

Kyorugi Referee Framework 2026

Community Guide and Frequently Asked Questions

Where the rollout is at

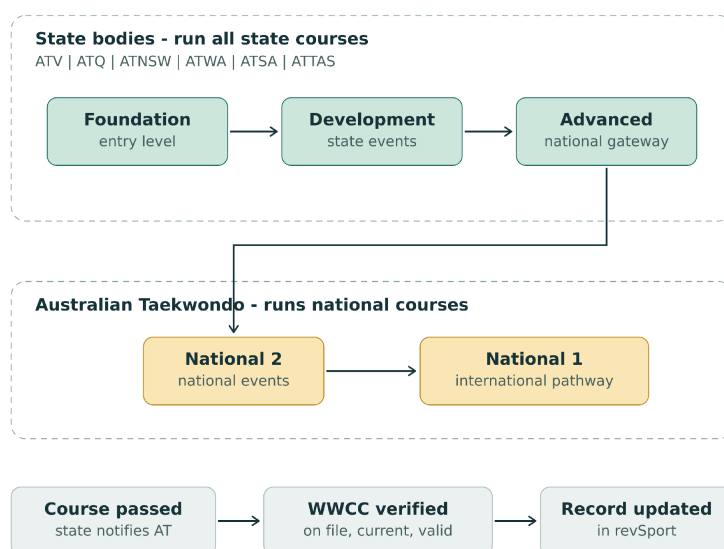
The rollout of the 2026 Kyorugi Referee Framework is nearly complete. By now, every referee should have received notification of their new level under the framework. State eLearning modules are currently being loaded into the LMS, and each State has been sent the course outlines and resources required to run every course, should they choose to use the Australian Taekwondo developed materials.

Everyone is required to complete a certification course this year under the new framework to confirm their level. This is partly because of the framework transition, and partly as it will be essential currency moving forward: World Taekwondo introduced significant rule changes in the June 2026 Competition Rules, and every referee needs to be certified under the rules now in force.

From 2027, the annual referee licence process begins. You will need to take action in December 2026 if you want to referee in 2027. Here's how it works, and what you need to know to be ready.

The framework at a glance

State bodies (ATV, ATQ, ATNSW, ATWA, ATSA and ATTAS) run all State-level education and training for referees at the Foundation, Development and Advanced levels. Australian Taekwondo (AT) runs the National 1 and National 2 courses. When you pass a course, your State notifies AT, your Working with Children Check (WWCC) is confirmed as on file, current and valid, and your accreditation is recorded in the revSport membership system.



Who runs what, and how a completed course becomes a recorded accreditation

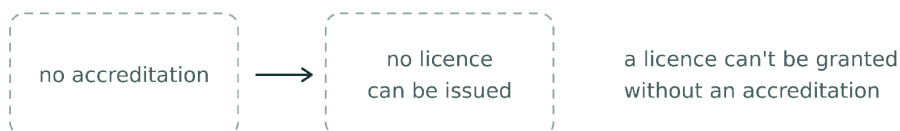
Your questions answered

1. What exactly do I need to referee each year?

Four things, confirmed **every year** through the annual licence process:

- **A current accreditation on file** — earned by completing a certification course, recorded by Australian Taekwondo in the revSport membership system.
- **A current and valid Working with Children Check (WWCC)** for your State of residence.
- **Completed Sports Integrity Australia (SIA) requirements**, including the Competition Manipulation & Sports Gambling and Safeguarding Children inductions.
- **Your annual licence fee paid** (tiered by level; \$0 at Cadet and Foundation).

All four pre-requisite requirements are non-negotiable. There are **no exceptions**, and **no requirement can be waived**. This is to ensure our referees are qualified, trained, and safe to work with children. **National 1 referees have one additional annual requirement:** passing the knowledge test, administered during the December–January licence window. When everything that applies to you is confirmed, you are granted a referee licence — either active or inactive — and you can officiate for that calendar year.



