



UMPIRING SOFTBALL PATHWAYS



Australian Government

Australian Sports Commission

SPORTAUS

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Version Control

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Table of Contents

Background.....	4
Community Umpiring Program	5
Level 1: Introduction to Umpiring.....	6
Level 2: State	7
Level 3: State Intermediate Level.....	8
Level 4: State Intermediate Level.....	9
Level 5: National	10
Level 6: National Level Senior.....	11
Australian Umpire Development Pathway.....	13

Background

The umpire development program, supported by the Softball Australia Accreditation Scheme, seeks to accredit umpires through on-diamond competence and rules knowledge in order to officiate at appropriate levels. Expected competencies increase in line with the standard of play, as does the required rule knowledge.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide an outline of the steps required to progress through the umpire development program.

This document should be read in conjunction with the various umpire development manuals.

Benefits of Becoming an Accredited Umpire

The benefits of becoming an accredited umpire include:

- Gives credibility to the role of umpiring
- Provides a defined pathway for acknowledged improvement and professional standards
- Presents opportunities for tournament selection and travel at state, national and international levels
- Provides a natural pathway as involvement in the sport does not have to end when playing days are over and instead, an umpire's career can last a lifetime
- Provides a sense of purpose and personal achievement and reward
- Empowers people to apply the correct rule for a given situation
- Offers a unique opportunity to work with many different types of people and situations and these personal skills can be transferred into other aspects of life ranging from business to family
- Gives unique perspective, as often a former player or coach will report that umpiring has been very beneficial in terms of better understanding the rules and the umpire's perspective and crew signals
- Offers the best seat in the house on field
- Provides a social outlet, where the friends made often last a lifetime
- Provides an identifiable number of accredited participants. This becomes important when applying for Australian Sports Commission funding.

Community Umpiring Program

The Community Umpiring Program is an initiative that seeks to promote a basic, association or school-based training and development program for those who are new to the role of umpiring.

The program promotes the role of umpiring to people wishing to get involved with umpiring, and those who are required to umpire as part of their respective club/team/school duties. This program provides volunteers with the support, protection and fundamentals needed to enable them to perform their duties in a way that satisfies the role they play.

This program provides a link to the current Level 1 Introduction to Umpiring Program.

Assessment

This program does not have a formal assessment component linked to it, only observations and guidance to assist you to get started.

Competitions

This program is designed to provide participants with skills to allow persons to umpire school based and club competitions.

Resources

- Coloured Shirt Program
- Community Umpiring Program Manual
- Community Umpiring Program flip cards

Level 1: Introduction to Umpiring

Level 1 accreditation is awarded when the following are achieved:

- 55% pass mark has been attained in the Australian Open Rules Assessment or 65% pass mark Australian Basic Rules Assessment.
- Successful completion of two modules in the *“Play by the Rules”* free online training course. This can be accessed at <http://www.playbytherules.net.au/interactive-scenarios/free-online-training>. A copy of the certificates should be saved and submitted with the application.
- A basic understanding of umpiring mechanics has been demonstrated. This is covered by the Level 1 Introductory Umpire Program (which can be downloaded from the Softball Australia website) and does not require a formal practical assessment to be undertaken, only an on-diamond check of the umpire’s skills by a softball official at the district association.

Competitions

- Upon successful completion of this level, you will be able to umpire at club and association levels and be able to apply to attend junior state championships up to U/15 age level.

Resources

- Online modules – Level 1 manual
- On Diamond Competency Checklist

Level 2: State

Level 2 accreditation is awarded after the following are achieved:

- 65% pass mark in the Australian Open Rules Assessment or 80% pass mark in the Australian Basic Rules Assessment.
- Attend the Level 2 Training Clinic conducted by your State Association. Attendance to this course may be waived by the SDU if the candidate attended this course in the previous year.
- Achieve a Level 2 pre-assessment pass on a practical assessment if required by your State Association. The pre-assessment games may be carried out at local association or equivalent games of equal skill level to that expected at the assessment games, using the National 2-Umpire System.
- Achieve a Level 2 pass on a practical assessment at six games (3 plates and 3 bases) at a junior State Championship or equivalent standard tournament using the National 2-Umpire System.

Competitions

- Upon successful completion of this level, you will have the requisite skills to umpire at all junior state championships using the 2-umpire system.
- Level 2 umpires may nominate for appointment to the U14s Australian Regional Championships and International Friendship Series. Umpires are to provide an Activity Diary and Development plan with their application, and must be endorsed by their State Director.

Resources

- Online modules – Level 2 manual

Level 3: State Intermediate Level

Level 3 accreditation is awarded when the following are achieved:

- Achieve 75% pass mark at the Australian Open Rules Assessment.
- Apply to your state director of umpiring (SDU) to be a level 3 candidate.
- Attend the Level 3 Training Clinic conducted by your State Association.
- Achieve a Level 3 pre-assessment pass on a practical assessment on at least one plate and one base prior to presenting for the Level 3 practical assessment if required by your State Association. The two pre-assessment games can be carried out at local association, state championships or equivalent games of equal skill level to that expected at the assessment games, using the National 3-Umpire System.
- Achieve a Level 3 pass on a practical assessment at six games (3 plates and 3 bases) at a junior State Championship or other equivalent standard tournament using the National 3-Umpire System.

Competitions

- Upon successfully completing this level, you will be able to umpire at all levels of junior state level competition.
- Level 3 umpires may nominate for appointment to the U16 National Championships, U14s Australian Regional Championships and International Friendship Series. Umpires are to provide an Activity Diary and Development plan with their application, and must be endorsed by their State Director.

