



UMPIRE ATTENDING NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS



Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission
SPORTAUS

Softball Australia
P.O Box 107
La Trobe University. Victoria 3083
www.softball.org.au

Acronyms

NUC – National Umpire Committee (4 x NUIC, 7 x NUS, TPC)

NUC Executive – National Umpire Committee (4 x NUIC)

NUIC – National Umpire In Chief (Communications, Development, Operations, Technical)

NUP – National Umpiring Program

NUS – National Umpiring Staff (7 members)

SDU – State Director of Umpiring

TCU – Tournament Chief Umpire

TD – Softball Australia Technical Delegate

TPC – Softball Australia Technical Projects Coordinator

WBSC – World Baseball Softball Confederation

Version Control

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Attending a National Championship

Eligibility

To officiate at a National Championship, you must be an active umpire in your member state and hold a qualification as per the table below:

Tournament standard	Umpire Level	Management crew
Open Male/Female	Level 6+ including Level 6 candidates	WBSC
Under 23 Male/Female Under 19 Male/Female	Level 5+ including Level 5 or 6 candidates	Level 6+
Under 17 Male/Female	Level 4+ including Level 5 candidates, and Level 3 where identified and approved by the SDU	Level 6+
Under 15 International Friendship Series	Level 2+	Level 5+

- Achieve the appropriate pass in the annual Open Playing Rules Assessment held immediately prior to your application.
- Level 2 Umpires have umpired at least 10 major games
- Level 3 Umpires have umpired at least 15 major games
- Level 4 to 8 Umpires have umpired at least 8-20 major games
- For all Levels, these games are to have been umpired in the previous twelve [12] months up to 30th April immediately preceding the Championship.
- Ensure that a record of your umpiring activities including development and administration is maintained in your [Umpire Activity Log](#).
- Completed an [Individual Goals Action Plan](#) if a candidate for level 5 or level 6.
- Have fulfilled your member state based obligations and be recommended by your State Director of Umpiring (SDU) and endorsed by your State General Manager/CEO.
- Be appointed to the Championship by the National Umpire In Chief Executive.

Application Process

- Complete an online 'Application for Appointment to a National Championship Form' by the set deadline – Include your Umpire Activity Diary and Development Plan. The link for the form will be notified to you once it becomes available.
- Your SDU will approve the Application

NOTE: Please ensure that you let your place of employment know that you will require leave during the times that you have applied for and that your employer is happy for you to take leave. This will avoid any disappointment associated with having to withdraw if your leave/holiday application is refused should you be appointed.

Appointment of Umpires

A Tournament Chief Umpire (TCU) is appointed to each Championship by the NUC Executive.

A number of Umpires are appointed to each Softball Australia Championship/Event. Typically, up to 12 umpires are appointed to each Australian Championship:

- Ten (10) or Eleven (11) officiating umpires
- One (1) or Two (2) candidate umpires for Level 5 or 6 practical assessment.

The number of umpires appointed will depend on a number of factors, i.e. team entries, number of diamonds available and game schedules, including where more than one championship is conducted at the one venue (e.g. Under 19 Men's and U17 Boy's).

Should circumstances warrant, the NUC Executive, may increase or decrease the number of umpires appointed to a Championship including local part-time umpires.

The NUC Executive also appoints a minimum of two (2) of the umpires who, along with the TCU, comprise the Assessment Panel.

Umpires from another country may also be appointed. Their attendance is usually by invitation from the NUC Executive and endorsed by Softball Australia.

Candidate Assessments

Level 6 assessments are usually conducted at the Open Women's, Open's Men's and the U19 Men's Championships.

Level 5 assessments are usually conducted at U19 Women's, U17 Girl's and U17 Boy's National Championships.

Notification of Appointment

Every effort is made to finalise and publish all Championship umpire appointments by October each year. Once completed, SDUs, National Umpiring Staff (NUS), Member States and the Softball Australia Office are notified, in writing, of the appointments. Each SDU will communicate appointments with their state umpires.

[Appointments](#) will be posted on the Umpiring section of the website.

Following notification, the Softball Australia Office will invoice each umpire appointed to a Championship for the "Umpire Levy". The Levy is set by Softball Australia and is to be paid by the due date. This is usually within 30 days.