Two documents, one outcome - you need both to step on the mat

Two documents, one outcome — you need both to step on the mat

2. What's the difference between a “valid licence”, an “active licence” and an “inactive licence”?

A **valid licence** is the umbrella term. It means you hold a referee licence for the current calendar year — all non-negotiable requirements have been confirmed — and you are cleared to officiate. A valid licence comes in one of two states, active and inactive. The active and inactive licenses are used to distinguish referees from those who have been trained in the most up-to-date rules and regulations and those who may need extra support when officiating at tournaments.

An **active licence** means you also met your continuing professional development (CPD) requirements in the previous calendar year — the events you officiated and the training or education you attended. Referees with active licences are prioritised for selection at State and National competitions.

An **inactive licence** means you met the non-negotiables but fell short on CPD in the year prior. This is your carry-over year: you can still officiate at State and National events while you catch up on your CPD requirements. It is not a penalty and it does not change your level — it is a 12-month window to get current again.

The simplest way to remember it: active and inactive are both valid. No licence at all is the only state in which you cannot officiate.

3. What are the continuing professional development (CPD) requirements?

Your CPD requirements vary depending on your referee level. These include officiating at a minimum number of tournaments, completing workshops among other requirements:

Level	Continuing professional development (CPD) requirements
International	• Hold WT Global Officiating License and be up to date with WT IR dues • Meet WT education requirements to be eligible to officiate at G ranked events AND Either Pathway 1 or 2 • Pathway 1 ○ Be a current WT Standing IR ○ 3 x competitions per year (of which at least 1 must be a WT promoted event) • Pathway 2 ○ 4 x Competitions per year (of which at least 1 must be an international G ranked event) ○ 1 x National workshop
National 1	• 4 x State or National competitions per year (of which at least 1 must be National/international G ranked event) • 3 x National workshops • Pass knowledge test

National 2	• 3 x State or National competitions per year (of which at least 1 must be National) • 2 x National workshops
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Advanced	• 2 x State or approved club competitions • 1 x State workshop
Development	• 1 x State or approved club competitions • 1 x State workshop
Foundation	• 1 x State or approved club competitions • 1 x State workshop
Cadet Development	• 1 x State or approved club competitions • 1 x State workshop
Cadet	• 1 x State or approved club competitions • 1 x State workshop

4. Can a referee officiate without a referee licence?

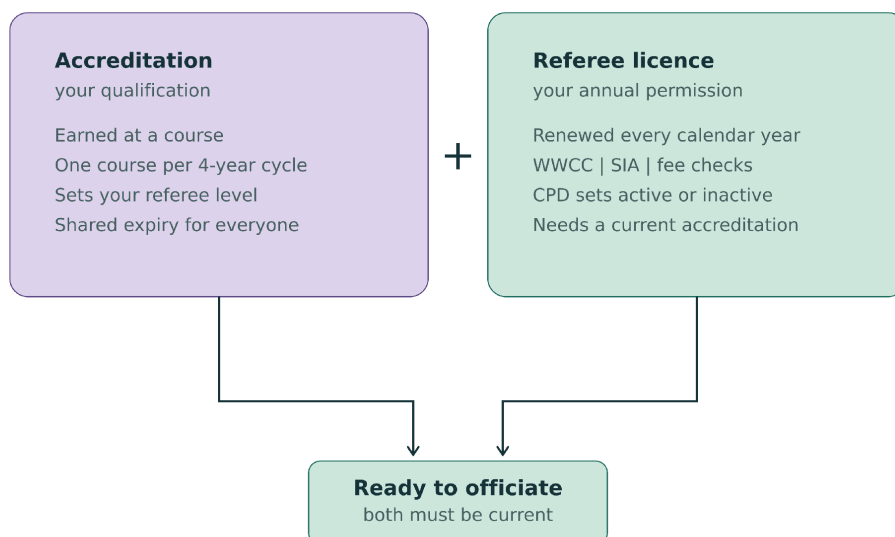
No. A referee licence is required for all levels of Kyorugi officials who wish to attend competitions, training, or workshops. The single exception is certification courses: you may attend an accreditation course without holding a licence — which is exactly how new referees enter the system, and how referees with expired accreditations return to it.

Holding a referee licence is central to Australian Taekwondo's safeguarding. Licenses help ensure that the officials are trained, qualified, and safe.

