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**AUSTRALIAN
SCHOOLS
ORIENTEERING
CHAMPIONSHIPS
RULES**

Operations Guide

August 2026



**ORIENTEERING
AUSTRALIA**

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1 Introduction

Responsibility for these Rules and Procedures for the Australian Schools Orienteering Championships (ASOC) is vested solely in Orienteering Australia (OA) and may be amended only with the approval of that body.

ASOC aligns with OA's strategic purpose, to provide enriching opportunities for fun, adventure and fitness through orienteering in Australia's diverse landscapes. Through its design as an inclusive, attractive and inspirational competition, ASOC aims to build a lifelong connection with orienteering for its school aged participants. ASOC is also an important step in the pathway to international representation for developing competitors, with the high-quality organisation of events and competition against international students adding to calibre of the event. OA acknowledges that junior success does not correlate directly to success in the elite category, and hence ASOC is designed to be a development opportunity for all. The social connections developed at ASOC are key to facilitating long term engagement with orienteering.

The rules outlined below are designed to align with ASOC's purpose, to celebrate our high achieving school age orienteers whilst also being inclusive to all school age orienteers in Australia.

2 Definitions

Australian Schools Orienteering Championships (ASOC) – A multi-day event that includes a series of competitions which are individual and team-based. ASOC is conducted over three formats: Sprint Distance, Long Distance and Relay.

Eligible Competitors (EC) - Students in attendance at schools, including students studying Years 11 and 12 full time at TAFE and home-schooled students, recognised by State /Territory Education Departments in Australia, who are 19 years or younger and 12 years or older as of 31 December in the year of the event. Equivalent eligibility criteria apply to all international competitors.

State Team (ST) - A group of up to 20 ECs who have been selected to represent their OA affiliated State/Territory Association in the ASOC Teams Competition. State Teams must wear their designated State Team uniforms for all ASOC competition formats. These uniforms differentiate competitors from all other ST, IIT or IC.

Invited International Team (IIT)- A group of up to 20 Eligible Competitors who have been selected to represent their country at ASOC. Invited International Teams must wear their designated international team uniforms for all ASOC competition formats. These uniforms identify these competitors from all other ST, IIT or IC.

Independent Competitors (IC)– ECs who have not been selected in a State Team or an international representative team. These competitors compete independently of the STs and IITs.

Competition Cohorts – A description of the age categories for which the three competition formats in ASOC are conducted. These are: Boys 19 years and under, Girls 19 years and under, Boys 15 years and under, Girls 15 years and under

Team Officials – Responsible adults appointed by the State/Territory or an invited international federation to supervise participating teams at ASOC who comply with all requirements of the OA National Integrity Framework (NIF) Safeguarding Children and Youth Policy.

ASOC Individual Competition – An open competition between all eligible competitors. who attend an Australian school. Competitors in this competition who place 1st, 2nd or 3rd in the Sprint Distance, Long Distance ASOC events are awarded “ASOC medallions”.

ASOC Team Competition – A selective competition between State Teams. Teams in this competition who place 1st, 2nd or 3rd in each ASOC event (Sprint Distance, Long Distance and Relay) are awarded “ASOC medallions”.

Official Relay Team – A group of 3 selected Competitors for each of the 4 Competition Cohorts, who have been nominated by state team officials to compete at the ASOC Team Relay Competition, or in the case of the Invited International Team, nominated by their team officials to compete at the Southern Cross Junior Team Challenge.

Southern Cross Junior Individual Challenge (SCJC)- An open competition between all eligible competitors, including state team competitors, invited international team competitors and Independent Competitors. Individuals in this competition who place 1st, 2nd or 3rd in the Sprint Distance and Long Distance ASOC events are awarded “SCJC medallions”.

Southern Cross Junior Team Challenge – A selective competition between representative Australian state/territory teams and invited international teams in the Sprint Distance, Long Distance and Relay ASOC events.

Ad Hoc Team – A group of no more than 3 competitors who combine to form a relay team and compete in the ASOC relay format. An Ad Hoc Team shall NOT include any Official Relay Team member. It must not purport itself to be representing a state/territory or a country.

Organising Body – The state/territory orienteering association who is a member of Orienteering Australia appointed by the Board to conduct the event.

