APPENDIX 2

Handicapping and Stewarding Rules

Season 2026/2027

Adopted – 23rd September 2026

*v2 – Correction of U18G 800m Novice Mark

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to provide clarity to Athletes, Coaches and Stakeholders around the systems and processes used by the South Australian Athletic league (SAAL) in the determination and administration of its Athletic handicap system.

1.1. HANDICAPPING PHILOSOPHY AND APPROACH

The South Australian Athletic League (SAAL) is committed to ensuring fair and competitive races for athletes of various abilities. Handicapping plays a crucial role in providing equal opportunities and a level playing field for all participants. The following handicapping philosophy and approach outline the principles and strategies employed by the SAAL in creating a fair and exciting athletic environment.

Fairness and Integrity:

- The SAAL believes in maintaining the integrity of the sport by applying fair and transparent handicapping principles and governance systems as outlined in these rules
- Handicapping decisions are made based on previous performances, personal bests, and recent form, to ensure equitable competition. This does not mean handicaps are solely data based. The SAAL believes that handicapping is a nuanced activity requiring an understanding of human factors and data.
- The SAAL is committed to promoting fair competition and discouraging any form of unfair advantage or gaming of handicapping outcomes by coaches or athletes

Individualized Handicapping:

- Handicapping is tailored to individual athletes, taking into account their unique strengths, weaknesses, and progression in the sport.
- Athletes' handicaps are reviewed regularly, allowing adjustments to reflect improvements in performance and ensure continued competitive balance.
- The SAAL recognizes the importance of providing opportunities for athletes of all abilities to participate and excel, promoting inclusivity and a diverse field of competitors.
- In the transition from U18 to Open events the handicappers will take into account potential age improvement.
- Where Athletes for whatever reason haven't shown or disclosed their form and are unable to provide the handicapper with a volume of performance that enables accurate assessment handicappers will take a conservative approach to their handicap outcome.

Consultation and Expertise:

- Handicapping decisions will be made by knowledgeable individuals who possess an understanding of the sport its history and its athletes.
- The SAAL seeks input from coaches, athletes, and officials to gather valuable insights and perspectives that inform the handicapping process.
- Regular communication and consultation with stakeholders ensure that handicapping decisions are transparent, well-informed, and accepted by the athletic community.
- Understanding of the handicapping system is two way. Our coaches are expected to have an in-depth

knowledge and understanding of the rules under which we operate and be able to communicate them accurately to their Athletes.

Continuous Improvement:

- The SAAL is dedicated to ongoing evaluation and refinement of the handicapping process, striving to enhance accuracy, consistency, and effectiveness.

- Respectful feedback from athletes and coaches is actively encouraged and considered in shaping the handicapping approach, fostering a collaborative and inclusive environment.

- The SAAL embraces new technologies, data analysis, and advancements in handicapping methodologies and handicapper competence to continually enhance the accuracy and fairness of the system.

Handicappers

Category	Distances	Handicapper
Open Men (Sprint)	70, 100, 120, 200, 300, 400	Mark Faulkner
Open Women (Sprint)	70, 100, 120, 200, 300, 400	Mark Faulkner
Para Athletes	70, 100, 120	Jordi McMillan
Distance handicapping	1000m, 1600m, 3200m	Damian Robinson
Middle distance (all categories)	550m, 800m	Damian Robinson
Over 35	70, 100, 120, 200, 300, 400	James Dunn
U18 Girls	70, 100, 120, 200	Mark Faulkner
U18 Girls	300, 400	Simon Pols
U18 Boys	70, 100, 120, 200,	Mark Faulkner
U18 Boys	300, 400	Simon Pols
U14 Boys and Girls	70, 100, 120, 200, 300, 400	Shane Grimwade

2. GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1. RACES CONDUCTED

Races may be conducted over the following distances

DISTANCE	RACE CATEGORIES
70m	Open Men and Women, U/14, U/18, O/35, Novice.
100m	Open Men and Women, U/14, U/18, O/35.
120m	Open Men and Women, U/14, U/18, O/35, Novice, Restricted.
200m	Open Men and Women, U/14, U/18, O/35.
300m	Open Men and Women, U/14, U/18, O/35, Novice,
400m	Open Men and Women, U/14, U/18, O/35, Novice
550m	Open Men and Women, U/18, O/35.
800m	Open Men and Women, U/18, O/35, Novice.
1000m	Open Men and Women, O/35.
1600m	Open Men and Women, O/35
3200m	Open Men and Women

3. OUR HANDICAPPING PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of any handicapping system is that Athletes are provided starting marks that enable them to cross the finish line at the same time as other competing athletes in their race. The key issue for handicappers is that in order to achieve this they must have adequate data on which to make decisions.

