



Recognition of Non-Special Olympics Sports Competitions

Criteria & Guidelines

Background

Special Olympics New Zealand remains dedicated to upholding the highest standards in the sports events in which our athletes participate in. Through adherence to current SOI competition policies, we have established a policy that allows us to acknowledge and consider any regional, national, or internationally delivered competition (through approval) as the equivalent of a Special Olympics club or national event. This commitment underscores our ongoing pursuit of excellence and inclusivity, ensuring that Special Olympics athletes who are involved in non Special Olympics sporting competition have access to the Special Olympics New Zealand sporting pathway.

Criteria

Special Olympics NZ are open to acknowledging any non-Special Olympics competition in which our athletes are involved in at the regional representation level or above. In order for us to recognise an athlete who has competed at this competition, SONZ require confirmation that the event is sanctioned by the respective National, or International Sports Organisation.

Please note that only regional representation (national events) or national representation (international events) will allow access to the Special Olympics Sporting pathway through application. In addition, and in alignment with Special Olympics International Rules, rule 13.2.1.2.4, special consideration may be given to an athlete competing in local mainstream competition if there was an inability to attend Special Olympic club competition.

- National events are considered any event whereby an athlete is competing against athletes from within New Zealand where they may be representing their region within their chosen sport. This enables athletes to access any Tier of Special Olympics events.
- **Example:** Golf New Zealand's All Abilities Challenge Series. A national event for disabled golfers who meet selection criteria.



- International events are considered any event whereby an athlete is competing against athletes from outside of New Zealand where they may be representing their country within their chosen sport. This enables athletes to access any Tier of Special Olympics New Zealand events.
- **Example:** Golf New Zealand's All Abilities Championship Event. An internationally open event for disabled golfers who meet selection criteria.

Team Sports VS Individual Sports

Due to the contrasting nature of team and individual sports, athletes involved in team sports must attend a minimum of **one** Special Olympics club training alongside the team they will compete within prior to the event. Host clubs may chose to require additional athlete attendance to confirm team fit. Athletes involved in individual sports are not required to attend club training prior to event attendance. Where a sport offers team and individual event categories, the applicant must outline which category they intend to compete in within their application and then adhere to club training rules as outlined above.

Special Olympics Registration

All athletes who wish to compete in Special Olympics New Zealand competition must be registered as athletes and have completed this process within the timeframes outlined in the Club Event Management Timeline found here - [Club Event Management Timeline](#)

Application Guidelines

Athletes who wish to use a non-Special Olympics sporting competition as qualification for Special Olympics events must fill out the Special Olympics New Zealand Event dispensation form and send it through to sport@specialolympics.org.nz. This form can be found here - [Athlete Event Dispensation](#)