



CODE OF PRACTICE

INTRODUCTION

THE SPORTS ASSOCIATION FOR ADELAIDE SCHOOLS (SAAS) AIMS TO:

- provide an educational purpose and value through sports activities between member schools.
- provide and encourage interaction and healthy competition between member schools.
- provide high-quality competition for all participating and encourage the importance of sport and a healthy lifestyle.

THE KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAAS COMPETITION ARE:

- High standards of sportsmanship
- The provision of safe and suitable sporting environments and equipment
- School staff supervision of venues
- Suitably qualified officiating
- Courteous conduct from players, coaches/managers, and spectators

All schools, coaches/managers/players and spectators are responsible for ensuring that the above aims and characteristics are enacted in all SAAS competitions.

RESPONSIBILITIES

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF:

PRINCIPALS AND SPORTS COORDINATORS

- foster sound attitudes towards sport in their coaches/managers, players and spectators
- provide, when hosting matches, a safe and suitable environment for competition, including ready access to medical care, changing rooms, toilets, etc
- ensure that coaches/managers have basic first-aid training as a minimum and that all teams are equipped with an appropriate first-aid kit
- show courtesy to visiting schools and, when visiting other schools, respect their premises and rules
- having nominated a team for a SAAS competition, all member schools must aim to ensure an entire team competes each week throughout the season. Where unavoidable change is necessary, early notification to the opposing school is essential.
- ensure adequate staff supervision at all venues
- communicate the Code of Practice throughout the school community
- follow the SAAS Disciplinary and Reporting Procedures

COACHES/MANAGERS

- remember at all times that the SAAS sporting competition is primarily conducted for the educational and social benefits of the students and that winning or losing is secondary to this
- encourage student leadership on and off the field and promote broad student participation in sports
- insist on high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, punctuality and dress
- strongly discourage public questioning of umpires' decisions and petulant displays of dissent
- intervene promptly in cases of unacceptable behaviour (by taking a player from the game or applying a similar sanction)
- intervene promptly to discourage spectators from any inappropriate language or behaviour, especially when directed towards the opposition or umpires
- implement and follow the Code of Practice
- follow the SAAS Disciplinary and Reporting Procedures

PLAYERS

- exhibit high standards of sportsmanship and courtesy at all times
- accept the umpire's decision without question or dissent
- accept winning with modesty and losing with grace and refrain from:
 - inappropriate language (e.g. swearing, abuse, sledging, racist taunts, or other verbal harassment etc.)
 - cheating or unfair tactics, including belittling, derogatory or provocative behaviour designed to upset opponents
 - deliberate violence to another player

SPECTATORS

- set an example of good sportsmanship by providing support that is constructive and positive, not critical and negative
- refrain from advising a coach/manager, umpire or player during a match
- assume some responsibility for making visiting spectators feel welcome
- respect the premises and rules of a host school

SAAS DISCIPLINARY AND REPORTING PROCEDURES

Umpires and referees can temporarily or permanently remove a player from the field during any SAAS competition game, depending on the nature of the offence committed and whether the player has received prior warnings. In cases where an umpire or referee is not available, it is the responsibility of the coach or manager to intervene in cases of unacceptable behaviour.

SAAS REPORT CARD

If a player receives a red card from an umpire during a game, the coach or manager must ensure that the relevant umpire or referee fills out the SAAS Report Card.

This report card should then be sent to the Sports Coordinator of the player's school.

The Sports Coordinator should review and sign the report card before forwarding it to the Headmaster or Principal.

The Headmaster or Principal will then take appropriate action and communicate it via the report card to the Headmaster or Principal of the opposing school and the SAAS Executive Officer.

The Umpire or Official has the authority to remove a player from the field or court by showing a RED CARD in the following situations:

- When a player commits a Reportable Offence
- Any player who commits a Red Card offence will be reported by the Umpire or Official and referred to the SAAS Office for further investigation.
- The Coach or Official should submit a SAAS Report Form to the principal for appropriate action. A copy of the form will be sent to the opposing school Principal (if required) and the SAAS Executive Officer, along with the outcome of any action taken.

RED CARD CONDITIONS

If a player is given a Red Card offence, they can be ordered off the ground or court immediately. Once a player or official is sent off the field with a red card, they cannot participate in the remainder of the match. They are also prohibited from entering the playing arena, including the coaches box or interchange bench.