In the absence of this data handicappers and the sport exposes itself to major variability in performance especially as it relates to juniors who are transitioning to senior events. The philosophical principles for our categories of racing are outlined below.

Under 14
The SAAL regards the U14 competition as a developmental level of competition.

Under 14 handicaps will be handicapped with full handicapper discretion other than the use of the published novice mark for new Athletes with no performance history.

All Athletes in this age division will be handicapped as soon as possible to run at or about target time for an event. This does not mean that an Athlete will move to a target time immediately, rather it is anticipated that this target time will be achieved after 7 -8 races.

It is important to note that for the purposes of handicapping runs over 70m 100m and 120m will all be taken into account when formulating a handicap for sprint events. Runs over 200m to 400m will be taken into account for the longer sprints

Under 14 in U18 competition
Under 14 Athletes are encouraged to compete in U18 competition. It should be noted that because of the rapid improvement of athletes at this level it is expected that U14 athletes will be treated conservatively. Existing SAAL U14 Athletes will not be required to start off the novice mark and their Under 14 results will be used as a basis for handicapping.

All Under 14 handicaps will be subject to a Handicap review and reset if required for their first race of each new season.

Under 18
The SAAL recognizes that the U18 competition is a development competition and furthermore that Athletes U18 years of age can display large variations in performance between and in season due to individual development and natural age improvement. It is anticipated that an U18 Athlete will be competitive within their first full season of racing (10 meets) assuming consistency of athlete performance.

U18 Athletes in open competition
U18 Athletes in open competition can expect to be treated more conservatively than in their U18 category due to anticipated age development and improvement.

Under 18 athletes will start open competition on the novice mark or less for every race distance.

At the start of each season all U18 handicaps will be subject to a review over all distances for their first race of every new season.

Para Athletes
The Para Athlete category is handicapped at the complete discretion of the handicapper. The handicapper will set an appropriate target time for the event and handicap based on prior performance outside of the SAAL and will consult with coach to ensure that all athletes are competitive as soon as possible due to the limited number of race opportunities.

Open Athletes
The open category **MUST** be handicapped using the rules and guidelines. Exceptions to this can only be made with approval of the Chief Steward. Handicappers should use this system to enable Athletes at this level to be competitive within their first full season of racing. A full season is defined as having run at least 10 meetings.

Over 35 Athletes
The Over 35 category is designed to provide healthy and fair competition for veteran athletes. Handicappers will apply handicapping rules of competition.

The handicapper will consider age and physical condition. The handicapper will be encouraged to apply discretion to account for this. Discretion applied outside of the rules must be advised to and approved by the Chief Steward. Athletes at this level should be competitive within their first full season of racing, which is defined as having competed in at least 10 meetings.

3.1. RACES AND RACE ELIGIBILITY

The SAAL will provide the following race categories

Please refer to the Rules of Competition for Race Eligibility clause 7.7 onwards

RACE TYPES	QUALIFICATION	REGISTRATION CATEGORIES – WHO CAN ENTER RACE?
Under 14	Any athlete under the age of 14 on the day of competition and over the age of 11.	Under 14 Athletes
Under 18	Any athlete under the age of 18 and over the age of 11 on the day of competition	Under 14 Athletes Under 18 Athletes
Para Athlete	A para-athlete is a person who has a current or provisional classification as defined in 3.1.1 below and is over the age of 14 on the day of competition.	Para Athletes
Novice	Any athlete who is aged 14 or over on the day of competition that has not won a novice, men's, or women's event in that distance category. The three distance categories are 0-200 metres, 201- 600 metres and 601 metres plus	Under 18 Athletes Open Athletes
Restricted	Any athlete who is aged 14 on the day of competition AND has not won a first prize of $750 or more in an open men or women's professional footrace conducted by the SAAL or an affiliated league in Australia	Under 18 Athletes Open Athletes
Open	Any athlete who is aged 14 or over on the day of competition. Except in the nominated category 1 and 2 events below, where the athlete MUST be aged 16 or over on the day of competition: Bay Sheffield Open Men's 120m Bay Sheffield Open Women's 120m Camden Men's and Women's 400m	Under 18 Athletes Open Athletes
Over 35	In nominated events where the athlete must be aged 35 or over on the day of competition.	Over 35 Athletes

3.1.1 PARA ATHLETE

A para-athlete is a person who is classified with a current or provisional classification on the Classification Master list of Athletics Australia. In addition, all those persons who hold a provisional or current classification of the following bodies:

- Deaf Sports Australia
- Sports Inclusion Australia
- Australian Para Olympic Committee
- Swimming Australia
- And Transplant Australia.

will be deemed to meet the same criteria.

