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NETBALL ACT

POLICY DOCUMENT

POLICY NAME:	Inclusive Uniform Policy
DATE WRITTEN:	8 December 2021
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NEXT REVIEW DATE:	8 March 2024
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Netball ACT

1. Introduction

Netball ACT believes that all netball participants should, as much as possible, be supported in wearing a uniform that allows them to participate in the manner in which they feel most comfortable. There are a multitude of reasons why a player or umpire may not feel comfortable wearing a traditional playing dress or umpiring uniform, and traditional uniform options may not suit their individual needs and preferences.

A recent study, *What Girls Want in Sport Uniforms to Make Them Feel Comfortable and Confident to Participate in Sport: A National Study* by the Victoria University, found that girls need to be provided with flexible options of uniform styles (65%) that are made from comfortable material and designed for girls (61%). The study found:

- 85% prefer to wear shorts during sport outside of school
- 85% prefer to wear t-shirts during sport outside of school
- 64% prefer to wear dark coloured bottoms during sport outside of school
- 58% do not want to wear skirts during sport outside of school

Creating flexibility of uniform options is also intended to allow players of diverse gender identities to feel comfortable participating in netball. This policy will outline NACT's position on acceptable team and umpiring uniforms in line with the Rules of Netball (2020 Edition). NACT celebrates diversity of sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, intersex status, ability, skill, cultural background, ethnicity, location, religious or political beliefs, and life stage. This policy is intended to guide Member Associations and their clubs to contribute to creating more welcoming and inclusive netball environments across the ACT.

2. Players

2.1 The Rules of Netball state that players must wear:

- A registered playing uniform and suitable sports footwear (spiked soles are not permitted).
- Playing position initials 150mm high which must be clearly visible and worn above the waist, front and back.

2.2 The Rules of Netball state that players must not wear anything that could endanger themselves or other players, specifically:

- No adornment of jewellery may be worn other than a wedding ring which must be covered with tape.
- A medical alert bracelet may be worn provided it is covered with tape
- Fingernails must be short and smooth
- Hair must be suitably tied back.

2.3 The Rules of Netball do not indicate that the registered playing uniform must be a dress. Multiple uniform options should be provided to allow all players to feel comfortable while playing netball, as long as the uniform allows each player to be easily recognisable as part of the same team. Each player in a team may choose their preference of the approved uniform options.

2.4 It is important that netball uniforms are comfortable and meet expectations of personal preference where possible. NACT encourages all Member Associations and Clubs to embrace adaptability and flexibility around uniforms in order to encourage continued participation and enjoyment in our sport. When approving uniforms, competition organisers should consider inclusivity and the weather conditions in which netball is played in the ACT.

NACT playing uniforms may consist of:

- T-shirts, singlets and long-sleeve shirts in addition to the traditional playing dress
 - They must be able to clearly display a playing positional bib
- Skins/leggings, shorts or skirts
 - The choice of bottoms must either include the same design as the dress/top or could be a designated block colour to match the uniform
- Players may wear head or face coverings for religious reasons. Such head coverings must be:

- Made of soft material
- Tight and non-flowing
- Not cover positional bib
- Be all black, all white or team colours
- If jewellery is not able to be removed for religious/medical reasons, it is the player's choice to play with them, and this player accepts the risks involved.
- Jewellery which cannot be removed for religious/medical reasons should be covered with padding/tape as necessary to prevent injury to others. Jewellery or other items which cannot be securely covered or taped must be removed per the Rules of Netball.

3. Umpires

- 3.1 The Rules of Netball state that umpires must wear clothing that is distinct from the teams' playing uniforms and suitable sports footwear.
- 3.2 NACT umpire uniforms may consist of:
- Maintaining the white shirt but allowing darker-coloured skirts, skorts or shorts
 - All umpires, regardless of gender identity, have the choice of wearing shorts or long sport pants rather than a skirt.
 - Leggings, long-sleeved shirts and skins may be worn should umpires wish to cover additional body surfaces. Such additional garments should be in a block colour.
 - Umpires may wear head coverings for religious reasons. Such head coverings must be:
 - Made of soft material
 - Tight or non-flowing
 - Be all black, all white or match the officiating uniform colours

4. Uniform Approval

- 4.1 Clubs are strongly encouraged to have multiple uniform options. Registered playing uniforms must be approved by the Competition Organiser prior to the commencement of the competition.
- 4.2 Any clothing or jewellery that a netball participant wants to wear that is not part of the approved registered playing uniform must be approved by the Competition Organiser.