3 Rules of Competition

3.1 Eligibility

- 3.1.1 Eligible competitors for ASOC are those defined as Eligible Competitors in clause 2 who attend schools (as described in the definition of Eligible Competitors) in Australia.
- 3.1.2 Eligible competitors for the State Team competition are those nominated and selected in the correct age classes in accordance with the procedures for the selection of State Teams laid down by the state and territory affiliates of OA. Eligibility for a State Team is normally determined by the State/Territory where a competitor attends school. OA may authorise exceptions to this in the following circumstances:

- where a competitor lives in a border area and is a member of, and regularly associated with, a State Association operating within that area.
 - where a competitor attends school in a different State/Territory to their family's place of residence.
 - where a competitor moves State/Territory during the year.
- 3.1.3 By invitation Orienteering New Zealand or other international federations may send teams of competitors who are nominated and selected in the event's Competition Cohorts. These teams may include any competitor who attends school in that country, regardless of citizenship.
- 3.1.4 Independent Competitors from outside Australia may compete if not part of an Invited International Team.
- 3.1.5 Any Independent Competitor must be a member of a state/territory affiliate of OA or their international federation. Independent Competitors shall only compete as an individual and may be a member of an Ad-Hoc team in the SCJC Relay competition.
- 3.1.6 Eligible competitors for the SCJC Team competition are those Australian State Teams as set out in 3.1.2 and Invited International Teams as set out in 3.1.3.
- 3.1.7 Championship titles:
- 3.1.7.1. Eligible competitors for ASOC Individual titles are those competitors eligible in 3.1.1.
 - 3.1.7.2 Eligible teams for ASOC State Team titles are those teams eligible in 3.1.2.
 - 3.1.7.3 Eligible competitors for the SCJC Individual titles are those competitors eligible in 3.1.1, 3.1.3, and 3.1.4.
 - 3.1.7.4 Eligible teams for SCJC Team titles are those teams eligible in 3.1.2 and 3.1.3.
- 3.1.8 ASOC accommodation facilities, eating arrangements, social activities etc., should be arranged for State Team participants and team officials (maximum 4 per team) where practicable. Invited International Teams may be invited into the ASOC accommodation facilities at the sole discretion of the Organising Body.
- 3.1.9 Social activities etc, where possible should include ICs who are accompanied by supervising adults. Supervising adults of ICs must be a parent/guardian or an authorised responsible adult who complies with the OA NIF Safeguarding Children and Youth Policy. This is at the sole discretion of the Championships Organising Body provided that no additional Duty of Care responsibility is placed on State Team officials or ASOC organisers.
- 3.1.10 ASOC accommodation facilities and eating arrangements may be provided for ICs if space permits at the sole discretion of the Organising Body and subject to any ICs being accompanied by a parent/guardian or an authorised responsible adult who complies with the OA NIF Safeguarding Children and Youth Policy.

3.2 Rules and Conditions of Competition

3.2.1 All competition rules of Orienteering Australia on the [OA Operations Guide](#) website page as 2.1 Competition Rules for Orienteering apply except where they conflict with these rules.

3.2.2 The Competition Cohorts shall be as follows:

- Boys 19 years and under
- Girls 19 years and under
- Boys 15 years and under
- Girls 15 years and under

3.2.3 Each OA affiliated state/territory may nominate a State Team, or in the case of the NT, may nominate a specific NT team, with a maximum of twenty (20) Competitors and four (4) team officials, dependent on host state capacity. The State Team will consist of a maximum of seven (7) runners in each Competition Cohort. No reserves are nominated.

Any State Team competitor in any Competition Cohort is eligible to earn individual points which contribute to State Team points and receive awards.

Late replacements/inclusions of State Team competitors are permitted. The final composition of any State Team or Invited International Team must be declared at or before the Pre-Event Meeting at the beginning of ASOC and the appropriate documentation stating the composition of the team is provided to the Organising Body. After this point no change is permitted to the composition of any State Team or Invited International Team during the conduct of ASOC.

3.2.4 There are three competition formats for which State Teams and Invited International Teams may score points; Sprint Distance, Long Distance and Relay. In the two individual competition formats (Sprint Distance and Long Distance) the performance of the first three (3) competitors in each age class count for the team result.