5. How does the licence process work?

The licence consists of two distinct but related components: your accreditation and your licence.

It helps to keep the two underlying concepts separate in your mind. Your accreditation is your qualification — like a driver's licence class. Your referee licence is your annual permission — like the registration you renew every year. They renew on different clocks, they're linked, and you need both.

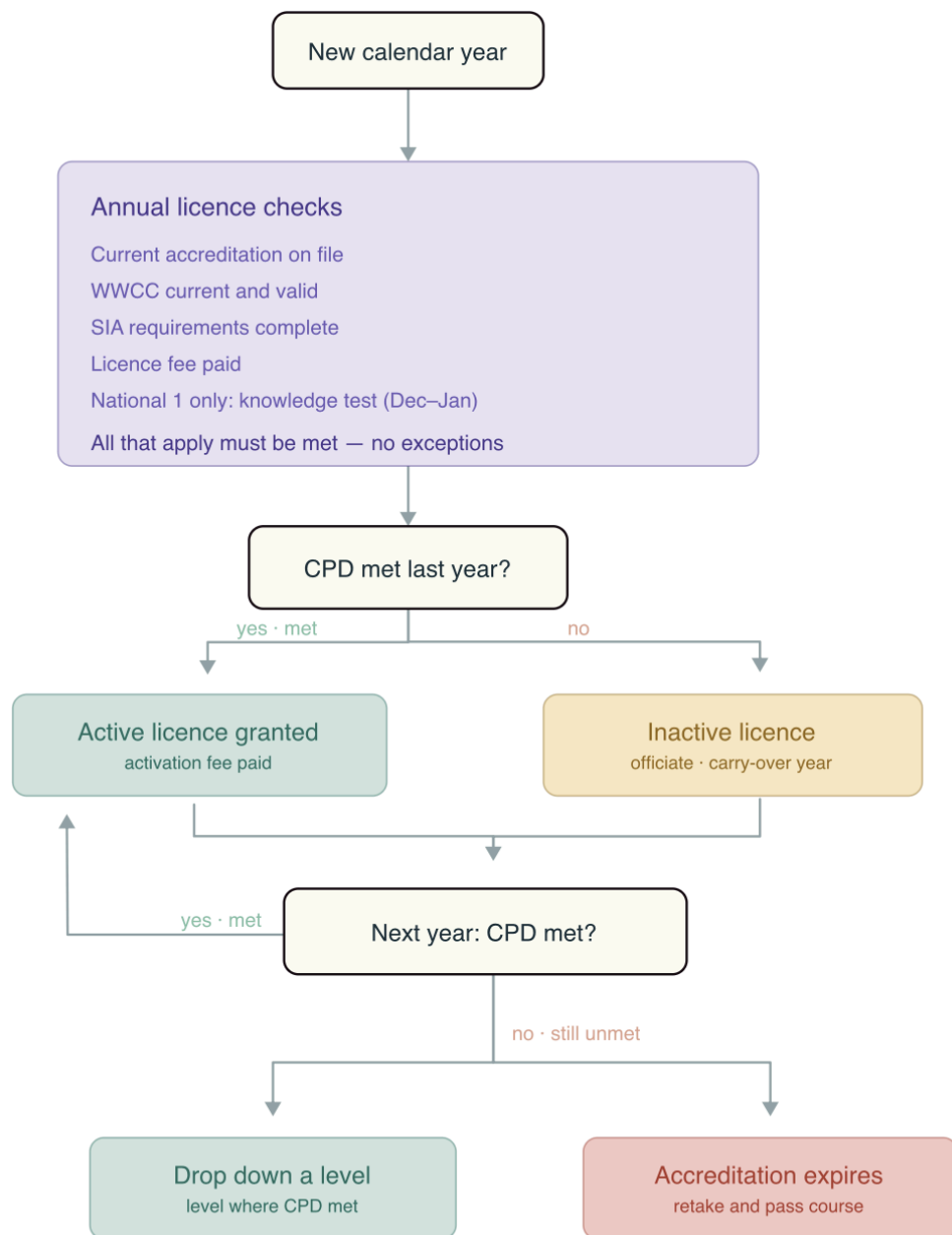


Separate: the course renews the accreditation | the licence renews every year
Linked: the licence process checks your accreditation is still on file and current
Linked: two years without CPD ends the accreditation early - even mid-cycle

Accreditation + licence: separate concepts, both required

Your first licence is granted automatically when your State notifies Australian Taekwondo that you have successfully completed the Foundation certification. Every licence after that is an annual renewal (note: referees that were accredited in 2026 at any level have been granted a licence for the purposes of transitioning to the new framework. Referees who wish to continue refereeing in 2027 will need to renew their licence in December 2026).