Travel

Where required, Softball Australia will arrange air travel for all umpires appointed to Softball Australia Championships/events. Any special travel requirements need to be requested in writing immediately after you are notified of your appointment, and forwarded to the NUIC Operations within 14 days of publication.

The Softball Australia Office will advise you of your travel details (if applicable) and arrangements. A copy will also be sent to your SDU, the Member State SDU and the NUIC Operations. In most cases, specific conditions apply to these travel arrangements that restrict alteration to the initial booking.

Any cost incurred by Softball Australia in relation to altered travel arrangements outside the specific conditions ***will be the responsibility of the umpire concerned***, who will be invoiced by Softball Australia when all accounts have been received.

NOTE: You should clearly understand the implications of this financial arrangement prior to your application.

Travel will be the best value fare available to Softball Australia, which may be economy, group travel or special price air travel. 1 piece of additional luggage is automatically booked.

Umpires may choose to make their own way by private car to the Championship venue to which they have been appointed. Umpires who chose to travel privately must advise the NUIC Operations in writing that this is the case as early as possible after the appointments have been published. Include departure/ arrival dates etc. Umpires travelling interstate will only be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred up to the equivalent cost of a return flight that would have been booked by Softball Australia. Receipts will need to be kept and submitted on the official form through the NUIC Operations, to substantiate the travel claim.

Accommodation

Accommodation for Championships may be twin share hotel or motel style rooms or self-contained apartments where three or more umpires sharing. All umpires are accommodated at the same location - including full time umpires from the host Member State. Accommodation is not organised for part-time umpires from the host State.

The host SDU, in consultation with the NUIC Operations, is responsible for arranging reasonably priced accommodation for the umpires.

Hotel or motel accommodation may include a light breakfast. However, in the self-contained apartments, umpires within each apartment may share the cost of breakfast and other supplies. Make sure you allow for this financial cost.

Accommodation information will be forwarded to the Tournament Umpires four weeks prior to the event.

Travel Uniform

For purposes of sport recognition, presentation and personal identification, umpires travelling to, and returning from National Championships, are required to dress in the official Softball Australia Umpire travel uniform. This will also be worn at the Bat Check and all Official Functions during the Championship.

1. White Softball Australia polo shirt
2. Dark navy trousers with black shoes
3. Dark navy shorts with casual enclosed shoes
4. Black socks

Officiating Uniform and Equipment

Softball Australia Championship Umpires are expected to supply their own officiating uniforms and equipment, presenting themselves on the diamond in good order and repair. Prepare all your equipment and uniforms well in advance of the travel dates.

It is an expectation that during the Championship your on-diamond appearance be neat and tidy, shoes polished, shirts clean and ironed with trousers/slacks pressed, your presentation on the diamond is important. Umpires must not wear watches or fitness trackers on their wrist whilst umpiring.

Fitness and Preparation

Fitness should play a major part in your preparation to officiate at an Australian Championship. Some Championships are conducted over a seven-day period. Night games may be scheduled which will mean long days, requiring a sustained level of stamina and fitness. You should plan out a fitness program well in advance to enable you to maintain the high level of performance over a number of days.

You should plan a game work program to ensure that your on-diamond work is productive. It is important to remember that your aim should be the quality of games, as opposed to the quantity of games.

Pre-tournament hydration is important, particularly if travelling to a more humid climate. Maintaining good levels of hydration, even if you are off the field, particularly in hot weather. The use of sunscreen is highly recommended and needs to be reapplied at regular intervals. Use of a water resistant sunscreen is a good idea.

Be prepared for “down time” when you are not on the diamond or in case of inclement weather. There may be many hours between your games. Bring along something to help pass the time, books, cards, crosswords, etc.

Candidates

Make time to talk to someone you know who has already been to a National Tournament. This may include your mentor or SDU, who should be able to answer any questions you may have.

Arrival at the Championship Venue

Umpires are usually required to arrive at the Championship venue at one (1) day prior to the opening day. This allows the umpires to settle into your accommodation, to participate in any pre-Championship function, the pre-Championship Technical Meeting and the Umpire training session and Briefing.

Generally, you will be met at the airport, either at the arrival gate or the luggage collection area. This will be arranged by the Host SDU and you will be advised of the details prior to your departure. The Member State may co-opt other state umpires to assist with your Transport. If other umpires are arriving at a similar time you may be required to wait and then travel together.