In the Relay format three competitors compose an official Relay Team in each class. Each State Team and Invited International Team may nominate only one official Relay Team in each competition cohort. All remaining competitors compete in Ad Hoc Teams as per Clause 3.4.2.

3.2.5 Competitors must compete in the same age class in both the individual events (Sprint Distance and Long Distance) and the Relay event with the exception of the conditions set out in Clause 3.2.6.

3.2.6 In the event of a State Team or IIT being unable to nominate an Official State Relay Team in a Competition Category, or in the event of injury or illness affecting a competitor during ASOC thereby preventing that competitor from taking further part, a 15 years and under member of the State Team may be promoted to the 19 years and under age class, or a girl may run in a boys State Team at the appropriate age. provided approval of the Championship jury is obtained prior to the State Team change.

The identified Official Team from each ST and IIT and in each Competition Cohort must be made public prior to the commencement of the Relay competition.

3.3 Course Standards and Technical Details

3.3.1 The course setters for the **Sprint Distance** event are to plan courses with the following anticipated winning times:

- Boys 19 years and under: 12 – 15 mins
- Girls 19 years and under: 12 – 15 mins
- Boys 15 years and under: 12 – 15 mins
- Girls 15 years and under: 12 – 15 mins
- One runner from each class starts at the same time at 1-minute intervals.

3.3.2 The course setters for the **Long Distance** event are to plan courses with the following anticipated winning times:

- Boys 19 years and under: 45 – 50 mins
- Girls 19 years and under: 45 – 50 mins
- Boys 15 years and under: 35 – 40 mins
- Girls 15 years and under: 35 – 40 mins
- One runner from each class starts at the same time at 2-minute intervals.

3.3.3 The course setters for the **Relay** event are to plan courses with the following anticipated winning times:

- Boys 19 years and under: 35 mins
- Girls 19 years and under: 35 mins
- Boys 15 years and under: 30 mins
- Girls 15 years and under: 30 mins

3.3.4 **Technical Difficulty.** The 15 years and under classes should be of Moderate navigation standard with IOF and English control descriptions provided, and the 19 years and under classes should be of Hard navigation standard with IOF control descriptions provided.

3.4 Competition Structure

3.4.1 **Individual Events Start List.** A start list for the Sprint Distance and Long Distance events should be released by at least 6pm on the evening prior to each competition. A public start draw announcement for each event shall be conducted. The process for formulating a start list for the two individual events is as follows:

- The starting sequence in each class shall be organised in five start groups.
- Independent competitors start in the first start group.
- Each State and Invited International Team shall nominate no more than two Competitors for each of the remaining four groups and must nominate one in each of the four groups before nominating a second for any group. Any remaining State and Invited International team Competitors shall then be distributed evenly

across the start groups. Nominations for start groups must be provided to the ASOC organisers in advance, with ASOC organisers to determine deadlines, however no less than 3 days before the event date. Changes due to illness or injury should be allowed, with the timing of these to be stipulated by ASOC organisers.

- The starting order in each group is to be drawn at random except that two competitors from the one State Team or Invited International Team may not be drawn to start consecutively. If they are drawn to start consecutively, the next competitor drawn must be inserted between them. If this happens at the end of the draw or at the end of a starting group, the competitor before them must be inserted between them
- In the Sprint Distance event, the starting interval between runners shall be one (1) minute.
- In the Long Distance event, the starting interval between runners shall be two (2) minutes.

3.4.2 Relay Start List. In the Relay, State and Invited International Team officials shall have the right to nominate the composition and running order of their Official Relay Teams. Competitors not in the official State Teams and International Relay Teams may compete in Ad Hoc teams composed freely from all the remaining Eligible Competitors in each age class.

The right to nominate the running order of any Ad Hoc team that includes a State and/or Invited International team member, remains with the State and/or Invited International Team officials.

Relay teams must be organised in advance, with ASOC organisers to determine deadlines. Changes due to illness or injury, as well as changes to running order, should be allowed, with the timing of these to be stipulated by ASOC organisers.

3.4.3 Complaints and Protests.

Complaints and protests are dealt with in a manner consistent with the OA Competition Rules Clause 27.