Licence renewal for the following year opens in **December**, in line with the membership renewal process. You apply, and the non-negotiable requirements are validated against your record: current accreditation, current WWCC, completed SIA requirements, and payment of the applicable fee (plus the knowledge test for National 1 referees). Your CPD record from the closing year then determines whether your licence is granted as active or inactive. If your CPD record meets requirements; your licence is granted as active. If your CPD record does not meet requirements; your licence is granted as inactive and you have until the next 12 months to bring your CPD record up to requirements.



↺ the licence process repeats every calendar year

Teal = officiating · amber = carry-over year · coral = sitting out · red = must retake a course

The annual licence cycle — every path leads back to an active licence

6. I am already a qualified referee with a valid licence. How often do I need to complete an official accreditation course?

Once per **Olympic cycle** — that is, once every four years, following each summer Olympic Games — or earlier if World Taekwondo releases a significant change to the competition rules. The June 2026 WT rule changes are an example: all referees are completing a certification course in 2026 under the new rules as part of the framework rollout.

This is the biggest conceptual shift from the old system, so it is worth being precise: **the course sets your accreditation, and everyone's accreditation carries the same expiry date at the end of the cycle. But the course is not the only thing keeping your accreditation valid.** Between courses, your annual licence — and in particular your CPD — is what maintains it. A referee who meets CPD every year holds their accreditation for the full cycle. A referee who stops meeting CPD gets one inactive carry-over year, and after that either steps down to the level their CPD supports or their accreditation expires early — even mid-cycle.

Under the previous system, a course every two years was the only requirement, and nothing else was checked. Under the new framework the course is less frequent, but the accreditation is a living thing that annual currency keeps valid.



One course per cycle - CPD and the annual licence keep it alive in between
Teal = active | amber = inactive (carry-over year) | red = expired

One course per cycle, one shared expiry — and four referees whose years play out differently

7. I'm a State referee. Can I attend a course in another State?

Generally, no. Under the framework, all education, training and assessment activities are completed within the State pathway of your State of residence, and State-level assessments must be completed by your own State body. Your State can, however, approve another State to conduct your assessment — so if travel, timing or personal circumstances make an interstate course genuinely more practical, contact your State association first and ask them to arrange it.

The certification itself is national: once you hold it, it is registered with Australian Taekwondo and recognised by every State for competition participation and referee exchange.

8. I can be demoted?

Your referee accreditation will reflect the level that you have qualified for and have maintained. If you meet all the requirements for maintaining your level, you will hold that level.

Under the old system, an accreditation was a rank: once you attended a course you kept the level for another two years regardless of whether you ever stepped on a mat — you could even fail a course and continue officiating at your existing level. That made the accreditation a statement about something you once did, not about what you can currently do.

The new framework, following the Australian Sports Commission's Modern Approach to Officiating, treats referees as athletes who officiate. Like an athlete, a referee's sharpness at a given level is maintained by actually performing at that level. A National 1 referee who has not officiated a national event in two or more years is — through no fault of their own — no longer match-current at that standard: the speed, the pressure, the rule interpretations and the match management expectations will have developed and moved on without them. That is why CPD is a core part of this framework. It helps to ensure that the referees on the mat are as up to date and match ready as possible. The same logic applies internationally: a World Taekwondo International Referee keeps their standing by continuously officiating and staying current at international events, not by having once passed the IR course.

This model is now the norm across Australian sport. Officiating and coaching accreditation systems aligned with the ASC approach — in codes such as football, AFL, rugby, hockey and touch football — all tie the level you hold to demonstrated, current activity, with officials moving between panels and grades as their availability and engagement change across their lives.

