

The Great Public Schools Association of Queensland

ABANDONMENT OF GPS COMPETITIONS AND ACTIVITIES

Effective 1 January 2021

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Spirit of Fellowship



Introduction

The Great Public Schools Association of Queensland manages several Sport and Activities across the academic year. It is recognised that various factors may prevent these competitions from being completed in their entirety. This guideline outlines what process to be carried out should a game, match or competition be abandoned for any particular reason.

This Policy will be used if a single game/ activity, round or Championship is abandoned by inclement weather or circumstances such as venue evacuation, venue issues, serious injury, lack of officials or other unforeseen events including pandemic and war.

This Policy document includes the following adverse weather procedures:

1. Hot Weather (Heat)
2. Wet Weather
3. Hail
4. Lightening
5. Cold Weather
6. Fog
7. Fire, Smoke and Haze (Air Quality)

The recommendations in this Policy are to be used for all participants involved in GPS Sport and Activities, including students, officials, referees, umpires, coaches, scorers, volunteers, staff and spectators.

Jodie Watson
Executive Officer
The Great Public Schools Association of Queensland

Previous amendments

Name	Effective	Approved date
GPS Abandonment of Competition and Activities	1 Jan 2021	19 Oct 2020
GPS Wet Weather Procedures - Draft V2 - 9 May 2016	9 May 2016	9 May 2016
GPS Extreme Weather Policy - 1 May 2010	1 May 2010	1 August 2008

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DEFINITIONS

- **Activity/ Activities:** To encompass all GPS Association organised events. Including but not limited to competitions, student debates, selection events, training, meetings, courses and presentations.
- **Adult/ Adolescent:** A post-pubescent participant
- **Ambient Temperature:** Temperature of the surrounding air, not taking into account humidity or wind in the air
- **Child:** A pre-pubescent participant
- **Dehydration:** Loss of body water and salts essential for normal body function. Excessive dehydration in a sporting environment may lead to heat exhaustion and heat stroke
- **Drizzle:** To rain gently in fine, mist-like drops
- **Fog:** Condensed water vapor in cloud like masses lying close to the ground and limiting visibility
- **Frost:** A deposit of minute ice crystals formed when water vapour condenses at a temperature below freezing
- **Heat exhaustion:** A form of heat illness characterised by a high heart rate, dizziness, headache, loss of endurance/skill/confusion and nausea
- **Heat Illness:** Occurs with high-intensity activity that elevates body temperature and/or prolonged exposure to hot weather
- **Heat stroke:** A form of heat illness with characteristics similar to heat exhaustion in conjunction with dry skin and confusion. Heat stroke may arise in a participant who has not been identified as suffering from heat exhaustion and has persisted in further activity
- **Intermittent** – Stopping and starting at intervals
- **Lightning** - a flash of light in the sky, occurring during a thunderstorm and caused by a discharge of electricity, either between clouds or between a cloud and the earth
- **Storm** - An atmospheric disturbance manifested in strong winds accompanied by rain, snow, and/or other precipitation and often by thunder and lightning
- **Thunder** - The crashing or booming sound produced by rapidly expanding air along the path of the electrical discharge of lightning
- **Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT)** – is a composite temperature used to estimate the effect of temperature, humidity, wind speed (wind chill, and visible and infrared radiation - usually sunlight) on humans. It is used by industrial hygienists, athletes, and the military to determine approximate exposure levels to high temperature.

PART 1: ABANDONMENT DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

The GPS Executive Office in conjunction with the Member School host representative, will have authority in implementing decision relating to inclement weather utilising the following guidelines.

1 EXTREME WEATHER

Extreme weather may be defined as weather that threatens the short or long term safety of individuals as a result of rain, hail, lightning, wind chill or heat. The risk is determined in conjunction with Sport Medicine Australia's Guidelines as well as the Bureau of Meteorology's forecast conditions.

Weather condition	Extreme weather determinant
Ambient temperature	>36 degrees Celsius
Wet bulb globe temperature (Shade)	>30
Apparent temperature (wind chill)	<2 degrees Celsius
Wind speed	>40km per hour
Rainfall	>80mm within 24hours

NOTE:

- Wind may create additional hazards regarding tree, branches or other materials becoming projectiles.
- Rain also needs to be considered concerning its impact on the safety of the playing surface.

2 HEAT ILLNESS (HOT WEATHER ENVIRONMENT FACTORS)

There are always preventative measures that can be undertaken to minimise heat injuries or illness. Whether it be the provision of shade, hats, appropriate sunscreen, spray bottles, water supply, nutrient supplements and more, it is essential to have trained personnel available to manage heat injuries and designated recovery areas for patients. When situations such as heat illness arise, an experienced medical practitioner should be present as heat stroke is potentially life-threatening. Any indication of this condition should be immediately referred to a professional medical practitioner for medical assessment

2.1 Temperature (Preliminary Assessment)

Ambient temperature is the most easily understood guide available. Please refer to the below Temperature Matrix. The Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) produces ambient readings for many locations within Australia. You can check these readings and a guide for the relative risk of your location at www.bom.gov.au/products/IDS65004.shtml. However, it is essential also to note relative humidity levels in combination with ambient temperatures. When combining these two temperatures, you will be better to gauge the risk of thermal injury, as outlined in the below tables.