Resources

- Level 3/4 manual

Level 4: State Intermediate Level

Level 4 accreditation is awarded when the following has been achieved:

- Achieve 80% pass mark at the Australian Open Rules Assessment.
- Apply to your SDU to be a Level 4 candidate.
- Attend the Level 4 Training Clinic conducted by your State Association.
- Achieve a Level 4 pre-assessment pass on a practical assessment on at least one plate and one base prior to presenting for the Level 4 practical assessment if required by your State Association. The two pre-assessment games can be carried out at local association, state championships or equivalent games of equal skill level to that expected at the assessment games, using the National 3-Umpire System.
- Achieve a Level 4 pass on a practical assessment at six games (3 plates and 3 bases) at a State U/19 Men's or Open Championship or equivalent standard tournament using the National 3-Umpire System. Umpires from developing states may be assessed at National events.

Competitions

- Upon successfully completing this level, attendees will have the requisite skills to umpire at all levels of state competition.
- Level 4 umpires may nominate for appointment to the U16 National Championships, U14s Australian Regional Championships and International Friendship Series. Umpires are to provide an Activity Diary and Development plan with their application, and must be endorsed by their State Director.
- Level 4 umpires are also able to nominate to be a 'skill-share' umpire at a junior national championship. 'Skill share' umpires are appointed to national junior tournaments so that they can gain experience at this level of tournament. Whilst not a pre-requisite, umpires will sometimes nominate as a skill share umpire prior to applying to be assessed as a Level 5 umpire.

Resources

- Level 3/4 manual

Level 5: National

Level 5 accreditation is awarded when the following are achieved:

- achieve 85% pass mark in the Australian Open Rules Assessment.
- apply to the NUC for appointment to Nationals and submit an application. Your application must include a Development Plan and Activity Diary and be supported by your SDU.
- Achieve a Level 5 pass on a practical assessment of six games (3 plates and 3 bases) at a junior National Championship using the National 3-Umpire System.

Competitions

- Upon successfully completing this level, attendees will have the requisite skills to umpire at junior national championships.
- Level 5 umpires can nominate for the Softball Australia Umpire Development program. This is an ongoing program for level 5 and 6 umpires wishing to advance to WBSC umpire certification.

Resources

- Level 5/6 manual
- 4-umpire system manual

Level 6: National Level Senior

Level 6 accreditation is awarded when the following are achieved:

- achieve 85% at the Australian Rules Open Assessment.
- apply to the NUC for appointment to Nationals and submit an application. Your application must include a Development Plan and Activity Diary and be supported by your SDU.
- Achieve a Level 6 pass on a practical assessment of six games (3 plates and 3 bases) at an U/19 men's or Open National Championship using the National 3-Umpire System.

Competitions

- Upon successfully completing this level, attendees will have the requisite skills to umpire at the open level of national championships.
- Level 6 umpires can nominate for consideration for the Umpire Development squad which can lead to selection to attend the WBSC certification clinic. Upon achieving WBSC certification, you can apply and be selected to umpire at international softball tournaments, including regional qualifiers and world championships.

Resources

- Level 5/6 manual
- 4-umpire system manual

International Accreditation through WBSC

International accreditation is awarded by the World Baseball-Softball Confederation (WBSC) (formerly by the International Softball Federation) when the following are achieved:

- 85% pass mark on the WBSC Rules Assessment.
- Membership of the Australian Development Squad and approval of the NUC to attend the Umpire Certification Seminar.
- Completion of the Umpire Certification Seminar and pass mark of on-diamond and seminar-based assessment.
- Satisfactory completion of a fitness test.

Competitions

- WBSC accredited umpires can nominate for World Championships and International Development Cup Series

Level 7 and 8 Umpire

These levels are for recognition of achievement and service to the National Umpiring Program and are awarded by the National Umpiring Program.

Australian Umpire Development Pathway

	Prerequisites	Assessment	Opportunities
Level 0 Local affiliate	Nil	As per local association rules	Local games, gala days, school knockouts Coloured Shirt Program
Level 1 Local affiliate	Minimum 1 year umpiring Play by the Rules online course Signed Umpires' Code of Conduct	55% on Open Rules Assessment or 65% on Basic Rules Assessment Practical - Level 1 competency checklist	State Championships as per state regulations Pan Pacs and Australian Masters
Level 2 State affiliate	Minimum 2 years umpiring Level 2 clinic Accreditation registration through Softball Australia	65% on Open Rules Assessment or 80% on Basic Rules Assessment Practical - U14 State level or equivalent standard	State Championships as per state regulations International Friendship Series U14 National Championships
Level 3 State affiliate	Minimum 3 years umpiring Level 3-4 clinic Accreditation registration through Softball Australia	75% on Open Rules Assessment Practical - U16 State level or equivalent standard	State Championships as per state regulations National Junior Championships
Level 4 State affiliate	Minimum 4 years umpiring Level 3-4 clinic Accreditation registration through Softball Australia	80% on Open Rules Assessment Practical - Open State level or equivalent standard	State Championships as per state regulations National Junior Championships
Level 5 National	5 years umpiring Advanced umpire clinic Development plan with nationals application Accreditation registration through Softball Australia	85% on Open Rules Assessment Practical - National Junior Championships (U16 Girls or Boys, or U18 Women)	National Open Championships Australian Development Squad
Level 6 National	Minimum 6 years umpiring Advanced umpire clinic Development plan with nationals application Accreditation registration through Softball Australia	85% on Open Rules Assessment Practical - U18 Men or Open Women Championships	Oceania WBSC Certification Clinic International Exchange Program Australian Development Squad
WBSC Certified International	Minimum 7 years umpiring WBSC Certification clinic Development plan with application Accreditation registration through Softball Australia	85% on WBSC Rules Assessment Practical - Championships approved by WBSC	World Championships WBSC-endorsed events

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)

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