Check the ETA of all the umpire crew on receipt of your travel details for this possibility. You will easily recognise your fellow "Blues", even if you do not know them; they will be dressed similarly to yourself.

Pre Championship Meetings

The umpiring crew is required to attend the pre-Championship Technical Meeting to conduct the bat inspection. The Softball Australia Technical Delegate (TD) chairs this meeting. You are required to wear your "travel" uniform to this meeting. Your TCU will advise you of your commitments, prior to the meeting.

The management from each participating team attends, along with the Tournament Management Committee. The umpire crew may be introduced to the team officials during this meeting by the TCU.

The Technical meeting will be utilised as an opportunity to do Official Bat Checks.

- Each team manager will provide all the team bats.
- Each bat is checked for compliance and will have the official Softball Australia sticker placed on the handle for easy recognition during the tournament.
- Any bats that don't comply will be taken, labelled and stored for safekeeping and returned to the team/player at the end of the tournament.

The TCU or designated official/s will carry out a ground inspection at least 4 hours prior to the managers meeting, to outline any issues and will report any problems to the tournament convener. This will allow time to rectify them prior to the tournament any issues can also be discussed at the Technical Meeting.

Pre Championship Umpires Meetings

The Umpire Meeting is usually conducted in a less formal atmosphere and usually at the Umpire accommodation.

Topics discussed at the umpire meeting may include,

- Umpire specific Championship arrangements (e.g. proximity of umpire change room etc.),
- Timing of transport to the park each day, allocation of vehicles, transport of gear.
- Availability of cold water and ice, tea, coffee,
- Official Function requirements, financial commitments etc. A finance officer may be appointed (volunteered) to collect moneys.
- Meeting the Umpire Liaison Officer/s, if appointed,

- Game allocations for the first one [1] or two [2] days may be issued.
- Two of the crew may be asked to volunteer to take on the job of preparing game balls. Ensuring that there are sufficient balls (new and used) available for each game and that damaged balls are kept separate from the game balls.
- Any ground rules or tournament specific issues
- A crew member will be appointed to write a report about the Championships for the Softball Australia Umpires' publication, "[Blues News Online](#)" (BNOL). This role will not be given to a candidate.

This will be the time for any general questions you may have. Do not hold back on questions, make sure you ask them. No question is a silly question.

During the Championship

Throughout the Championship you will be guided by the TCU. The TCU is usually a senior umpire with many years of experience at National Championships. The TCU may also have international experience (e.g. Olympic Games, World Championships) both in Australia and overseas.

If you require assistance on any matter, the TCU is your resource person who will endeavour to help you with any problem you may encounter. You may prefer to speak to one of the assessors if it is a personal issue. There will generally be both male and female members on the Management Crew. If you sustain an injury or become ill, advise the TCU immediately. There are obvious reasons for this - to enable the appropriate course of treatment to be undertaken promptly if necessary and to allow for timely changes to game allocations.

The umpires may be required to participate as a unit in the Opening and Closing Ceremony. The TCU will advise of the appropriate attire, generally this will be the On Diamond uniform (Blues).

An official Championship Umpire Crew photograph may be taken. This is arranged by the TCU. You will be advised by the TCU, or the Umpire Liaison Officer, of the time and place, and appropriate attire, for the photograph.

There may be occasions during the championship when the TCU will call an "umpire team meeting". All umpires will be advised of the time and place well in advance.

Make sure that when times are set for meetings or rendezvous that you are on time, early is preferable.

In some States the umpires will be assigned a Liaison Officer. These people are volunteers. The TCU will assign various administrative duties to the Liaison Officer and you are expected to co-operate at all times.

You are requested not to ask the liaison officer to take on tasks of a personal nature such as clean shoes or iron shirts. Make sure you communicate well with this person. They will try and provide you with whatever you need. Remember though, they are NOT our servants, they deserve our courtesy and respect, they are fantastic people, don't forget to thank them.

Should time and game schedules permit, it is possible that an informal Umpire's Dinner, or possibly even a breakfast, will be arranged. If this is the case smart casual dress is appropriate. No matter what level you are you should always be prepared to learn both during your own game and while watching games. Assessors are there, providing feedback and support. There is always something that can be gained from these discussions. Adopting the attitude of 'learning something on each game' is a good idea.