- A complaint can be made about infringements of these rules or the organiser's directions.
- Complaints can be made by event or team officials, or competitors or anybody else connected with the event.
- Any complaint shall be made in writing to the organiser or at the registration tent to a representative of the organiser as defined in the Event Bulletin as soon as possible after the results for an age class are complete. A complaint is adjudicated by the organiser. The complainant must be informed about the decision immediately.
- There is no fee for a complaint.

- The organiser may set a time limit for complaints. Complaints received after this time limit shall only be considered if there are valid exceptional circumstances which must be explained by the complainant.
- The organiser's decision in relation to any complaint must be advised to all competitors affected by the decision. A protest can be made against the organiser's decision about a complaint.

A protest jury established under Clause 3.5 shall consider protests.

- Protests can only be made by team officials, competitors or event officials.
- Any protest shall be made in writing to the organiser or at the registration tent to representative of the organiser as defined in the Event Bulletin, no later than 15 minutes after the organiser has informed the complainant of the decision about the complaint. Protests received after this time limit may be considered at the discretion of the jury if there are valid exceptional circumstances which must be explained in the protest.
- There is no fee for a protest.
- The result of any protest must be advised to all competitors affected by the decision.

3.5 Protest Jury

- 3.5.1 An ASOC protest jury shall be appointed at the Pre-Event Meeting.
- 3.5.2 The ASOC protest jury shall consist of representatives from three (3) different states, with the OA ASOC Coordinator (or their representative) to be a non-voting member of the protest jury.
- 3.5.3 Where possible protest jury members shall be accredited OA Controllers.

4 Guidelines for Organisation

4.1 Meetings

- 4.1.1 The ASOC Management Committee comprises the ASOC Event Coordinator appointed by the Organising Body, the OA ASOC Coordinator, two ST officials from each team and two IIT officials from each team, and at least one, but no more than 2 representatives of ICs. In the event of voting on a matter each ST, IIT and a representative of ICs shall have one vote.

This committee shall hold a minimum of two (2) meetings during the period of ASOC. The Pre-event Meeting is conducted prior to the commencement of ASOC and the Post-Event Meeting after ASOC. Other meetings may be scheduled at the discretion of the OA ASOC Coordinator. Meetings are conducted in accord with the procedures set out in the OA Rules and Policies. The ASOC Management Committee may make recommendations to the Board for amendments to these rules.

4.2 Duties of the Organising Body

- 4.2.1 Where a decision has been reached by OA (or its host state affiliate) a championship may be conducted in accord with the above rules and guidelines. The name of the event is “The Australian Schools Orienteering Championships”.
- 4.2.2 The Organising Body is responsible for all aspects of the organisation of the carnival and must appoint a person as the ASOC Event Coordinator to liaise with the OA ASOC Coordinator and the State Team and International Team officials. The Organising Body shall prepare a budget and establish an event entry fee in consultation with the OA ASOC Coordinator. It shall be responsible for the issue of invoices, receipts, the payments of accounts and the preparation of a financial statement in accordance with the constitutional requirements.
- 4.2.3 The Organising Body may negotiate and enter into agreement with sponsors provided the OA General Manager is kept informed and provisions of the OA Sponsorship Policy are adhered to.
- 4.2.4 When the Organising Body has been determined for a particular year, the relevant State/Territory Orienteering Association must appoint a suitable event controller in accordance with OA rules. The Organising Body is expected to provide an appropriate person to chair the Pre-Event Meeting and the Post-Event Meeting.

4.3 Awards and Ceremonies

- 4.3.1 A Presentation function, to which sponsors and OA officials are invited, must be conducted at the end of ASOC.
- 4.3.2 ASOC Team and SCJC Team awards shall be presented at this function.
- 4.3.3 ASOC Individual and SCJC individual awards may be presented at this function or in the arena immediately after the competition.
- 4.3.4 **Points Allocation ASOC State Team Competition.** Points in the ASOC State Team Competition are awarded on the following basis for all age classes in both individual competitions and the relay competition. Only ST members can contribute to team points. Teams not placed receive 0 points.
 - 1st - 7 points
 - 2nd - 6 points
 - 3rd - 5 points
 - 4th - 4 points
 - 5th - 3 points
 - 6th - 2 points
 - 7th - 1 pointsTotal points for all age classes count.