Yellow Card	Red Card
For on-field behaviour considered unacceptable by an umpire or official, which is not classified as a reportable offence	For ANY reportable offence

REPORT CATEGORY MATRIX

CATEGORY 1 – VERBAL OFFENCES AND OFFENSIVE GESTURES

Conduct	Level	Lower - Sanction	High - Sanction
Threat	High	4 matches	5 matches
	Medium	3 matches	4 matches
	Low	2 matches	3 matches
Abuse	High	3 matches	4 matches
	Medium	2 matches	3 matches
	Low	1 match	2 matches
Other	H/M/L	Reprimand	1 match

CATEGORY 2 – PHYSICAL CONTACT OFFENCES

Conduct	Impact	Contact	Lower - Sanction	High - Sanction
Intentional	Severe	High/Groin	4+ matches	5+ Matches
		Body	4 matches	4+ Matches
	High	High/Groin	3 matches	4+ Matches
		Body	2 matches	3 Matches
	Medium	High/Groin	2 matches	3 Matches
		Body	1 match	2 Matches
Low	High/Groin	1 match	2 Matches	
	Body	Reprimand	1 Match	
Careless	Severe	High/Groin	4+ matches	4+ Matches
		Body	3 matches	3+ Matches
	High	High/Groin	2 matches	3 Matches
		Body	1 match	2 Matches
	Medium	High/Groin	1 match	2 Matches
		Body	Reprimand	1 Match
	Low	High/Groin	Reprimand	1 Match
		Body	Reprimand	1 Match

This guide is for SAAS member schools. Each school can sanction incidents as they see fit. Outcomes are transparent, and schools communicate with each other. Schools can act on non-reported incidents with eyewitness accounts, victim statements, or filmed footage. Please present complaints to the school principal through a Staff Member or Co-ordinator.

MISCELLANEOUS

Winter contact sports Open A teams are required to wear numbered shirts. For SAAS sports, there are specific rules regarding player behaviour.

- If a player uses inappropriate language directed towards an umpire, official, player, or spectator, they will be immediately sent off the field for the remainder of the quarter and the following quarter.
- If a player utters an obscenity in frustration, they will receive a warning or penalty, depending on the sport.
 - For example, in AFL, a 25-meter penalty will be issued. If the same player repeats the offence, they will be sent off the field.

SAAS PLAYER INFRINGEMENT FRAMEWORK

This framework provides a standard guide for SAAS member schools when dealing with student breaches of the SAAS code of conduct during SAAS fixtures and events, including Intercol.

1. Report
2. Gathering of evidence
3. Tribunal or mediation with cited student
4. Determination of consequence
5. Communication of conclusion of process

Umpire/School Report of player/incident.

- Behaviour or conduct as reported by match officials.
- Behaviour or conduct as reported by a staff member.
- Behaviour or conduct with a SAAS fixture reported to the school.
- Report template completed.

Evidence gathered.

SAAS contacts the co-ordinators from the involved schools for information regarding the report.

- Does the report require further investigation?
- Is there a requirement from SAAS to assist?
- Gathering and submission of any evidence.

School Coordinators are to inform relevant parties within their schools.

*Tuesday 12.00 pm is the recommendation for submission of information

The matter is dealt with internally by the schools involved.

1. The report sent to SAAS via match officials or a school.
2. The information is forwarded to the schools involved.
3. Schools conduct their own internal investigation.
4. School Head to be informed on the matter.
5. If an indiscretion by a student(s) is confirmed, the schools use the SAAS Matrix Grid for an outcome.
6. Outcome shared with the opposition School and SAAS.
7. The determination of consequences is determined by the school where the student is enrolled.

If a school wishes to appeal the outcome, they may lodge this with the SAAS office.

- SAAS creates a 3-person panel from the SPC committee (not associated with the schools involved) to preside over the incident.
- The incident information is assessed.
- The SPC Panel findings are presented to the SAAS office.
- The SAAS office forward this onto the schools involved.

If a school appeals the SPC Panel Outcome

- A SAAS Board member(s) will be asked to hear the case and present a finding.
- This outcome will be presented to SAAS to forward to the schools involved.
- This will be declared the end of the case.