As a Candidate

If you are a candidate there will be little expectation to do much except look after yourself and give yourself the best chance of being successful. All attending umpires will do whatever they can to help candidates. Therefore, if there is something that you need help with or clarified then just ask a member of your management or umpiring crew.

The Assessment Panel comprises the TCU and two other Assessors appointed by the NUIC Operations.

Like the practical assessment at accreditation levels (2 to 4), candidates will be assessed over six games (3 plates and 3 bases). Like previous practical assessments, the assessors are keen for you to do well and pass. You may also be allocated to games in which you will not be assessed and you will be advised when this is the case.

For Level 5 candidates there will be post game de-briefings. This is not always the case for Level 6 candidates. If no post game de-brief is conducted and you have any questions or concerns, speak to your TCU.

Following the conclusion of the practical assessments and after their deliberations, the TCU or a member of the Assessment Panel, will advise you of the time and place of the candidate interviews. This is likely to be either the second last or last day of the tournament. Only the candidate umpire concerned, the TCU and Assessment Panel will be present at the interview.

You will be requested to keep your result confidential to within your closet family/friends and the umpiring crew until after the Closing Ceremony. This practice is in consideration of those umpires who may not have been successful and to achieve a pleasant surprise factor when the announcement is formally made to the wider community.

Away from the diamond, relax, be social and be a member of the crew, it can be a lot of fun. Do not put undue pressure on yourself, stay relaxed and umpire your usual game, and most of all move on from any close calls or unusual situations. There is about to be another call that requires your undivided attention.

Game Allocations

The TCU will endeavour to have the allocations for the next day's games posted in the umpire's change room each day, typically by the late afternoon. Should circumstances prevent this happening, umpires will be advised of the game allocations as soon as they are available.

All allocated umpires are requested to be at the park 1 hour prior to their game. Ensure TCU and plate umpire know you are there. You should schedule your pre-game "stretching" and "warm up" around this time.

It is the responsibility of the game Plate Umpire (i.e. Crew Chief) to ensure that all the members of their crew are present at the park. This is particularly important for the first game of each day. You will need to be in the umpire's dressing room at least 30 minutes prior to each game.

You must be aware that, where possible, and barring unexpected circumstances, all games should start at the scheduled starting time. You will need to allow for pre-game meetings and announcements if necessary. All games are 7 innings games, with no time limit, so it is important to try and keep to the scheduled times.

Discipline off the Diamond

At all times, beginning when travelling to the Championship venue until you return home, your conduct is to be exemplary and entirely appropriate to that of a representative of the NUP and Softball Australia.

Extremely late hours should be avoided. Each game is a big game during a National Championship and you never know when you might be called upon to work an extra game. It is important that you are prepared for such a possibility at all times.

NO alcohol will be consumed at the park, except for official functions. A breach of discipline may result in the umpire being removed from the roster for the remainder of the Championship and sent home.

At the end of the game, leave the diamond quickly and wait until you are in the change room to congratulate your fellow umpires on their game.

After the game, you are not to answer any questions or discuss specific plays of the game with anyone outside the umpiring room. In particular, do not criticise players, coaches or your fellow umpires. Direct all coaches and questions from them to the TCU. Should you have or receive any complaints, direct them to the TCU who will, if necessary, take appropriate action.

When your game is over, you are requested to change out of your officiating uniform immediately. Avoid wearing State shirts or logos – event shirts are appropriate off diamond attire. Avoid socialising with players and coaches while in or out of uniform. When amongst spectators by all means applaud the plays. By all means applaud good plays but do not vocally support a specific player or team.

Should you wish to leave the park at any time, you should personally notify the TCU (or member of the management crew). Do not ask anyone to relay a message. You should also personally notify the TCU of your return to the park.

Remember, you are there as part of a team, it will make everyone's experience more enjoyable if everyone acts appropriately.

Performance Evaluations

During National Championship all umpires are evaluated by the TCU and Assessment Panel. A copy of your evaluation will be given to you at the umpire "de-brief meeting" at the conclusion of the Championship or sent to you following the tournament. A copy is also forwarded to the NUIC Operations and NUIC Development and distributed as necessary to the other NUICs.