- 4.3.5 In the individual competitions, teams with three or more finishers are ranked by the sum of the three times of their best three competitors. The fastest combined time determines the points allocated. Teams which do not have three finishers are ranked after all teams with three finishers, as follows:
- Teams with two finishers: by the sum of the two times
 - Teams with one finisher: by the time of that finisher and after all teams with two finishers
 - Teams with no finishers shall not be placed
 - In the event of two teams being tied in an event, both teams shall receive the points for the higher placing.
- 4.3.6 The State Team with the most points from the Sprint Distance, Long Distance, and Relay competitions is the winner of the ASOC State Team Competition. In the event of a draw, joint winners shall be announced. An overall trophy, the ASSOA Shield, is to be presented to the best performed State Team.
- 4.3.7 **Points Allocation SCJC Team Competition** – Points in the SCJC Team Competition are awarded using the principles described in 4.3.2 and 4.3.3 with the total number of points for 1st place determined by the number of participating teams.
- 4.3.8 The State Team or Invited International Team with the highest overall points from the Sprint, Distance, Long Distance, and Relay competitions is the winner of the Southern Cross Junior Team Challenge competition. An overall trophy, the Southern Cross Junior Challenge (SCJC) Shield, shall be presented to the best performed Team
- 4.3.9 **Competition Awards**
- a. **Sprint Distance and Long Distance Events:** ASOC medallions are to be presented to the first three (3) placegetters in each class for all competing students attending Australian schools. SCJC medallions are to be presented to the first three (3) placegetters in each class including all competitors (e.g. State Teams, Invited International Teams, and Independent Competitors).
 - b. **Individual Teams Event:** ASOC medallions are to be presented to all members of the first three (3) State Teams in the ASOC State Team Competition with the three fastest combined times in the individual events. There shall be a single set of team awards covering the individual Sprint and Long events, and State Teams are ranked in order of the points earned across the two events.
 - If State Teams are equal, ranking shall be in order of the most points earned in a single event (e.g. 1st + 3rd would beat 2nd + 2nd);
 - If still equal, ranking shall be in order of the best placing achieved by any individual across the events;
 - If still equal, ranking shall be in order of total State Team times (best 3 runners) summed across the two events.
 - c. **Relays:** ASOC medallions are to be presented to the three (3) members of the first three (3) place-getting teams in the relay event from within the State Relay

Teams. SCJC medallions, are to be presented to the three (3) members of the first three (3) place-getting teams including all competitors (including State Teams, Invited International Teams and Ad Hoc Relay Teams).

5 Honour Team and Rob Simson Memorial Shield

5.1 An Australian Honour Team shall be announced at the end of the carnival and recognised by the presentation of a suitable trophy or item of clothing arranged by the Organising Body. The following procedures apply:

- a. A selection panel of three (3) shall be appointed at the Pre Event Meeting before the commencement of the competition.
- b. The Honour Team shall consist of a maximum of four (4) competitors from each Competition Cohort
- c. Only members of State Teams are eligible for selection.
- d. Equal weighting shall be given to all three competition formats
- e. In considering the relay results selectors should note the different legs run by the competitors.
- f. Selectors may make use of different formulae for analysing the results (e.g. placings, kilometre rates and total elapsed times).
- g. Any competitor who breaches the Code of Behaviour set down by Orienteering Australia shall not be eligible for selection.
- h. Any competitor who performs well in the individual events and is subsequently elevated to a relay team in a different class (in accordance with Clause 3.2.5) may still be considered for the Honour Team in the Competition Cohort in which they ran in the individual events.

5.2 The **Rob Simson Memorial Shield for the Best Newcomer** shall be presented to the competitor who best fits this criterion.

- a. Any competitor in their first year of State Team representation is eligible for the award.
- b. The appointed selection panel (Clause 5.1) shall decide the recipient.
- c. The citation reads: *"This award is presented by the Simson family, to acknowledge the work done by Rob Simson, in 1989 and later, in establishing and championing the competition that we now know as ASOC."*

6 Invitational New Zealand and International Teams

6.1 No more than two invitational New Zealand Schools Orienteering Teams are to be invited each year to participate in ASOC. The New Zealand Teams are to compete under these Orienteering Australia Rules and shall adhere to Orienteering Australia policies and procedures.

