



Inclusive Swimwear Policy

April 2021

1. Background:

- 1.1 Swimming Australia is committed to creating a welcoming and inclusive swimming environment for all competitive members. Within our [Inclusive Swimming Framework](#), our goals are:
- All Australians feel welcome, safe, valued and celebrated in swimming
 - All Australians 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 [FINA requirements for swimwear approval](#) may not suit their individual needs and preferences.
- 1.3 This may be attributed to a range of factors including but not limited to a swimmer's cultural or religious observations.
- 1.4 Lack of appropriate competitive swimwear options are a key barrier to participation in swimming by many people in the community including, people with disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, transgender and gender diverse people and women and girls.
- 1.5 To accommodate and support swimmers' individual needs and encourage participation and involvement in swimming competitions, Swimming Australia 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 [By-Law CBL24.6](#) of the By-Laws for the Conduct of Australian Swimming Events (**Swimming By-Laws**) and [By-Law 17.9](#) of the Swimming Australia By-Laws for the Conduct of Australian Open Water Swimming Events (**Open Water Swimming By-Laws**) which reads:

Notwithstanding any other clause in this by-law, swimsuits may be modified and alternative swimsuits may be worn to accommodate a swimmer's individual needs and preferences, 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:

- (a) complies with the Swimming Australia Inclusive Swimwear Policy; and
- (b) is approved by the Technical Manager or Meet Referee prior to the swimmer's first event at the relevant competition.

- 2.2 If there is any inconsistency between this Inclusive Swimwear Policy and the Swimming By-Laws or the Open Water Swimming By-Laws, the relevant Swimming Australia By-Law will prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.
- 2.3 This Policy has been developed in line with the [Inclusive Swimming Framework](#), and should be read in conjunction with the [Safe Sport Framework](#).

3. Application:

- 3.1 This Policy applies to swimmers, except swimmers seeking to achieve a World Record competing in:

- **All levels** of domestic pool and open water swimming competition conducted by Swimming Australia, its affiliated Member Organisations and Clubs.

3.2 Australian Records

- All swimmers are eligible for an Australian 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 World Records

To be eligible for official World Records swimmers must wear an approved swimsuit as required under [FINA rules](#) and [World Para Swimming Rules](#).







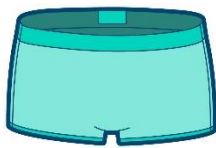
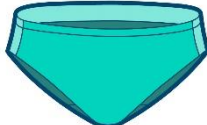




- 3.4** The swimwear of all swimmers shall be modest, in good taste and must not be transparent.
- 3.5** Swimwear must be of textile material (i.e. permeable textile open mesh materials such as cotton, nylon, lycra and the like) with no application of surface treatment closing the open mesh structure. Swimwear must not contain any non-textile material such as polyurethane or neoprene.
- 3.6** Swimsuits which the Technical Manager/Meet 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.
- 3.7** Swimsuits which the Technical Manager/Meet 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. In accordance with FINA regulations, for open water swimming competitions in water with temperature below 20°C, men and women may use either swimsuits (3.5 above) or wetsuits. When the water temperature is below 18°C, the use of wetsuits is compulsory.
- 3.8** Swimmers wishing to swim in a modified or alternative swimsuit must (either themselves or their representative) present the suit to the Technical Manager/Meet Referee for inspection prior to the swimmer's first event at the competition for approval.
- 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 Technical Manager/Meet Referee's decision.
- 3.10** The Technical Manager/Meet Referee may approve a modified or alternate swimsuit at their discretion and in accordance with this Policy, the Swimming By-Laws, the Open Water Swimming By-Laws and competition rules to the extent they relate to swimwear. The Technical Manager or Meet Referee's decision shall be final.
- 3.11** In instances where the Technical Manager/Meet Referee is unsure whether the swimwear meets this Policy's requirements, the swimmer should be allowed to participate, however the Technical Manager/Meet Referee should contact Swimming Australia at inclusion@swimming.org.au, cc'ing the officer responsible for Technical Officiating within the relevant Member Organisation, with details regarding the swimwear. Swimming Australia staff will work with the Technical Swimming Committee and associated 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 Swimming Australia at inclusion@swimming.org.au 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 Technical Manager/Meet 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.






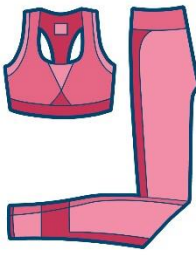
5. Examples

5.1 Examples of acceptable swimsuits

			
Full coverage with leggings	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 suits

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

What is the reason for the swimmer's request to wear alternate or modified swimwear?

To accommodate a swimmer's impairment

Modification of swimsuits to accommodate a swimmer's impairment is permitted as per [WPS10.15.2](#), provided that for Australian Swimming events any such approval may be granted by the Technical Manager/Meet Referee, with proposed modified swimsuits presented prior to the swimmer's first event at the competition for approval.

TECHNICAL MANAGER/ MEET REFEREE APPROVAL PROCESS

1. Swimmer or representative presents alternate/modified swimwear to the Technical Manager or Meet Referee prior to the start of the swimmer's first event of competition.
2. Technical Manager/Meet Referee inspects and approves or denies use of swimwear in line with this policy.
3. Technical Manager/Meet Referee keeps a register of all requests and outcomes for the duration of the meet.

For modesty, religious or cultural reasons

IS THE SWIMWEAR NON-TRANSPARENT, IN GOOD TASTE, AND MADE OF TEXTILE FABRIC(S)?

This may include 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.

YES

NO

COULD THE SWIMWEAR UNFAIRLY ENHANCE A SWIMMER'S PERFORMANCE?

This may be due to compression of tight-fitting swimwear or buoyancy due to the number of items worn. Unacceptable items include full body fast suits and full leg fast suits.

NO

YES

DOES THE SWIMWEAR PRESENT A GENUINE SAFETY RISK TO THE SWIMMER AND / OR OTHER SWIMMERS?

This may include swimwear that covers the face, prohibits the body from moving freely or impedes buoyancy. In accordance with FINA regulations, for open water swimming competitions in water with temperature below 20°C, swimmers may use either swimsuits or wetsuits. When the water temperature is below 18°C, the use of wetsuits is compulsory.

NO

YES

SWIMWEAR IS ACCEPTABLE
and the swimmer's request to compete in the swimwear should be supported.

SWIMWEAR IS NOT ACCEPTABLE
and the swimmer's request to compete in the swimwear should not be supported.

For other reasons not outlined within the Inclusive Swimwear Guideline / Policy

The swimmer's request to compete in alternate or modified swimwear would not be supported. However, in instances where the Technical Manager/Meet Referee is unsure whether the swimwear meets the policy requirements, the swimmer should be allowed to participate. The Technical Manager/Meet Referee should then contact Swimming Australia at inclusion@swimming.org.au with details regarding the swimwear. Swimming Australia will work with the relevant parties to review the case and provide further feedback to those involved.

ADDITIONAL SWIMWEAR NOTES

Swimmers may choose a swimsuit style that covers additional body surface including the legs, arms and/or head.

Swimmers may choose to wear a swim skirt as an additional layer over a standard swimsuit.

There is no limit to the number of pieces the swimwear may be made from, however swimsuits which the Technical Manager/Meet Referee believes would be capable of unfairly enhancing a swimmer's performance should not be permitted, this includes compression swimwear that may be tight-fitting and/or increase buoyancy.

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