ provides the following guidelines for players' participation in State Championships.

Maximum age

All players participating in an underage championship must be under the age as of the 1st January in the year the championship is being played (i.e. for the U16 age group: A player who turns 16 from 1st January onwards during the year of the championship is eligible to participate, whereas, a player who has already turned 16 by the 31st December the year prior to the championship is ineligible).

Minimum Age

HQ recognises a range of factors influencing the ability of under-age players to participate within teams entered into competitions above the player's age group. These factors include the individual's physical and social/psychological/emotional development, fitness/athletic ability, skills and tactical capability.

To encourage increased participation across all age groups, HQ prioritises players' participation in their own age group at state level competitions and aims to limit participation of players who are significantly younger replacing players who are within the age group.

Based on the above considerations and the changes in the age groups within the National Championship framework (U13 → U14 / U15 → U16) HQ will apply the following minimum age limits to guide the selection of teams for state-level competitions taking effect from February **2024**.

| State Championship | Minimum Age | Maximum Age | Birth-years eligible in 2024 |
|---|---|---|------------------------------|
| Under 14 (14 years and younger) | 10 at 31 December previous year, turning 11 in year of Championship | 13 at 31 December previous year, turning 14 in year of Championship | 2013, 2012, 2011, 2010 |
| Under 16 (16 years and under) | 13 at 31 December previous year, turning 14 in year of Championship | 15 at 31 December previous year, turning 16 in year of Championship | 2010, 2009, 2008 |
| Under 18 (18 years and under) | 14 at 31 December previous year, turning 15 in year of Championship | 17 at 31 December previous year, turning 18 in year of Championship | 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006 |
| HQC & Super Sixes Indoor | 17 at 31 December previous year, turning 18 in year of Championship | No maximum age | 2006 or earlier |

Dispensation requests

No dispensation will be given unless extreme extenuating circumstances. Before contacting Hockey Queensland with any requests associations are encouraged to explore the participation of any registered age-eligible player within their association and the clearance process with available players from other associations.

For the purpose of clarity, extenuating circumstances do not include:

- Nominating a development team of younger players playing in a higher age group
- Nomination of a younger player of perceived high enough playing standard
- Inability to fill teams despite sufficient number of registered age-eligible players in the association

The HQ office will make a final decision on any requests on a case-by-case basis.

The minimum age requirement policy was reviewed and comprehensively discussed during the State Championship Review with ample opportunity to Associations to provide arguments for the discussion. This included the face-to-face workshop with following online forum, participation in the Review Working Group and the surveying of regional coaching directors. The HQ Board was satisfied with the wide array of presented arguments and felt well informed to endorse the age requirements.

The above presented requirements recognise the Association's need for flexibility while removing administrative work for Associations and HQ in the dispensation process. They provide a pathway for younger players to transition into the next age group competition.

The Board discussed and endorsed updates to the policy in February 2024 to account for changes to the National Championship Framework and participation data of previous years.

When nominating young players, Associations are encouraged to consider sport science advice of a higher risk of negative physical and mental impact on the athlete. Associations should make an assessment on the following:

- Player maturity
- Increased Injury risk
- Self-worth and peer pressure
- Match load, team size and game time management.
- Number of State / National tournaments played in one year

~END~