CONDUCT (INTENTIONAL, CARELESS)

Intentional conduct

If a player intentionally commits a reportable offence, it means that the player engaged in the conduct that constitutes the offence with the intention of committing it. Intention is a state of mind, and it can be formed spontaneously. The critical factor is whether the intention existed when the player engaged in the conduct.

Whether or not a player intentionally commits a reportable offence depends on the player's state of mind at the time of the action. What the player did is often the best evidence of the purpose they had in mind. In some cases, the evidence the act provides may be so strong as to compel an inference of intent, regardless of what the player says afterwards. If the immediate consequence of an act is evident and inevitable, the deliberate doing of the act carries with it evidence of an intention to produce the consequence.

For instance, a strike will be considered intentional when a player delivers a blow to an opponent to strike them.

CARELESS CONDUCT

Players are expected to act cautiously and care towards everyone involved in the game, including other players and umpires.

Any behaviour that violates this duty of care and results in a reportable offence will be considered careless.

To breach this duty, a player's conduct must be such that a reasonable player would not consider it appropriate in all circumstances.

Players who fail to take reasonable precautions to avoid activities that could lead to a reportable offence will also be deemed careless.

IMPACT (LOW, MEDIUM, HIGH, OR SEVERE)

Several factors need to be considered when determining the level of impact of a sporting event.

Firstly, the extent of force should be considered, especially if the player has sustained any injury.

Secondly, the potential to cause injury is a vital factor, particularly in intentional head-high strikes, high bumps, head-high contact with a player who has his head over the ball, forceful round-arm swings, or spear tackles. The absence of injury does not mean the impact cannot be classified as severe.

Thirdly, the impact between the offending player and the victim player should be considered, along with any other effects on the victim player due to such an impact. Additionally, the body language of the offending player, such as flexing, turning, raising, or positioning the body, should also be considered to determine whether the impact force has increased or reduced.

Low impact requires more than a negligible impact and is the minimum impact necessary for a Classifiable Offence to constitute a Reportable Offence. To better understand the level of impact, the following table summarises applicable base-level impact guidelines for incidents with low, medium, high, and severe effects.

Impact Guidelines	
Low	Minimal or no impact on the match - The player continued to play the majority of the match and suffered no or minimal ongoing issues.
Medium	Some impact on the Player, and / or the Player left the field for a lengthy period, and/ or some possible lower-level ongoing treatment(s) required.
High	Significant impact on the Player, and / or the Player could not participate in the remainder of the game, and / or significant ongoing issues that require medical intervention and / or may miss some matches.
Severe	Significant impact and severe injury to the Player, and / or likely to miss many matches.

These are base-level impact guidelines.

The impact can be raised with the potential to cause serious injury.

CONTACT (HIGH/GROIN, BODY)

Please note the following information regarding contact in a sporting match:

Contact above the shoulders, not just contact with the head, is considered high contact. Contact to the groin area includes contact to the crease or hollow at the junction of the inner part of each thigh with the trunk, the adjacent region, and the testicles.

If contact is high and to the body, the Match Review Panel will classify it as high. Contact will be classified as high or to the groin area if a player's head or groin contacts another player or object, such as the fence or the ground, due to the actions of the offending player.

For example, suppose a player tackles another player around the waist; as a result, the tackled player's head makes forceful contact with the fence or the ground. In that case, the contact will be classified as high, even if the tackle was to the body.

IMPACT OF A BAD RECORD ON CLASSIFIABLE OFFENCES

The sanction for Classifiable Offences will not automatically increase due to a player's bad record.

MULTIPLE OFFENCES IN A SINGLE MATCH

When a player commits multiple Reportable Offences during a single match, the individual penalties are combined to form the final penalty for the player.

LOW-LEVEL OFFENCES

The following are low-level Reportable Offences that do not need to be classified.

Low-Level Offences	
Attempt to Strike / Kick / Trip	Pinching
Careless Contact with an Umpire	Prohibited Boots, Jewellery or Equipment
Disputing Decision	Spitting at Another Player
The instigator of a Melee	Staging
Interfering with a Player Kicking for Goal	Striking
Unreasonable or Unnecessary Contact with an Injured Player	Time Wasting
Unreasonable or Unnecessary Contact with an Umpire	Using Abusive, Insulting or Obscene Language Towards or concerning an Umpire
Engaging in a Melee	Using Abusive, Insulting or Obscene Language
Not Leaving the Playing Surface	Wrestling
Obscene Gesture	Any Other Act of Low-Level Misconduct which is not a Classifiable Offence or Direct Tribunal Offence

Low-level offences attract the base sanctions (with a reduced sanction considered for an early guilty plea)

REPORTABLE OFFENCES

The Laws of the Game provide a list of specific Reportable Offences, but there are also categories of permitted contact that do not constitute a Reportable Offence.