The evaluation is based on your on and off diamond performance and your presentation at the Championship.

You may choose whether you "share" your evaluation with your SDU on your return home. Whatever you choose, the evaluation should be used to further your development within the umpire program.

All performance evaluations from attending National Championships will form part of the umpire's profile in assessing whether an umpire has maintained the level of performance, at national level, comparable with his/her level of accreditation.

Financial Responsibilities

Softball Australia accepts responsibility for the fares and reasonable priced accommodation for:

- The TCU and all Umpires appointed to a National Championship / Event.

The Office will invoice each State for the umpire concerned after the Championship.

Umpires should check with their State Association regarding any entitlements for some reimbursement of these costs.

All Umpires

- Payment should be made promptly by the due date stated on the invoice, which will be sent from Softball Australia soon after the appointments are announced.
- At the Championship, all umpires may be asked to contribute on a share basis, to the cost and day to day expenses of the ground transportation organised for the umpires. The transport could be a mini bus, rented car or private car belonging to local umpires.
- Individual umpires are responsible for their own meals and their own incidental expenses incurred (e.g. phone, fax, dry cleaning, laundry etc.) during the Championship. Any accounts at the accommodation, should be settled prior to the day of departure.
- The umpire crew may decide to have fresh food provided to make sandwiches etc. This may be organised by the liaison officer and the costs shared amongst the umpire crew.
- Should you require a copy of the official Umpire Crew photograph there will be a charge, depending on the size of the photograph ordered, the cost is usually between \$20.00 - \$45.00
- All umpires are invited to contribute, on a share basis, to the purchase of a small gift of appreciation for the Liaison Officer.
- Should there be an international visiting umpire at the Championship, it is possible that the umpire crew will want to present to them a small memento of their time in Australia. If this is the case, the crew will share the cost of the gift.

General Points

The proper handling of any softball game requires that four (4) essential factors be part of the umpire's make up. They are:

1. Knowledge of the rules;
2. Good judgement;
3. Technique;
4. Game management.

It is important to always officiate with the utmost respect. If you respect the role of the coaches, players and spectators, they in turn, are more likely to respect you as an umpire. Many, but not all, will appreciate the responsibilities you have and the many decisions you have to make on the diamond during a game.

At all times you must show all participants that you possess a good positive attitude, proper conduct and most of all, a pleasing temperament at all times.

Believe in yourself and your capabilities, you are here because others believe in you.