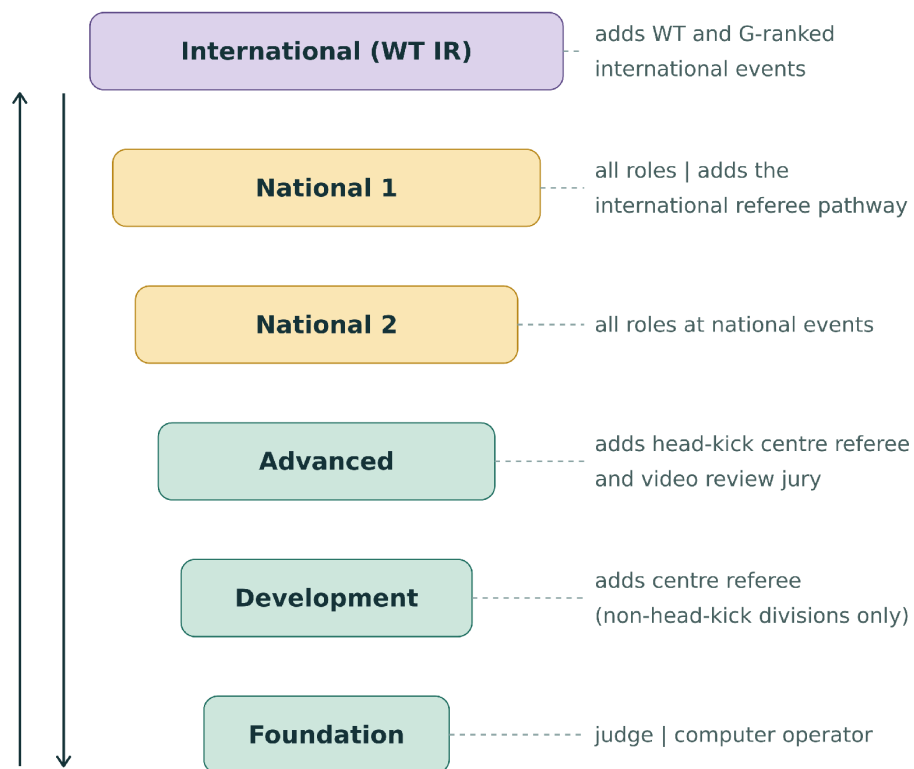
However, it is normal that a person's priorities or circumstances might change from one year to the next and you may not have had high involvement as a referee one year. For this reason, the framework gives you a fair, low-stakes way to realign: if your engagement drops, you spend a carry-over year on an inactive licence and you can use that time to once again get up to date with the current rules and interpretations and achieve match readiness. If your engagement stays low for more than the one year on an inactive licence, your accreditation will be stepped down to the level your activity genuinely supports — and keep officiating there, or you can choose to attend a course and be reassessed at the higher level. This ensures that you are able to be as involved in refereeing as your circumstances permit. Nothing is lost permanently. When you are ready to return to the higher level of refereeing you had acted at previously, the pathway back up is the same one you climbed the first time, now with far more training touchpoints to support you. The framework is built for lifelong engagement: your level should describe who you are officiating for right now, and it can rise and fall with you across a whole career in the sport.

9. Who can and can't act as centre referee?

The centre referee controls the match and makes independent decisions in real time, so the role is restricted by level:

- **Cadet and Foundation** referees cannot centre referee at all. Their roles are corner judge and computer operator (Foundation referees aged 18+ may also perform off-court duties such as weigh-in and inspection).
- **Cadet Development** referees may centre referee youth divisions only.
- **Development** referees may centre referee non-head-kick divisions only.
- **Advanced, National 2, National 1 and International** referees may centre referee any division appropriate to the event.

Every level keeps all the roles of the levels below it — an Advanced referee still judges and operates the computer. Progression adds roles; it never removes them.