Examples include legally using the hip, shoulder, chest, arms or open arms, as long as the football is no more than five meters away and contact that is incidental to a marking contest where a Player is legitimately marking or attempting to mark the football.

The Laws define certain offences, such as Charging and Engaging in a Melee. However, they also state that words, terms, or phrases not defined in the laws should be given their ordinary meaning in interpreting reportable Offences.

Additional guidance on what constitutes particular Reportable Offences is available.

STRIKING, KICKING

Striking and kicking refer to hitting or striking with the hand, arm, or elbow or kicking with the foot or leg. The impact must be more than negligible to be classified as a strike or kick. However, if the intention was to commit a reportable offence, a panel can still charge a player with striking even if the impact was insignificant. If no contact is made, a player can be charged with an attempt to strike or kick, also considered a low-level offence.

CLASSIFICATION OF CERTAIN STRIKES

The following factors are considered according to these guidelines when determining the classification of a Striking offence.

Intent: Regardless of other provisions within these guidelines, if a strike takes place behind the play, off the ball, during a break in play, or with a raised forearm or elbow, it is typically considered intentional.

Impact: Regardless of any other part of these guidelines, any strike that is careless or intentional and is inherently dangerous or has the potential to cause serious injury will not be classified as low impact. For example, a strike with a raised elbow or forearm will usually be classified at a higher level based on the nature and extent of the risk of serious injury involved, even if the actual physical impact is low.

MISCONDUCT

Misconduct in football refers to any action deemed unacceptable or unsportsmanlike by the other game participants. It can also include any action that can potentially damage the reputation of any person, club, or the Controlling Body or bring the game of football into disrepute.

Serious misconduct offences will be directly referred to the Tribunal. However, any other act of misconduct will be considered a Low-Level Offence and will be reviewed by the Match Review Panel.

FORCEFUL FRONT-ON CONTACT

It is considered a reportable offence when a player bumps or makes forceful contact with an opponent from the front who has their head down over the ball. Unless done intentionally, such actions will be regarded as careless, except in two cases:

1. If the player was contesting the ball and had no realistic alternative way to compete for it.
2. If the bump or forceful contact was caused by circumstances outside the player's control, which could not reasonably be anticipated.

Note: Players can contact their opponents' bodies from side-on, but if the contact is made forward or side-on, it will be deemed front-on and, therefore, illegal. If a player has his head down either in anticipation of winning possession of the ball or after contesting the ball, it will be considered that he has his head down over the ball for the purposes of this law.

ROUGH CONDUCT

"Rough conduct" is a term that can be broadly interpreted to include any unreasonable physical contact. Intentionally or carelessly engaging in rough conduct against an opponent is considered a Reportable Offence if it is limited given the circumstances. Some officially recognised forms of rough conduct should be given particular attention, but the definition remains quite broad.

ROUGH CONDUCT (HIGH BUMPS)

A player will be considered guilty of Rough Conduct if they bump into an opponent, whether reasonably or unreasonably, and as a result, forcefully contact any part of their body with the opponent's head or neck. If such conduct were unintentional, it would be regarded as Careless unless:

- The player was in a contest for the ball and did not have another realistic way to contest it or

- Circumstances caused the forceful contact with the opponent's head or neck, which was beyond the player's control and could not be reasonably predicted.

The purpose of the rule that deals with high bumps is to reduce the risk of head injuries to Players, which is of utmost importance for their safety. To ensure this, all Players must keep this purpose in mind and follow the rules accordingly.

For the purpose of these guidelines, head clashes that result when a Player has intentionally elected to bump are circumstances that can be reasonably foreseen. If a Player chooses to bump without contesting the ball, they will ordinarily be held liable.

ROUGH CONDUCT (BUMPS TO THE BODY)

It is important to note that a player can still be charged with Rough Conduct even if the rule regarding high bumps does not apply, such as in the case of a bump to the body. This is because the player's conduct may still be considered unreasonable. To determine whether a bump was unreasonable, various factors can be considered, including but not limited to:

- whether the force applied during the bump was excessive for the situation
- whether the player who was bumped was in a vulnerable position and
- whether the bump was an expected or necessary part of the game.