Contacts

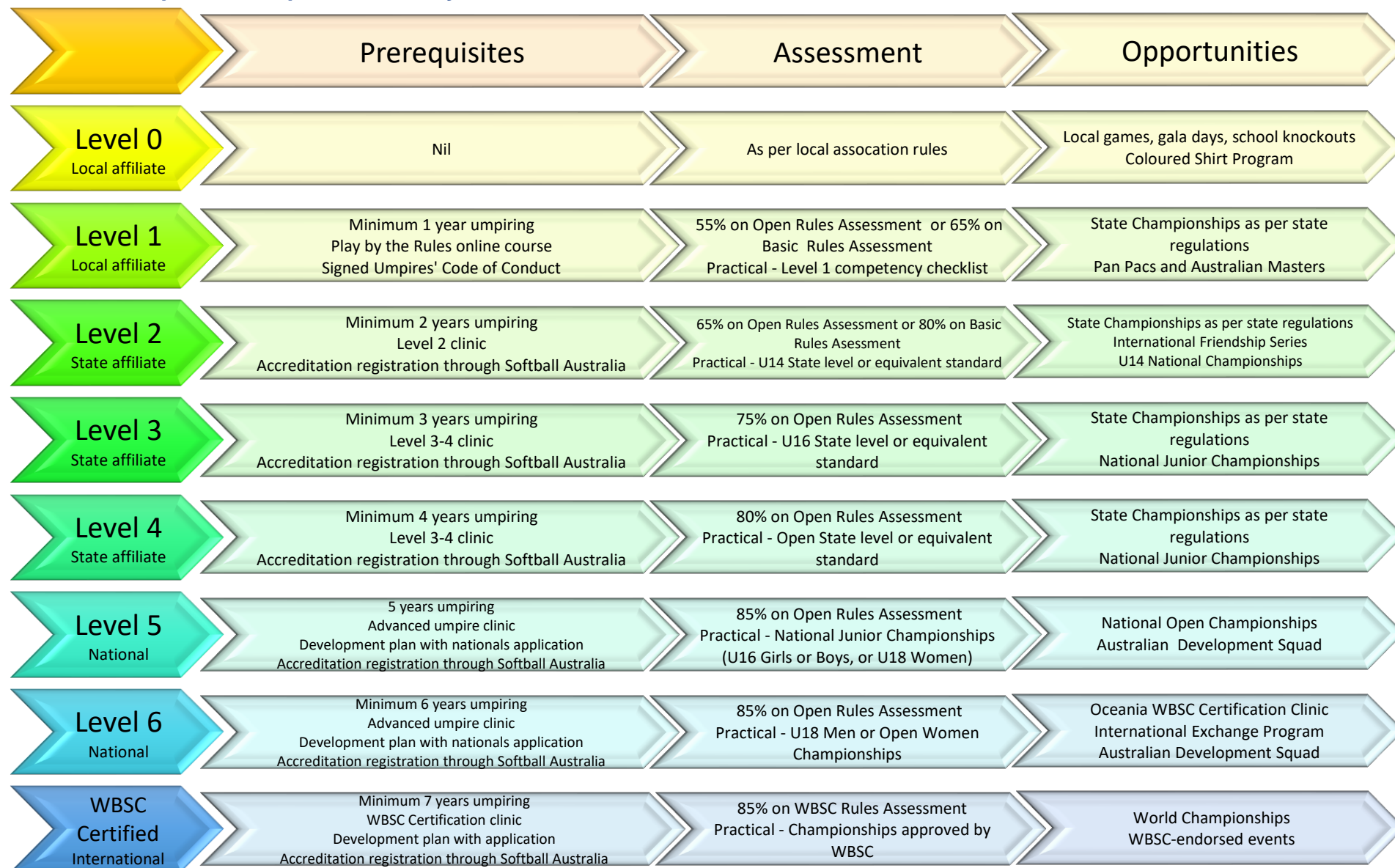
Always be prepared to get in contact with someone else to find out any information you require or to confirm what you have already been told.

Your best contacts are:

- Your National NUICs
- Your SDU
- Your coach/mentor

All current contacts can be found on the website: www.softball.org.au – Umpiring.

Australian Umpire Development Pathway



Individual experience may vary. Other tournaments may be used for assessments where appropriate.

Additional umpiring resources, including information on umpiring courses and accreditation, can be found on the Softball Australia website (www.softball.org.au)

Softball Australia



t 03 9417 0022
f 03 9417 3399
e info@softball.org.au
w www.softball.org.au
a PO Box 107
La Trobe University
VIC 3083

Softball ACT



t 02 6278 3000
f 02 6278 3010
e softballACT@bigpond.com
w www.act.softball.org.au
a PO Box 4264
Hawker ACT 2614

Softball NSW



t 02 9677 4000
f 02 9677 4040
e office@softball.net.au
w www.nsw.softball.org.au
a PO Box 210
Rooty Hill NSW 2766

Softball Northern Territory



t 08 8927 3333
f 08 8927 9999
e enquiries@softballnet.com
w www.nt.softball.org.au
a PO Box 40051
Casuarina NT 0811

Softball Queensland



t 07 3391 2447
f 07 3391 4734
e admin@softballqld.asn.au
w www.qld.softball.org.au
a PO Box 861
Sunnybank QLD 4109

Softball South Australia



t 08 8353 6766
f 08 8353 2480
e admin@softballsa.com.au
w www.sa.softball.org.au
a PO Box 275
West Beach SA 5024

Softball Tasmania



t 03 6249 3589
f 03 6249 3589
e tassoftball@yahoo.com.au
w www.tas.softball.org.au
a GPO Box 2124
Hobart TAS 7001

Softball Victoria



t 03 9415 1745
f 03 9417 3399
e admin@softballvic.org.au
w www.vic.softball.org.au
a PO Box 107
La Trobe University
VIC 3083

Softball Western Australia



t 08 6181 3900
f 08 9345 3553
e admin@softballwa.org.au
w www.wa.softball.org.au
a PO Box 450
Mirrabooka WA 6941