Every level keeps all the roles below it and adds more - the bars widen as roles build
 Up: move up through assessment | Down: step down by choice | return anytime

Roles build at every level — the bars widen because nothing is ever taken away

10. Who can and can't officiate head kick matches as centre referee?

Only referees accredited at **Advanced level or above** may act as centre referee in divisions where head kicks are permitted. Development referees are explicitly limited to non-head-kick divisions when in the centre.

This is a deliberate safety boundary, not a formality. Head-kick divisions carry a materially higher risk profile — knockdowns, concussion recognition, 8/10 counts, medical timeouts, and the Australian modified head contact protocols all demand a level of match control, technical knowledge and composure that the framework develops and assesses at the Advanced standard. Lower-level referees can still contribute to

those matches in judging and computer operator roles under the control of an appropriately accredited centre referee.

11. What happens legally if a Foundation referee acts as centre referee, or a Development referee runs a head kick match — and something goes wrong?

Officiating outside the scope of your accreditation means you are acting outside Australian Taekwondo's sanctioned framework, and that has **serious potential consequences for you, the event, and the athletes**.

- **Athlete safety** is the first concern. The role restrictions exist because managing contact, injury and concussion situations requires assessed competency. An unqualified centre referee may miss or mishandle exactly the situations the restrictions are designed to protect against.
- **Insurance** arranged through Australian Taekwondo and its member States is predicated on events being run under the framework, with officials performing roles they are accredited and licensed for. An official acting outside their accredited scope risks the relevant insurance not responding to a claim — potentially leaving the official, the event organiser and the club personally exposed.
- **Personal and organisational liability.** If an athlete is injured and it is established that the match was controlled by someone not qualified to control it, that fact may be central to any legal claim against the official, the organiser, the club, the State body or Australian Taekwondo.
- **Disciplinary consequences.** Knowingly officiating outside your accreditation is a breach of the referee code of conduct and may result in sanctions affecting your accreditation and licence.

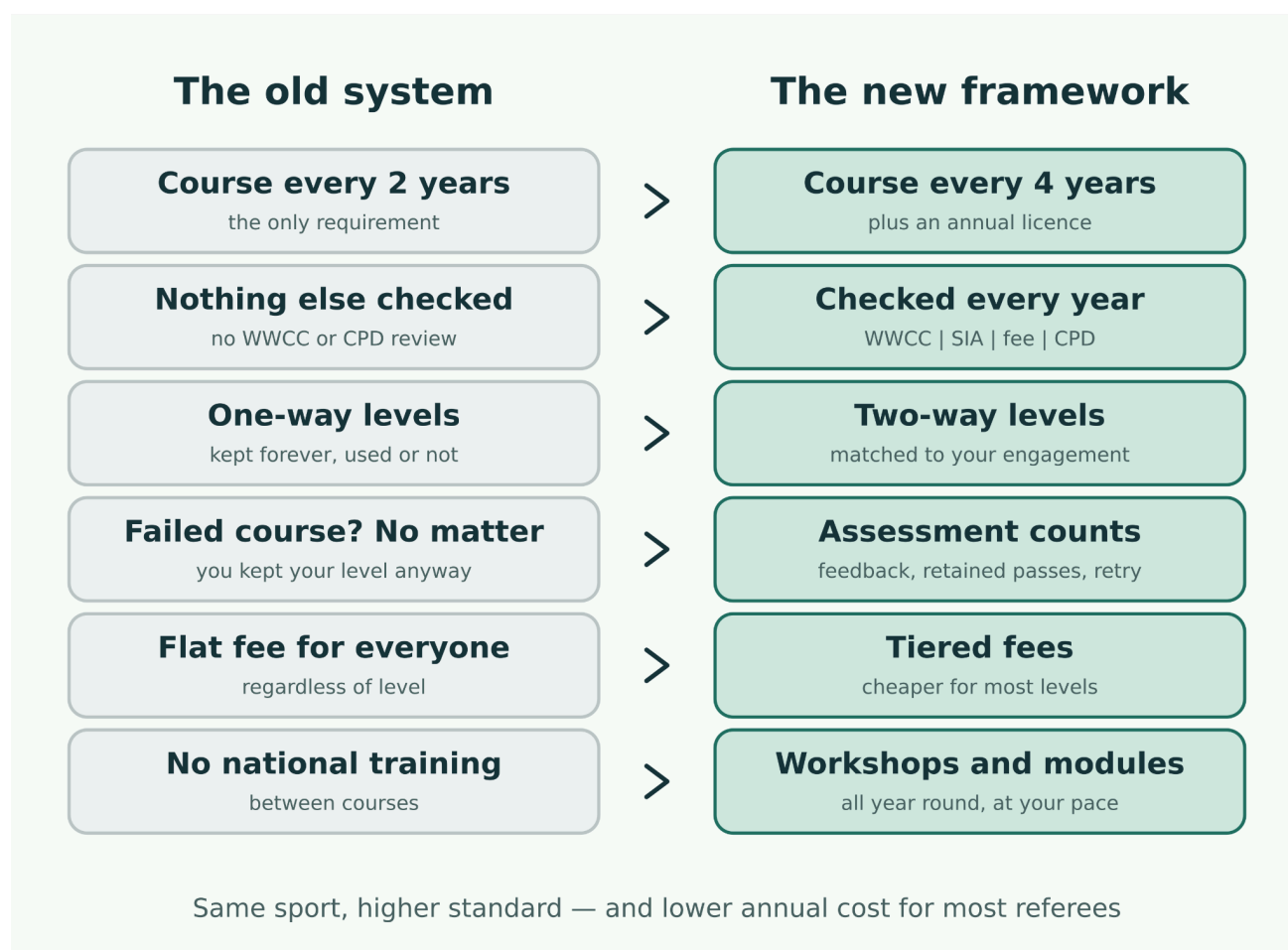
If you are ever asked to fill a role above your accreditation level — even to help an event that is short of officials — the answer is to decline and raise it with the referee chair. The framework provides legitimate pathways (Cadet Development and Development centre referee roles, and supervised practical training sessions) to build that experience safely.

