
MSA Inclusive Swimwear Policy:

1. Background:

1.1 Masters Swimming Australia Inc. (MSA) is committed to creating a welcoming and inclusive swimming environment for all competitive members. Our goals are that:

- All swimmers in Australia feel welcome, safe, valued and celebrated in swimming,
- All swimmers in Australia can participate in the role and at the level of their choice in swimming, &
- Australia's diversity is reflected in swimming.

1.2 It is acknowledged that for some swimmers the standard competitive swimsuit options defined by MSA General Rule 'GR 16.1' may not suit their individual needs.

This may be attributed to a range of factors including but not limited to a

- Swimmers' religious observations,
- Swimmers' cultural and/or linguistic diverse background
- Swimmers with disability,
- Transgender and gender diverse swimmers

1.3 To accommodate and support swimmers' individual needs and encourage involvement in swimming competitions, MSA allows swimwear to be modified or alternative swimsuits to be worn in accordance with this Policy.

2. Purpose:

2.1 This Policy has been developed to clarify and supplement the effective application of General Rule GR 16.2 of the MSA General Rules which reads:

Notwithstanding the World Aquatics rulings referred to in GR 16.1, swimsuits may be modified or alternative swimsuits may be worn to accommodate a swimmer's individual needs, including in respect of modesty, religious or cultural purposes, gender identity, physical disability or in connection with any other protected attribute under federal or state anti-discrimination legislation provided any modification or proposed alternative swimsuit is approved by the Referee prior to the swimmer's first event at the relevant competition.

- 2.2** If there is any inconsistency between this MSA Inclusive Swimwear Policy and the MSA General Rules, the relevant MSA General Rules will prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

3. Application:

- 3.1** This Policy applies to swimmers, except swimmers seeking to achieve a World Aquatics Masters World Record, competing in all levels of domestic pool and open water swimming competition conducted by MSA, its affiliated Member Organisations and Clubs.
- 3.2** All swimmers are eligible for an **MSA National Record** if they wear modified or alternative swimwear for the relevant event at which they achieve that record provided the swimwear satisfies the requirements of this Policy.
- 3.3** To be eligible for official **World Aquatics Masters World Records** swimmers must wear an approved swimsuit as required under MSA General Rule GW 16.1.
- 3.4** The swimwear of all swimmers shall be modest, in good taste and must not be transparent.
- 3.5** Swimwear must be of textile material (i.e., permeable textile open mesh materials such as cotton, nylon, lycra and the like) with no application of surface treatment closing the open mesh structure. Swimwear must not contain any non-textile material such as polyurethane or neoprene.
- 3.6** Swimsuits which the Referee believes would be capable of unfairly enhancing a swimmer's performance will not be permitted; this includes compression swimwear that may be tight-fitting and/or increase buoyancy. In accordance with World Aquatics regulations, for open water swimming competitions in water with temperature below 20°C, men and women may use either swimsuit (3.5 above) or wetsuits.
- 3.7** Swimsuits which the Referee believes would present a genuine safety risk to the wearer or other swimmers will not be permitted, this includes swimwear that may cover the face, prohibit the body from moving freely and/or impedes buoyancy.
- 3.8** Swimmers wishing to swim in a modified or alternative swimsuit/s must (either themselves or their representative) present the suit/s to the Referee for inspection prior to the swimmers first event at the competition for approval.

Masters Swimming Australia Inclusive Swimwear Policy 2024

Adapted from Swimming Australia Inclusive Swimwear Policy April 2023

Approved by the MSA Board 2024













- 3.9** Swimmers are not required to justify their choice of swimsuit; however, swimmers may be required to provide information pertaining to items within this policy to assist with the Referee's decision.
- 3.10** The Referee may approve a modified or alternate swimsuit/s at their discretion and in accordance with this Policy, the MSA General Rules and competition rules to the extent they relate to swimwear. The Referee's decision shall be final.
- 3.11** In instances where the Referee is unsure whether the swimwear meets this Policy's requirements, the swimmer should be allowed to participate, however the Referee should contact MSA National office with details regarding the swimwear. MSA staff will work with the MSA National Technical Committee and associated Affiliate Member Organisation to review the case and provide further feedback on this request to wear alternate or modified swimwear. Swimmers should also be encouraged to contact MSA National office if they require any clarification or support on their request to wear modified or alternate swimwear

4. Accommodating Modesty

- 4.1** Swimmers may choose a swimsuit style that covers additional body surface including the legs, arms and/or head, but not the face.
- 4.2** Swimmers may choose a relaxed fitting swimsuit style however, this must not be so loose as to cause a safety risk, this includes swimwear that prohibits the body from moving freely and/or swimwear that impedes buoyancy. Swimsuits must not cover the face as this is a drowning risk.
- 4.3** Swimmers may choose to wear a swim skirt as an additional layer over a standard swimsuit.
- 4.4** There is no limit to the number of pieces the swimwear may be made from, however as set out in 3.6 swimsuits which the Referee believes would be capable of unfairly enhancing a swimmer's performance will not be permitted; this includes compression swimwear that may be tight-fitting and/or increase buoyancy.