Persons falling outside these specific categories who clearly suffer from a disability (this might include being an NDIS recipient or there is other written evidence showing they have a disability) may be considered a para-athlete at the sole discretion of the management committee.

If a person under this process is considered not meeting such a standard there will be no appeal but the person should be encouraged to gain formal provisional classification through a recognised sporting body.

EXEMPTIONS

Elite Athletes

Where an athlete is aged 14 or over on the day of competition and is of national stature eg (Placed 1st 2nd or 3rd in a National Championship) and where the athlete has a body of work that enables handicap assessment, they may apply to the SAAL Committee for participate in the Bay Sheffield Open Men's and Women's 120m and Camden Men's and Women's 400m. Acceptance is not guaranteed and is at the total discretion of the handicappers.

3.2. RACE CATEGORIES

The SAAL will provide the following race categories

CATEGORY	TOTAL RACE PRIZEMONEY
Category 1 (Bay Sheffield 120m)	$10,000 plus
Category 1a (Bay Sheffield)	
Category 2 (Camden 400m; Loxton 120m,)	$5,000 to $9,999
Category 3	$1,500 to $4,999
Category 4	$0 to $1,499

4. HANDICAPPING

The handicapping and stewarding system incorporates the following:

- Data collection from multiple sources including:
  - SAAL events
  - VAL events
  - ASA events
  - Individual athlete communications
- Calculation of MPS and average MPS rate over applicable distances
- Performance relative to their average and best MPS.
- The League's handicapping guidelines.
- The Handicappers.
- The Stewards

4.1. DATA COLLECTION

Systems Data

Data is collected from all SAAL, VAL and ASA races. This data determines a metres per second (MPS) rate which is then presented to the handicapper as an average MPS and a best MPS rate for each race category over all distances. This enables the handicapper to assess a possible handicap mark for the athlete. The system automatically calculates an anticipated time based on both the average and best MPS rate and the allocated handicap.

The best MPS rate for the athlete is presented as a default however the handicapper may apply their own MPS if the runner's performance and the handicapper's assessment warrants this adjustment

Refer to rules of competition Clause 7.4

Athlete's responsibility to provide data

All athletes are able to view their data on the SAAL database. The onus is entirely on the individual athlete to ensure that the data is both correct and up to date. Where athletic data is absent or not as yet uploaded, the athlete is required to upload that data themselves. In the event they are unable to upload data, the athlete is required to inform the stewards prior to competition. Coaches and athletes should note that it is their responsibility to provide accurate and up to date data. It is important to note that all athletes are required as part of the race nomination process to ensure that the data in the system is correct.
Failure to do so will result in fines, sanctions and handicap reductions.

4.2. HOW AVERAGE MPS AND FASTEST MPS ARE CALCULATED

For athletes who have 14 or less performances in a given time period, their top 3 performances will be used to calculate their MPS rate.

For athletes who have 15 or more performances in a given time period, their top 25% of performances will be used to calculate their MPS rate (except for Under 20 athletes where only the top 3 for all time periods will be used).

The fastest MPS time over a 36-month period attained by the athlete will also be provided to the handicapper.

4.3. ADJUSTMENT FACTORS FOR HANDICAPPING PURPOSES

Basis for Times used for Handicapping & Wind Readings

The SAAL will use wind adjusted times for handicapping purposes. The formula is: 10% of the wind reading then halve the figure again.

Eg: An athlete runs 12.60sec into a 2.0mps head wind (-2.0).
The wind adjusted time becomes 12.50sec.
10% of 2.0 = 0.2.
0.2 x 50% = 0.1.
12.60sec – 0.10 = 12.50sec

Adjustment for Artificial Tracks

The following formulae is used in order to equate times on artificial tracks to that of a good grass track.

- 70 & 100 metres – 0.1
- 200 metres – 0.2
- 300 metres – 0.5
- 400 metres and above – 1.0 per 400

Track Conditions

Upon completion of a meeting, if the Chief Steward believes the track to be exceptionally fast or slow, for the purpose of handicap calculations, the Chief Steward can declare that an allowance is added/deducted to the recorded times. Factors that will be considered are the conditions of the track, weather and the times recorded by all participants. Any such allowance will be stated in the Stewards report and recorded against the performance in the database.