Officials found to be permitting unqualified referees to act in a role outside the scope of your accreditation may be sanctioned. Event organisers and officials are encouraged to sight a referee's licence prior to allowing them to act as a centre referee if there is any doubt about the qualification held or the duties able to be performed by the referee.

Other common questions

Why did the framework change at all?

Three reasons. First, to align with the ASC's Modern Approach to Officiating, which puts participant experience and official development at the centre. Second, to recognise that our officiating community is diverse — some referees want a club-level contribution, others aspire to the Olympic Games, and one rigid pathway served neither well. Third, to lower barriers: State-run courses, tiered fees that reduce annual costs for most levels, a Cadet program for 12–15 year olds, and far more education and training opportunities than previously existed.



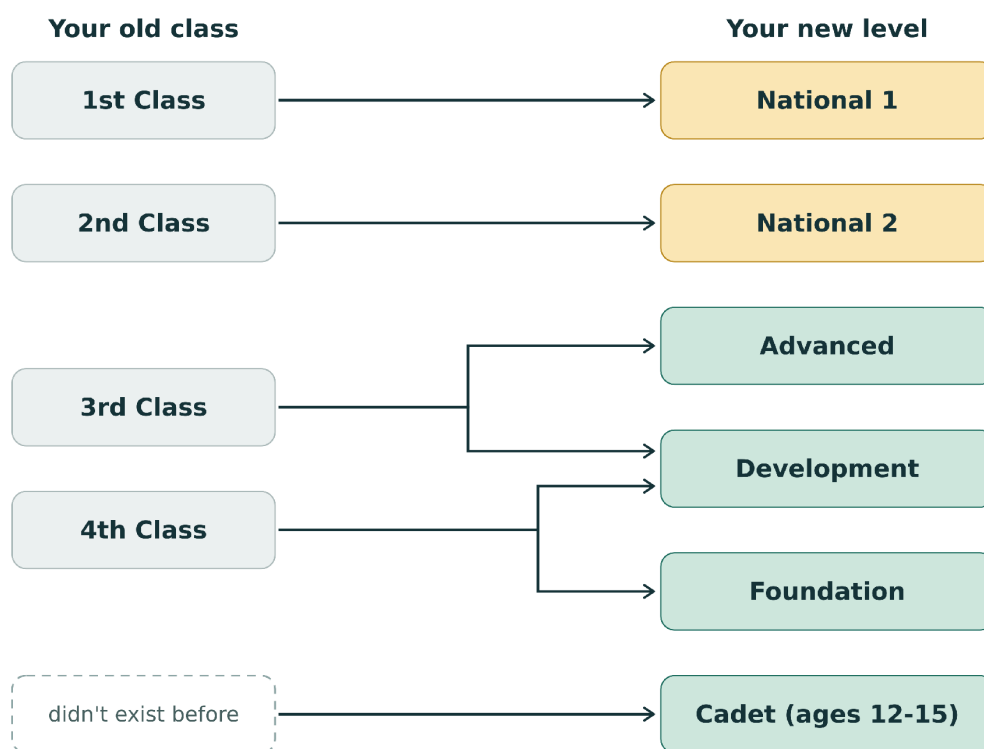
Six things that changed — and why most referees come out ahead