5. Examples

5.1 Examples of acceptable swimsuits

			
Full coverage with legging	Full coverage with pant	Three-quarter length	Rash shirt or well-fitted t-shirt
			
Swim skirt	Swim shorts	Trunks	Briefs
			
Neoprene wetsuit (for open water swimming)	*Hygiene swimwear/underwear	Swimwear with ties	Swimwear with zippers/fasteners

**Note – Swimmers are not required to present hygiene swimwear to the Technical Manager/Meet Referee, however this swimwear is approved under the Policy.*

5.2 Examples of unacceptable swimsuits

		
Loose fitting t-shirts	Full body fast suit	Full leg fast suit
		
Loose fitting shorts	Street wear	Sportswear

MSA General Rule – 2024

GR 16 SWIMWEAR

GR 16.1 World Aquatics rulings on Swimwear, including;

- The Swimwear rules per World Aquatics Competition Regulations Section I Rules Applicable to all Aquatics Disciplines – 7. Swimwear and Wearables,
- Swimwear approved by World Aquatics in accordance with the rules and procedures set forth in the World Aquatics ‘Requirements for Swimwear Approval (FRSA)’ issued by the World Aquatics Bureau and valid on the date of approval., and
- The Swimwear rules per World Aquatics Competition Regulations Section II Swimming Rules – 15. Swimwear and Wearables,
- The Swimwear rules per World Aquatics Competition Regulations Section III Open Water Swimming Rules – 7. Swimwear and Technology, shall apply to Masters Swimming Australia competitions.

GR 16.1.1 For Masters competitions Swimsuits which comply in respect of their shapes and which evidently fulfil the other requirements, in particular in respect of material, (permeable open mesh textile material) can be used even if the corresponding model is not formally listed on the ‘List of Approved Swimwear’.

GR 16.1.2 Swimwear includes goggles and caps (up to two (2) caps may be worn).

GR 16.1.3 In pool swimming competitions the competitor must wear only one swim suit in one or two pieces. No additional items like arm bands or leg bands shall be regarded as part of a swimsuit.

GR 16.2 Not with-standing the World Aquatics rulings referred to in GR 16.1, swimsuits may be modified, or alternative swimsuits may be worn to accommodate a swimmer’s individual needs, including in respect of modesty, religious or cultural purposes, gender identity, physical disability or in connection with any other protected attribute under federal or state anti-discrimination legislation provided any modification or proposed alternative swimsuit/s are approved by the Referee prior to the swimmer’s first event at the relevant competition.

GR 16.3 To be eligible for official World Aquatics Masters World Records and World Aquatics Masters Top Ten swimmers must wear a World Aquatics approved swimsuit as required under GR 16.1.

GR 16.4 All swimmers are eligible for a National record or National Top Ten if they wear modified or alternative swimwear for the relevant event at which they achieve that record / time, provided the swimwear satisfies the requirements of GR 16.2.

World Aquatics – Competition Rules – January 2024

15 SWIMWEAR AND WEARABLES

- 15.1** Competitors must wear only one swimsuit in one or two pieces. No additional items, like arm bands or leg bands shall be regarded as parts of a swimsuit. All swimsuits shall comply with the requirements set forth in these Competition Regulations.
- 15.2** For swimming competitions, swimsuits for men shall not extend above the navel nor below the knee. For women, the swimsuit shall not cover the neck, nor extend past the shoulder, nor below knee. The swimsuits shall be made from textile materials.
- 15.3** No swimmer shall be permitted to use or wear any device or swimsuit that may aid his/her speed, buoyancy or endurance during a competition (such as webbed gloves, flippers, fins, power bands, or adhesive substances, etc.). The use of technology and automated data collection devices is permissible for the sole purpose of collecting data. Automated devices shall not be utilised to transmit data, sounds, or signals to the swimmer and may not be used to aid their speed. Goggles may be worn. As a consequence of injury, it is permissible to tape not more than one or two fingers or toes. Any other kind of tape on the body is not permitted unless approved by the Referee or other designated person.
- 15.4** A World Record (including Junior World Record and Masters World Record) will only be recognised by World Aquatics if approved swimwear has been used.
- World Aquatics may request the Athlete to submit her/his swimsuit worn during the World Record for conducting further analysis in its laboratory.