4.4. ASSIGNED MARK

Using this data, the handicappers shall allocate an assigned mark for any athlete who has adhered to the entry rules of the SAAL race. The basis of the assigned mark will include:

- The average MPS rate handicap provided by the system.
- The fastest MPS over the previous three years.
- Consistency as measured by + or – relative to the athlete's best and average MPS
- Other historical data relating to performance.
- SAAL guidelines where they are not included in the system.
- Chief Steward's recommendations.
- Handicapper's judgement including their own calculation of the Athlete's MPS
- Allocations of Approved performance (AP) Non-approved performance (NAP) Unacceptable performance (UP)

The assigned mark shall be published at a minimum Tuesday at twelve noon before the next week's races. Published marks are subject to the review process.

4.5. BAY SHEFFIELD AND CAMDEN CLASSIC

The SAAL recognises that all events at Bay Sheffield Carnival and the Camden 400m Classic are events that require extra attention in terms of handicapping and oversight

Qualifying runs:

The following will apply to all athletes over all distances at the Bay Sheffield and Camden Classic (400m).:

Any athlete who has not competed at least twice in the current season over the nominated race distance or has no identifiable form over that distance will have a full handicap review undertaken for that event. This review will be based on their best MPS and in the cases of new and junior (U18) runners will include their expected age and development improvement level.

Athletes that fall into this category can expect to be re-handicapped in order to ensure race integrity. This includes interstate Athletes.

In order to provide an additional level of scrutiny in our major events, all Open races at the Bay Sheffield Carnival and 400m Open Races at Camden will be handicapped firstly by the relevant handicapper and then prior to publishing They may refer to an appropriate Official or a neutral Committee member.

5. HANDICAPPING GUIDELINES

5.1. LEAGUE TARGET TIMES

Target times are the times that the SAAL would expect an athlete to achieve.

Distance	U/14's	U/18s B	U/18's G	Men	Women	Over 35 M	Over 35 W
70m	8.80	8.00	8.80	7.70	8.40	8.00	HD #
100m	N/A	10.80	12.20	10.40	11.70	11.20	N/A
120m	14.50	13.20	14.50	12.40	14.00	13.20	HD
120m Rstd	N/A	N/A	N/A	12.80	N/A	N/A	N/A
200m	26.00	22.00	25.00	21.00	23.80	23.80	HD
300m	40.00	35.00	40.00	33.50	38.50	36.00	38.00
400m	57.00	50.00	57.00	48.00	54.00	51.00	56.00
550m	1.25	1.15	1.25	1.10	1.20	1.14	N/A
800m	2.20	1.58	N/A	1.54	2.10	2.00	N/A
1000m	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.25	2.50	2.35	N/A
1600m	N/A	4.30	N/A	4.10	4.40	4.20	N/A
3200m	N/A	N/A	N/A	9.00	N/A	N/A	N/A

Where the event is a combined race (eg: Under 18's 800m, Over 35 events, Novice or All Comers), the target time will default to the target times applicable in the male category.

The SAAL reserves the right to alter target times at its discretion to reduce the field spread for either a race distance category or an individual event in accordance with the Constitution, rule 37.

5.2. HANDICAP LIMITS

The following handicap limits (maximum handicap) will apply for the season. This represents the maximum applicable handicap available to athletes within their classification. Limits at other events shall be determined by the handicapper in consultation with the Management Committee.

DISTANCE	MEN	WOMEN
Bay Sheffield 120m Open	11m	13m
Bay Sheffield Select 1600m	80m	80m
Bay Sheffield 70m Open	14m	14m
Bay Sheffield 550m Open	110m	110m
Bay Sheffield 800m Open	160m	160m
Bay Sheffield 1600m Open	320m	
Bay Sheffield 120m Over 35	36m	36m
Bay Sheffield 300m Over 35	90m	90m
Bay Sheffield 550m Over 35	140m	140m
Bay Sheffield 1600m Over 35	400m	400m
Camden Classic 400m Open	40m	60m
Loxton 120m Open	14m	14m

5.3. HANDICAP LIFTS

In determining a handicap increase (LIFT), the handicapper will consider:

- The existing allocated handicap
- The average MPS
- The fastest MPS the athlete has achieved over the previous 36 months.
- The athlete's consistency and performance relative to their average and best MPS
- The rate of progression toward target time for the event.
- Races contested since the last handicap lift.
- Event wins & the applicable penalty.
- Prizemoney accumulated.
- Time recorded in respect to the target time for the event.