ROUGH CONDUCT (DANGEROUS TACKLES)

When applying a tackle in a game, it's essential to be reasonable and considerate of the circumstances. Sometimes, a tackle may be seen as Rough Conduct, which is unacceptable. To determine whether the tackle constitutes a Reportable Offence and whether it was Careless or Intentional, the following factors should be considered:

- If the tackle consists of more than one action, it will be considered a more severe offence, regardless of whether the player being tackled has the ball.
- Certain tackles are inherently dangerous, such as a spear tackle or a tackle where a player is lifted off the ground. These will be considered as severe offences.
- If the player being tackled is in a vulnerable position, for example, their arms are pinned, and they have little opportunity to protect themselves, the tackler should be cautious and avoid causing harm.
- Lastly, if an opponent is slung, driven or rotated into the ground with excessive force, it will be regarded as a severe offence and dealt with accordingly.

INTENTIONAL CONTACT WITH AN UMPIRE

Intentional, aggressive, forceful, demonstrative, or disrespectful contact with an umpire will result in a direct referral to the tribunal.

UNREASONABLE OR UNNECESSARY CONTACT WITH AN UMPIRE

Unreasonable or unnecessary contact with an umpire is any contact that could be considered intentional but is not aggressive, forceful, demonstrative, or disrespectful. This is classified as a low-level offence.

CARELESS CONTACT WITH AN UMPIRE

If a player makes contact with an umpire, it will be considered careless if it breaches the player's duty of care owed to the umpire. The following factors will be considered when determining whether the contact is careless:

- The location of the contact (e.g. centre bounce or ball up).
- Whether the player positioned themselves behind the umpire.
- Whether the player's path crossed the umpire's exit line from a stoppage.
- The force of the contact.
- Whether the contact impeded the umpire's decision-making process.
- Whether the umpire fell to the ground because of the contact.
- Any mitigating factors (such as an attempt to avoid contact, an offline bounce or throw, or being pushed by an opponent into the umpire's path).

It should be noted that careless contact with an umpire is considered a low-level offence.

ENGAGING IN MELEE

A Melee refers to a situation where three or more Players and/or Officials are grappling or struggling with one another.

THE INSTIGATOR OF A MELEE

If a player's conduct leads to retaliatory action resulting in a melee, that player is considered the instigator of the melee. It is important to note that the offence of instigating a melee is separate from the offence of engaging in a melee. A player may be found guilty of both offences.

STAGING

If a player intentionally exaggerates contact unsportsmanlike, it will be classified as staging and reported as a reportable offence. Staging can have the following negative consequences:

- It can influence the decision-making of umpires
- It can incite a melee
- It goes against the spirit of the game, making it an unsportsmanlike act.

TRIPPING

When determining whether a trip should be considered an offence, we will consider various factors such as the speed of the opposing person, the body part used to make the trip (hand or foot/leg), and whether contact was made with a swinging motion.

GUIDELINES FOR PLAYER REPORTING AND APPEAL

If a player wants to challenge a penalty that has been imposed by their school using the SAAS Disciplinary Matrix, they must follow the below guidelines:

1. A game official or an opposition school coordinator reports the player.
2. SAAS is notified of the report by the player's school, the opposition school, a SAAS official, a video review, an eyewitness, or others.
3. The player's school is informed of the report and provided with information.
4. The school investigates the report.
5. The schools involved confer and decide on an outcome.
6. with the help of the school coordinator, coach, and leadership, the school uses the Reporting Matrix to determine the findings.
7. SAAS and the opposition school are notified of the report outcome for transparency and collegiality between schools.
8. The relevant association is informed of the report, which is vital for the SANFL cross-sanction relationship.
9. The student must serve any school-imposed consequences.

If the two schools cannot agree, an SPC Panel will be created to hear the case and formulate a decision.

If a student or their family wishes to appeal a decision made by the school, the School Head or Leadership will hear the appeal. If the appeal process goes further, the opposition school may present the appeal to SAAS. SAAS will then confer with a panel from the SPC comprising three members or with an association organisation for confirmation with a penalty appeal. The findings will then be presented to the school as the appeal outcome.