

Purpose:

To select an Australian Development Squad of umpires who will be prepared and then assessed for suitability to attend the next WBSC Certification Clinic. The Australian Umpire Development squad is particularly designed to prepare umpires and give an insight into the diverse requirements for International umpire representation, plus an understanding of the place which umpires and umpiring has in Australian and International Softball.

Selection process:

All level 5 & 6 umpires will be advised of the Development Squad, the process for selection and the commitments required. They will then be asked for expressions of interest to be considered for selection to the squad. A Review Group of experienced umpires will be established to rate all umpires, against criteria established by the National Umpiring Committee using the Australian International Umpire Development Program module. These ratings will be used to select the next International Australian Development Squad. These ratings will include but not be limited to; Rules Assessment, on and off diamond performance, demeanour and attitude, along with handling players and coaches.

Each year the squad will be announced following completion of all National Championships. The Development Squad will continue to be assessed on an ongoing basis and selection will depend on performance and task completion. Umpires can be withdrawn and new umpires may be added to this squad at any stage

To be considered for selection the candidates must meet the following minimum criteria which is both sports specific and general.

MANDATORY:

This is unmarked criteria that the applicant must satisfy and NUC will have recorded evidence.

- Have a minimum Level 5 National Umpire accreditation
- Have a current Australian Rules Assessment pass of 85 or more
- Have attended at least one National Championship in the last two years
- Have received a positive practical report for each national championship attended in the last two years
- Have more than 12 months development since gaining Level 5

If any of the "Mandatory" criteria are not met then the applicant is excluded from further consideration.

ESSENTIAL:

Marked criteria that the applicant must satisfy and provide evidence and or supporting statement in their expression of interest or application.

- Have a 4-year development plan
- To have umpired at senior State championships / tournaments in the last two (2) years
- Have an ability to represent Softball Australia and promote the Australian Umpire Program
- Have potential / capacity for development/learning/improvement
- To have a demonstrated ability to actively support the umpire programme
- To be adaptable and flexible
- To have good interpersonal skills
- To have demonstrated behaviours that are mature and socially acceptable

DESIRABLE:

Marked criteria that the applicant should provide evidence and or supporting statement in their expression of interest or Application.

Inability to satisfy these criteria will not exclude the applicant from selection.

- To participate in State training activities as a clinician
- To currently serve on their State panel
- To contribute to the management of State Umpiring Program
- To have umpired in the playoff series at a State Championship / tournament in the last two (2) years

The marked criteria are weighted according to the significance placed on the activity

Some of the Umpire competencies required to be achieved throughout the program to achieve nomination to the WBSC clinic.

<p>Manage Self</p>	<p>Understand the role of an umpire at international competition level Attain a level of fitness appropriate to the standard of softball Exhibit correct positioning in relation to play Demonstrate a high level of professionalism and integrity in conducting umpiring duties and roles Design, implement and review a professional and personal development plan Actively develop officiating skills via research and discussion Critically review and analyse game performance independently of your mentor</p>
<p>Manage Athletes</p>	<p>Interact and communicate effectively with players and coaches in an inclusive manner Interpret and apply the rules of softball at Australian level Demonstrate effective use of all 'control tools' to manage the game Implement strategies to prevent, manage, and resolve conflict Display a range of body language techniques in order to promote and enhance an air of authority/ presence</p>
<p>Manage Others</p>	<p>Demonstrate on-field cohesion and support of your co-umpires Convey a professional, cooperative and positive attitude Exhibit consistent communication with the Tournament Chief Umpire Ability to assess the practical competence of lower level umpires</p>
<p>Manage Environment</p>	<p>Identify and implement risk-management strategies/ principles Identify and comply with ethical responsibilities and applicable laws affecting sports officials</p>

Ongoing Requirements of Australian Development Squad members:

As a member of the Australian Development Squad you will be expected to maintain an ongoing game quota requirement encompassing all levels and standards of play and an active involvement in the development of umpires in your State, under the direction of your State Director of Umpiring.

- Maintain and review a 4-year development plan consisting of short and long term goals;
- Be available for appointment to National Championships over the next four years;
- Maintain in greater detail a record of your game assignments and contribution (in hours) to training programs in your State, verified by your State Director;
- Demonstrate leadership and role model qualities;
- Submit reports to the National Umpiring Committee on your softball activities;
- Complete specific assignments as required (e.g. review of umpiring documentation, etc.)
- Maintain an 85+ pass in the Australian Rules Assessment;
- Maintain a high standard of umpiring performance at all times;
- Conduct yourself in an exemplary manner both on and off the diamond at all times;
- Complete industry or A.S.C. recognised courses of sports specific and general nature.

Australian Development Program Squad Training:

Training will be ongoing and available at tournaments and online.

Where possible a clinic will be held for selected squad members (time and finances permitting). Training will involve a theory and practical component. The theory content is purpose designed and covers a range of topics.

The topics may include:

- Umpire performance
- Attitude
 - On and off the field
 - Interpersonal skills
 - What this really means
- Goal setting
 - Short and Long term
- Fitness
- Injury prevention
- Psychology of umpiring
 - Travelling alone with the team
 - Managing stress
- Conflict management
- Personality assessment
- Championship UIC responsibilities
- How to
 - Manage umpire game assignments for major events
 - Be an effective assessor
- Oceania Region's place in the World environment
- Expectations of representative umpires and why
- Career opportunities
- Insights into the administration of the National Umpire Program

Practical components will be conducted during an Australian National Championship/s. Performance evaluations by senior umpires will be offered following each game on a one-on-one mentoring basis. Interviews are conducted, again on a one-on-one basis, at the end of the championship with written appraisals and an agreed personal development program and a set time frame.



Financial Responsibilities:

It should be noted that there may be some financial outlay required for courses, clinics and correspondence, which should be considered as an investment in your umpiring future. The overall financial commitment of the Development Program should be carefully considered along with all the other long-term aspects.

It may be possible for individuals to apply for assistance grants from government and other community bodies.

It is expected that your umpiring will progress under the development program; therefore you should anticipate fulfilling some Australian commitments at particular international events. These events could be in Australia, the Oceania Region or in Northern Hemisphere WBSC member countries. This participation will incur a cost in several areas, including having to take vacation time beyond that taken for National Championships, personal expenditure and the purchase of "tour gifts" for fellow umpires in these events.

Review:

Within the agreed work program, the Development Squad umpires will be regularly monitored by a panel selected from active WBSC accredited umpires and tournament Chief Umpires. Where possible, opportunities will be offered (allowing for work and family commitments) to check their umpiring development within the specific timeframe.

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