If the athlete is handicapped based upon their best MPS to reach the target time for the event, they will be **ineligible** for a lift.

If the athlete is not handicapped to attain the target time for an event and they have received an AP (see athlete rating) in previous races from the stewards for that race category the athlete may be lifted using the table below at the handicapper's discretion.

Note:
In open events less than 1000m there will be no credits or lifts applied for Athletes running in Athletics South Australia or other amateur events. Only professional athletic events conducted by the SAAL, or affiliated leagues will be taken into consideration in terms of credits towards handicap adjustments upwards. In open events > 1000m data gained from Athletics SA meets may be used in the assessment of lifts. Handicappers are not obliged to apply discretionary increase above the minimum graduation.

5.4. HANDICAP LIFT TABLE

Distance	Minimum Graduation	Lift Range
70m – All events *	0.25	0.25 to 1.00m
120m Open M & W	0.25	0.25m to 1.25m
120m U/14, U/18B, U/18G	0.25	0.25m to 2.00m
120m O/35	0.25	0.25m to 3.00m
200m – All Events	1m	1m to 4m
300m Open M & W	1m	1m to 4m
300m U/14, U/18B, U/18G	1m	1m to 8m
300m O/35	1m	1m to 8m
400m Open M & W	1m	1m to 6m
400m U/14, U/18B, U/18G	1m	1m to 10m
400m O/35	1m	1m to 10m
550m Open M & W	2m	2m to 10m
550m U/14, U/18B, U/18G	2m	2m to 15m
550m O/35	2m	2m to 20m
800m Open M & W	2m	2m to 15m
800m U/14, U/18B, U/18G	2m	2m to 20m
800m O/35	2m	2m to 20m
1000m – All events	3m	3m to 30m
1600m Open	5m	5m to 40m
1600m U/18 & O/35	5m	5m to 60m
3200m	10m	HD

For 70m, 100m and 120m distances in the Junior and Over 35 categories, a handicapper may take into account, performances outside of the nominated distance for the purposes of providing a lift.

5.5. HANDICAP LIFTS/PENALTIES – OUTSIDE OF GUIDELINES

Adjustments to race distances where events are reduced to scratch

When handicaps for the entire field are adjusted either

- due to the inclusion of a backmarker who would otherwise be handicapped behind scratch or;
- as a result of the field being pulled back to scratch

the handicapping adjustment will be proportional to the net distance normally covered from each handicap. This is in order to allow for the different MPS of athletes from different handicaps and to maintain the equity of the handicapped race with the change in distance raced.

5.6. DISCRETIONARY LIFT FOR SPECIFIC EVENTS

Discretionary lift for Winners before the Bay Sheffield and Camden Classic events

The SAAL Handicappers, with the approval of the Handicap Review Panel, may provide a discretionary lift in addition to other handicap increases of up to 4 minimum graduations (1m) for the premium events – Men's & Women's 120m Bay Sheffield, and 2 minimum graduations (4m) 400m Men's & Women's Camden Classic.

The lift is not applicable if the athlete is projected to meet or run under the target time for the event based upon their best MPS.

This discretionary lift only applies to the above-named races and is only available to athletes who have recorded wins in lower graded events over the same distance since 1st October 2025 and received a handicap penalty because of those wins.

A discretionary lift cannot be given to any athlete who has received a UP over any event between their win and the Bay Sheffield or Camden Classic.

5.7. ALTERATIONS TO DECLARED HANDICAPS

Alterations to handicaps can only be altered in accordance with clause 10.5 of the Rules of Competition

5.8. HANDICAP REDUCTIONS AND PENALTIES

Novice Runners

Initial Handicap Allocation

When a SAAL registered athlete enters a particular distance in an open event for the first time they will be allocated a starting handicap based on their best performance over that or a similar distance or the novice mark whichever is the lesser.

The maximum initial handicap an athlete can receive is the novice handicap for that distance, subject to the conditions listed below.

Athletics South Australia (ASA) members will be allocated the novice mark or less based upon their ASA (& other Athletics Australia related) performances.

Where an athlete is new to the sport and has no performances or results in any form of organized athletics, whether it be professional, amateur or beach sprints, the novice marks below will apply.