Ambient temperature (Easily understood, most useful on hot, dry days.)	Relative Humidity	Risk of heat illness	Possible modifying action for vigorous sustained activity
15 – 20		Low	Heat illness can occur in distance running. Caution over-motivation.
21 – 25	<60%	Low – Moderate	Increase vigilance. Caution over-motivation.
26 – 30	<50%	Moderate	Moderate early pre-season training intensity. Reduce intensity and duration of play/ training. Take more breaks.
31 – 35	<30%	High – Very High	Limit intensity. Limit duration to less than 60minutes per session.
36 and above	<25%	Extreme	Consider postponement to a cooler part of the day or cancellation.

WBGT (The WBGT is particularly useful for hot, humid days.)	Risk of heat illness	Possible modifying action for vigorous sustained activity
Less than 20	Low	Heat illness can occur in distance running. Caution over-motivation.
21 – 25	Moderate – High	Increase vigilance. Caution over-motivation. Moderate early pre-season training. Take more breaks.
26 – 29	High – Very High	Limit intensity, take more breaks Limit duration to less than 60minutes per session.
30 and above	Extreme	Consider postponement to a cooler part of the day or cancellation (allow swimming).

2.2 Duration and Intensity

The combination of extreme environmental conditions and sustained vigorous exercise is particularly hazardous for the athlete. The greater the intensity of the exercise, the greater the risk of heat-related symptoms. Factors to consider include:

- a. The length of the game (30 minutes or greater)
- b. The number of Player and Referee rotations (Minimal – Unlimited)
- c. Competition grade/level (Social/ A Grade/ Representative/ Elite)

2.3 Conduct of Hydration & Interchange Opportunities

It is important to note that (5) five minutes of rest can cause a significant reduction in core temperatures. Therefore consideration of the following factors include:

- a. dividing games into shorter playing periods to allow for extra breaks
- b. suitable hydration methods available (drink containers/ ice/ fans)
- c. alternative training/playing times
- d. alternative venues

2.4 Time of Day

The hottest part of the day is usually between 11am – 3pm. Scheduling activities outside this time should be considered throughout any summer competition/ training/ event or activity.

2.5 Local Environment

The type of exercise surface and the amount of sunlight vary significantly with different sporting activities and therefore, must be analysed for each sport and activity. Factors to consider include:

- a. Type of playing surface (Synthetic grass/ Cement or Hardcourt/ Lawn)
- b. Location (Sheltered/ Open)
- c. Air movement (Enclosed/ Open)

Note: The more the venue is open to air movement, this will help decrease heat stress.

3 HEAT ILLNESS (HOT WEATHER PERSONAL FACTORS)

3.1 Clothing

The type of clothing worn by players, referees, officials and volunteers is vital in minimising health risks associated with exercise in hot conditions. Therefore consideration of the following factors include:

- a. Fabrics that minimise heat storage and enhance sweat evaporation
- b. Lightweight, light-coloured, loose-fitting
- c. Made of natural fibres or composite fabrics with high wicking (absorption) properties that provide for adequate ventilation

Note: The clothing should complement the existing practices in Australia that protect the skin against permanent damage from the sun.

3.2 Acclimatisation of the participant

The process which an individual adjusts to gradual changes in the environments such as a change in temperature and humidity. Allowing the individual to maintain performance across a range of environmental conditions. Consideration of the following factors should include the following, especially if the athlete/team has travelled from cool temperature climate to compete in hot/humid conditions:

- a. Origin of participant/team
- b. Distance travelled
- c. A suitable period of preparation and acclimatisation under relative conditions (60 minutes activity per day for 7-10 days)

3.3 Fitness levels/ athletic ability

The potential for heat-related illnesses can be exacerbated if the following conditions haven't been considered:

- a. Physical/ Physiological characteristics of the athlete including body size and endurance fitness (overweight/unconditioned)
- b. Lack of hydration
- c. Level of athletic ability playing in a grade of competition

3.4 Age and gender

The age and gender of a participant can affect the level of risk towards heat exhaustion. Females may suffer more during exercise in the heat because of their greater percentage of body fat. Young children are especially at risk due to the poor development of essential body mechanisms that help the adult body to naturally cool itself. Veteran participants may also cope less well with exercise in the heat due to reduced cardiac function.