What counts as CPD?

Two things: **events officiated** (State, club, or National competitions approved by your State body — typically 6+ hour events run under WT rules with an approved scoring system and referee coaches or educators present) and **training and education attended** (State or National workshops, practical training sessions, and online modules). The number required per year is tiered by level and set out in the Annual Re-accreditation Requirements table of the framework.

What happened to my 1st/2nd/3rd/4th Class accreditation?

Existing accreditations are transitioned, not discarded. 1st Class becomes National 1 and 2nd Class becomes National 2. 3rd and 4th Class referees are transitioned to Foundation, Development or Advanced based on their verified event experience and current competency, so nobody is unfairly disadvantaged. 1st and 2nd Class referees who are no longer participating in national events may request transition to a lower level to keep their accreditation aligned with their engagement.



3rd and 4th Class placements depend on verified experience and current competency

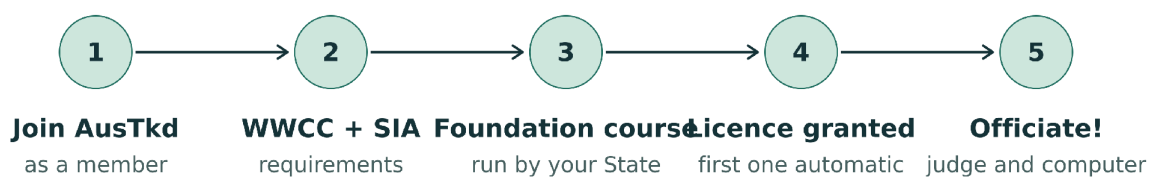
Where each old class lands in the new framework

What if I fail an assessment?

You receive structured feedback identifying why the criteria were not met and what to focus on, and additional assessment opportunities are arranged. You do not start over — successful components are retained and you are reassessed only on the outstanding areas. If a second attempt is unsuccessful, a six-month period applies before reassessment. Assessment decisions can be appealed in writing to the Chair of the NKRC within 14 days. Note this is also a change from the old system, where a failed course had no effect on your standing — under the new framework, the assessment is taken more seriously, because the accreditation has to mean something.

I'm interested in becoming a referee. How do I start?

An interest in Taekwondo and officiating is all you need. Foundation entry is open to all AT members aged 16+, and the Cadet program welcomes young officials aged 12–15.



From interest to the mat - Foundation entry is open to all members aged 16+

From interest to the mat in five steps

I'm new to Australia, or returning to the sport with prior experience. Do I start at Foundation?

Not necessarily. The Recognition of Prior Learning / Recognition of Current Competencies process allows referees holding accreditation from another WT Member National Association, WT International Referees, and experienced international athletes and coaches to enter at the level their evidence supports.

Do Cadet referees need a licence?

Yes — the licence requirement applies to all levels of Kyorugi officials — but the annual licence fee at Cadet and Foundation level is \$0, so for young and entry-level referees it is a compliance check rather than a cost.

My WWCC expires partway through the year. What happens?

A current, valid WWCC is a non-negotiable condition of officiating at all times, not just at licence renewal. If you renew your WWCC mid-year, you should notify your State association so that your valid certification is on file. If your WWCC lapses or its status changes — you cannot officiate until it is restored.