Distance	Men	Women	U/14 B	U/14 G	U/18 B	U/18 G	O/35 M	O/35 W
70m	4.00	4.00	4.00	7.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	8.00
70m NOV	4.00	8.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
120m	6.00	6.00	6.00	9.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	12.00
120m NOV Combined	6.00	16.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
200m	10	10	10	16	10	10	10	26
300m	15	15	15	24	15	15	15	30
300m NOV	15	40	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
400m	20	20	20	30	20	20	20	45
400m NOV	20	50	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
550m	30	30	NA	NA	30	30	30	60
550m NOV	30	60	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
800m	40	40	NA	NA	40	100	40	100
800m NOV	40	100	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1000m	60	60	N/A	N/A	60	140	60	140
1000m NOV	60	140	N/A	N/A	HD	HD	HD	HD
1600m	100	100	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1600m Combined	100	240	N/A	N/A	100	240	100	240
1600m W & O/35	N/A	HD	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	100	240
3200m	200	400	N/A	N/A	HD	HD	HD	HD

5.9. OTHER DEDUCTIONS

Athletes who break the target time during the Season
The target time table sets out the target time for each event.

If an athlete's time (adjusted time for the sprint events) in any round or final, is under the target time, the handicapper or Chief Steward will assess that time on the basis of the times of other Athlete's track conditions and the race result and if warranted make an adjustment to their handicap back to target for the final of that event.

All performances external to the SAAL are also included in this provision. Track and wind adjustments apply for events up to 120m.

5.10. WIN PENALTIES

Once an athlete has won a race, they will incur a penalty in accordance with the Penalty Table (refer to the Penalty Table).

The SAAL Management Committee can determine that certain events will not attract a penalty. This will be advised to the athletes, prior to the commencement of the event. The conditions applying to any non-penalty race will be advertised on the S.A.A.L. website **and may also be announced at the commencement of a S.A.A.L. Competition.**

Month of December
Handicap penalties incurred for races won in the S.A.A.L. over any distance during the month of December shall not apply to the Bay Sheffield Carnival.

Exceptions:

- An Athlete significantly breaks target time; or
- An Athlete is given a fine or suspension from the stewards
- An Athlete is given a UP during the current season
- If an athlete is given two or more NAPs during the current season, their eligibility for the December penalty-free provision will be at the discretion of the Chief Steward
- For this provision to apply, an Athlete must have competed in at least two S.A.A.L. or affiliated league meets prior to December in the current season.

For every event, the Penalty Table provides the SAAL Handicappers with a range of penalties they can impose based on the event category and prizemoney on offer.

The Penalty Table includes both a minimum penalty and an additional discretionary penalty that is available to the Handicappers. It should be noted that the discretionary penalty will be used to take into account considerations such as the actual prizemoney, winning time and margin and the performance and improvement shown by the athlete. Race winners who break the target time when winning an event will have their handicap readjusted to the target time prior to the deduction of the winning penalty.

5.11. PENALTIES TABLE

The table below summarizes the standard penalty amounts.

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Distance	Category	Minimum Penalty	Additional Discretionary	Notes
70m	1	1.50m	0.25m to 1.0m	A category 1, 1A or 2 120m win will attract a penalty in all 70m events.
	1A	1.0m	0.25m to 0.5m	
	2	1.0m	0.25m to 0.50m	
	3	0.75m	0.25m to 0.50m	
	4	0.25m	0.25m to 0.50m	
100m/120m	1	3.0m (See notes)	0.50m to 2.0m	The minimum penalty for the Bay Sheffield is 3.0 and for the Stawell Gift win is 3.50m
	1A	1.5m	0.50m to 1.0m	
	2	1.50m	0.50m to 1.0m	
	3	0.75m	0.25m to 0.75m	
	4	0.50m	0.25m to 0.75m	
300m	1	10m	2m to 10 m	
	1A	8m	2m to 8m	
	2	8m	2m to 8m	
	3	6m	2m to 6m	
	4	3m	2m to 4m	
400m	1	12m	2m to 10 m	A category 1, 1A or 2 400m win will attract a penalty in all 300/550m events
	1A	10m	2m to 8m	
	2	10m	2m to 8m	
	3	8m	2m to 6m	
	4	4m	2m to 4m	
550m	1A	10m (Bay/Stawell)	2m to 10m	Min. penalty for Bay or Stawell 550m is 10m
	2-4	5m	1 to 10m	
800m	1A	12m (Bay/Stawell)	2m to 12m	Min. penalty for Bay or Stawell 800m is 12m
	2-4	8m	1 to 10m	
1000m	1a	15m	1 to 15m	Min Penalty for Loxton is 15m.
	2-4	10m	1 to 10m	
1600m	1A	40m	5m to 60m	Min Penalty for Bay Sheffield or Stawell is 40m.
	2-4	20m	5 to 30m	
3200m	1A	60m	10m to 100m	Min penalty for Stawell or Bay Sheffield is 60m
	2-4	40m	10m to 100m	

Category 1A win penalties apply to all Bay Sheffield races unless otherwise stated in the win penalty table.