- 6.2 Additional school students of eligible age from New Zealand who are members of Orienteering New Zealand but are not members of the New Zealand Teams may participate in ASOC as ICs. Any such runners from New Zealand shall be treated the same way from a competition perspective as all other ICs
- 6.3 When New Zealand Teams participate, they are eligible to compete against State Teams for the Southern Cross Junior Challenge (SCJC) Shield.
- 6.4 Other International Teams of IOF affiliated federations in the Oceania or Asia regions may be invited to compete at ASOC by OA in consultation with the Organising Body and the OA ASOC Coordinator. OA may also make such a team eligible for the Southern Cross Junior Challenge.

7 Service Awards

- 7.1 The Post-Event Meeting or another approved ASOC Management Committee meeting may recommend awards in accordance with the following policy. The Service Award recognises a person's continued commitment to the Australian Schools Orienteering Championships program, in particular representatives from State/Territory associations who have completed or are about to complete ten (10) years of service as a team, event or organisational official.

8 Request for Rules Deviation

- 8.1 Deviations from these rules may be allowed under the process described in OA Competition Rule 2.10. Rules deviation requests require approval from the Director (Technical), in consultation with the OA Schools Coordinator and the Director (Performance and Coaching). The Board may be consulted if the request for a rules deviation is a significant change from these rules.

9 Review of Rules

- 9.1 These rules shall be reviewed annually by the Board of Orienteering Australia and may be amended by the Board from time to time.

10 Changelog

- March 2024** Addition of the definition of both ASOC and the Southern Cross Junior Challenge which had been missing from rules as Clause 2.
- Renumbering of Clauses where appropriate.
- Further clarification of eligibility to compete in Clause 3.1.1-3.1.4.
- New Clause 3.2.6 defining who is eligible for individual awards.

Addition of Clause 3.2.2.1 to add current practice of process of having more than 6 Competitors in one age group.

Modification of Clause 3.4.1. and 3.4.2. to allow organisers to set deadlines for individual and relay team entries in advance of the competition.

Clarification of awards in Clause 4.3.7.

Correcting small errors in clause references and updating of nomenclature where appropriate.

Inclusion of Clause 10 to allow for an application for deviation from these rules.

June 2024

Expanded clause 1 Introduction to define how ASOC fits within the OA Strategic Plan.

Expanded clause 2 Definitions with clarification around the purpose of ASOC and Southern Cross Junior Challenge and new definitions for State Teams, Independent Competitors, Team Officials (including NIF requirements for such officials), and ASOC Individual and State Team competitions.

New clauses and modification of previous clauses in 3.1 Eligibility to better quantify eligibility to take part.

New clause 3.2.2.1 To allow for more than 6 state team members in a class in exceptional circumstances.

Deletion of clause 3.2.5 about individual placing awards that is now covered within clause 3.4.

New clause 3.4.1 to replace previous clauses 3.4.1 and 3.4.2 to clarify start list procedure for individual events.

Renumbering of clauses in 3.4 Competition Structure

3.4.2 Relay Start List clarified for naming and timing of teams for Relay.

Modifications to clauses in 3.5 Event Officials to clarify process for appointment of a jury including deletion of previous clause 3.5.1

Deletion of previous clause 3.5.1 and provisions in that clause moved to clause 1 and 2.

Modification of clause 4.1.1 to allow a person acting n behalf of independent Competitors to attend event meetings.

Modifications to clause 4.3 Awards and Ceremonies to clarify determination and presentation of awards and the conduct of ceremonies.

Removal of previous clauses 8 International Schools Teams and 9 Australia – New Zealand Schools Test Match Conditions and Rules to a new document within the OA Operations Guide.

Renumbering of previous clauses 10 and 11.

Several minor wording changes to better clarity process and procedure.

March 2025

Comprehensive review and rewrite of these rules to improve clarity.

April 2026

3.1.2 Amended to include a process allowing competitors to represent either the state in which they attend school or the state of which they are State Association members.

3.2.3 The provision for team sizes in any competition cohort to be up to a maximum of 7 competitors.

3.1.5 Amended to include Independent Competitors from all international federations.

7.1 Amended service awards wording

August 2026

6.4 Change from member federation to affiliated federation of the IOF to reflect the status of federations such as New Caledonia within the IOF and to allow such a team to be eligible for the Southern Cross Junior Challenge.