Special Reassessment for Category 1 120m Winners

The winner of the Category 1 Men's or Women's 120m event will have their handicaps reviewed across all race distances and categories. The Handicapper will evaluate the athlete's winning performance and Metres Per Second (MPS) to determine whether a discretionary handicap reduction is warranted for any other race distance.

Any adjustments made under this regulation are at the discretion of the Handicapper. This clause operates in conjunction with, and does not override, standard penalty regulations. Any discretionary adjustment will take into account any automatic penalties already applied as a result of a win.

Place penalties may also apply for finishing 2nd or 3rd in Category 1 and 2 events, specifically the Bay Sheffield 120m, Camden Classic 400m and Loxton 120m. Any penalty would be based upon the money won and the category to which that purse is comparable. These reductions are at the discretion of the handicapper.

The penalties for 200m races will be determined by the handicapper (HD).

5.12. INTERSTATE ATHLETES

Interstate Athletes competing in South Australia who are registered with an affiliated league will be handicapped in the same way as South Australian athletes.

This does NOT mean that interstate athletes will be provided with the same mark that they have in their home state. SA Handicappers will take into account differences between the bodies handicapping systems and will apply a handicap generally in association with the home state handicapper.

5.13. THE STEWARDS

Stewarding is a fundamental and integral part of the SA Athletic League's Handicap System.

All athletes will receive one of the following performance ratings when competing in the SAAL over all distances. An AP rating will be applied automatically by the system and adjusted by the stewards where deemed necessary.

5.14. ACCEPTABLE PERFORMANCE (AP)

The athlete is considered to have run to an acceptable standard and is eligible for a handicap lift to enable them to move closer to the target time of the event. It is not a guarantee of a lift, but the handicapper will look favorably at consistency of performance across multiple starts in assessing whether a lift is warranted. For example, two consecutive "APs" over the same distance at separate meetings is the best and most preferred way to be lifted to a more competitive level.

5.15. NON ACCEPTABLE PERFORMANCE (NAP)

The athlete has been determined by the stewards to have not run to an acceptable level and therefore is INELIGIBLE for a handicap lift until they receive an AP. This is not to suggest the athlete has deliberately under-performed, it merely indicates the athlete has not demonstrated a level of performance or consistency that is commensurate with previous performances or appropriate effort The SAAL acknowledges that sometimes an athlete has genuinely not run quite as well as they should have.

5.16. UNACCEPTABLE PERFORMANCE (UP)

The athlete has been determined by the stewards to have run to an unacceptable standard whether that be time effort, or consistency based and depending on the severity, will be subject to a warning, fine and or a suspension

If the UP occurs within a meeting in a heat and is a result of an unacceptable improvement either on the Athletes best MPS or their previous run, stewards may elect in association with the handicapper to apply a handicap deduction for the final of that event. All athletes who receive UP performances will undergo a full handicap review by the handicapper over all distances in which they compete.

The Chief Steward must note those athletes rated as NAP and UP in the Chief Steward's report at the conclusion of the meeting. This should include reasons for the NAP. . In the case of a UP, the Chief Steward must provide detail supporting the decision to apply an Unacceptable Performance rating within the Chief Steward's report and to the athlete upon request. Athlete and Coach will be consulted on race day where possible.

5.17. TRIGGERS FOR NON ACCEPTABLE PERFORMANCE AND UNACCEPTABLE

In making a determination regarding performance and performance variation the stewards shall take into account all aspects of the performance including data made available to them on the race day results screen and information from the handicapper

This data will include:

- A measure of the athletic performance relative to the Athlete's projected time using their Average MPS and their best MPS for the applicable distance
- An assessment by the stewards (in distance events) as to how there race was run.
- The performance of the field relative to the individual Athlete's performance.
- The state of the track and whether it was accounted for

This data will disclose the degree to which the Athlete was faster or slower than expected time in terms of seconds up to 2 decimal points. (See example below)

Position	Name	Colour	Mark	Time	Time (adj)	Variance to predicted time (using best MPS)
1	Athlete 1	White	7.50m	13.128	12.984	+.10
2	Athlete 2	Pink	12.50m	13.251	13.107	+.16
3	Athlete 3	Red	6.25m	13.324	13.180	+.41
4	Athlete 4	Purple	12.50m	13.393	13.249	+.09

The Stewards can use this data in association with the table below to provide a guide to whether a conversation is required with the Athlete involved and whether subsequently the athlete is provided with a NAP or UP or retains an AP classification.

Distance	Extreme range (seconds}
70	> 0.3
100	> 0.4
120	> 0.4
200	> 0.5
300	> 0.9
400	> 1.1
550	> 1.5
800	> 2.0
1000	> 3.0
1500/1600	> 8.0
2000	> 8.0
3200	NA

5.18. REVIEW PROCESSES

Unacceptable Performance Appeal Process
Please refer to the rules of competition Clause 8

Handicap Review and Appeal Process

If after reading these Handicapping Rules, it is not clear to you how the handicap you received has been calculated there are a number of avenues open to you:

(a) Handicap review - check that your handicap is correct.
(b) Handicap appeal

Handicap Review

1. To apply for a review of your handicap you must complete a handicap review application form. (Login to your SAAL account and select handicap review request)

   When applying for a review you must clearly state the basis of your request and why you believe the handicap is unjust. This must be completed within 24 hours of declaration of handicaps. Review requests will not be accepted after this time.

2. The SAAL office will refer your application to the relevant handicapper.

3. The SAAL handicapper will review the application and provide a brief written report in a standard format with 24 hours of receipt.

Handicap Appeal

If you are not happy with the outcome of the review, then you have the right to appeal against your handicap. To do this you must advise the SAAL office in writing with a $50 fee before 12 noon of the Thursday prior to the carnival. Handicap appeals will not be accepted for meets scheduled on a Friday. The Bay Sheffield handicap appeals processes and timelines are detailed below.

The Handicap Appeals Committee must discuss a handicap appeal as soon as practically possible and may give directions to the Handicapper(s) to change the handicap if seen fit to do so. The Handicapper and the Chief Steward shall be consulted to provide evidence that is relevant to the appeal. The procedure and conduct of each appeal will be at the discretion of the Handicap Appeals Committee. The outcome of the appeal shall be emailed to the SAAL office as soon as practicable after the meeting. (Also refer to Rules of Competition Section 4 Handicap Appeals Committee and Section 8 Appeal to Handicap Appeals Committee)

A summary of the review and appeals process can be found on the following page.

SAAL Handicap Reviews and Appeals

Bay Sheffield

Handicap Reviews and Appeals

Release of Handicaps
15th December 2026

I don't understand my handicap or think there has been a mistake

SAAL Office forwards request to Handicapper

Coach to request a Handicap Review within 24 hours of handicap release -
Login and select 'Handicap Review Request'
Fill out the form and send

- Ask your coach
- Review the handicapping guidelines

Handicapper to complete a brief standard report to coach before 12noon 21st of December
Any errors found are corrected

Still not happy?

Appeal Handicap before 7pm 17th of December

Handicap Committee advises new handicap or dismisses appeal. SAAL Office advises Athlete of outcome.

Independent Handicap Appeals Committee reviews handicap.

In some cases, the Appeals Committee may choose to refund some or all of the appeal fee.

Submit your handicap appeal to the SAAL Office with a $50 payment.

OTHER MATTERS

Bay Sheffield Backmarkers 120m Invitational.

After the Bay Sheffield handicaps are declared, an order of merit of the top 12 Backmarkers will be announced and contacted regarding the Backmarkers event.

If two athletes are on the same handicap the athlete who is ranked highest on the Athletics Australia national (100m/200m) rankings will be placed higher in the order of merit.

Following the semi finals - only those athletes who are Backmarkers according to the handicap in both the Men's & Women's 120m and are NOT in the Bay Sheffield final will be eligible for the Backmarkers 120m Invitational.

The eight lowest handicapped athletes, as per the order of merit, will be invited to contest the 120m Backmarkers Invitation.

Loxton Skins

The Loxton Skins is an invitation event conducted over 50m. The 8-person field will consist of 4 male and 4 female sprinters.

Following the semi-finals of the Men's & Women's 120m Loxton Gift, the handicappers will invite athletes to contest the Skins event.

The Loxton Skins event will be open to all athletes aged 14 and over who are not participating in the finals of the open men's and women's 120m.

Selection will be based on the athlete's mark in the open men and open women 120m (current at the date of the event).

In handicap order (from lowest to highest), the four lowest handicapped eligible athletes - 4 male and 4 female will be invited. If an athlete declines the next athlete based on handicap will be invited until the field is complete.

Handicaps will be unique for the event and be set by either a combination of both the men's or women's open sprint handicappers or a single open handicapper if only one is in attendance.

Final selections and handicaps are not subject to appeal.