3.5 Predisposed medical conditions

It is essential to know if participants, referees, officials or volunteers have a pre-existing medical condition or are taking medication that may predispose them to heat illness. The following conditions are examples of illnesses that will put the participant, referee, official or volunteer at a high risk of illness:

- a. Asthma
- b. Diabetes
- c. Pregnancy
- d. Heart Conditions
- e. Epilepsy
- f. Virus, Flu or Gastro

4 HAIL

4.1 All hailstorms present some risk to players in an open playing field, and the size and intensity of the storm can change dramatically in a short period.

- a. All play should be suspended during hailstorms so that players and officials can seek suitable shelter
- b. Monitor temperature drop, rainfall and high wind that may be associated with the hail conditions.
- c. Play can be restarted after the hail has stopped falling, with particular attention to the amount of ice on the playing surface (size and thickness).
- d. It may be unsafe to resume play, deferral of the restart to allow melting (or manual clearing in parts) should be considered.

5 LIGHTNING

5.1 When lightning is a possible or actual threat to a game, the following procedures are applicable:

- a. Observe the approaching storm clouds, the first flash of lightning or clap of thunder, no matter how far away should heighten lightning awareness.
- b. Method of determining the distance to the storm cell is to measure the time elapsed from when the lightning flash is observed and when the associated thunder is heard. The distance can be determined by using the following rule:
 - I. Distance (Km) = time from observing flash to hearing thunder (in 3 seconds)

5.2 In the absence of specific information from weather radar, a lightning location system, or specialised warning device, then the 30/30 Safety Guideline should be used. The 30/30 Rule is a guide to postponement or suspension of play/competition. The accepted "safe" distance from lightning is greater than 10km. This means:

- a. That as the time interval between observing the flash and hearing the thunder approaches 30 seconds, all those in exposed areas should be seeking or already inside safe shelters. A storm cell with lightning within 10km constitutes a threat
- b. For resumption of play/competition, a minimum 30 minutes after the last sighting of lightning or sound of thunder is required.

5.3 Identification of safe structures

- a. No place is absolutely safe from lightning strikes, but some areas are much safer than others.
- b. Safer areas include:
 - I. Enclosed vehicles with windows closed (car, bus, tractor with cab), do not touch metal parts
 - II. Substantial enclosed buildings
 - III. Low ground, sheltering in clumps of low bushes
 - IV. Trees of uniform height- ie forest.
- c. Unsafe areas include:
 - I. High ground
 - II. Open ground
 - III. Water
 - IV. Isolated or tall trees
 - V. Near outdoor metal structures such as fences, gates, poles, seating, ropes courses
 - VI. Insubstantial structures such as picnic sheds and shade shelters
 - VII. Machineries such as mowers or unenclosed tractors

5.4 Blue sky and lack of rainfall is not a reason to breach the 30minimun return-to-activity rule

6 COLD WEATHER

- 6.1 Extreme weather can produce two chill risks: the absolute air temperature and the wind chill factor. Of these, wind chill in winter sports is the more significant risk.
- 6.2 Apparent Temperature (AT) is an adjustment to the actual air (ambient) temperature based on the perceived effect of the extra elements such as humidity and wind.
- 6.3 AT is valid over a wide range of temperatures, and it includes the chilling effect of the wind at lower temperatures. Minus 2°C (AT) is the point where play is to be suspended for wind chill factor.

7 FOG

- 7.1 When the difference between air temperature and the dew point is less than 2.5 degrees Celsius fog will form. Producing water vapour condenses into tiny water droplets that are suspended in the air, causing a change in visibility.
- 7.2 While fog can moisten the playing field and make it slick during a competition, its most impactful effect is low visibility.
- 7.3 All play should not commence or be suspended during fog events and not commence until players and officials can see all areas of the field of play.

8 AIR QUALITY

- 8.1 To determine if a competition should proceed, or if the events on offer should be amended, information from the AQICN website and a local assessment of conditions are to be used.
- 8.2 Major causes of Poor Air Quality include bush fire smoke and dust storms
- 8.3 The following table outlines the actions that should be taken for any Sport or Activity based on the air quality index.

AQI	Category	Action
0-66	Very Good/Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business as usual
67-99	Fair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For most people there will be no noticeable symptoms of exposure • People who are sensitive to air pollution should take some precautions and/or consult their health practitioner before participating • Competition/Training to continue as planned
100-149	Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular messaging to participants, staff, volunteers, officials and team staff regarding hydration, general health awareness and the potential risk to personal health • For sensitive groups (and symptomatic students) they should consider their participation • For asymptomatic students, they should reduce the amount they are training • Any junior event should be cancelled • Senior and 1st Sport and Activities/training may continue but options around start time and reducing competition/training duration and distances should be reviewed if there is the possibility to shift the event to better conditions
150 – 200	Very Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular messaging to participants, coaches and officials regarding hydration, general health awareness and the potential risk to personal health • For sensitive groups (and symptomatic athletes) they should consider their participation in the event • For asymptomatic athletes, they should reduce the amount they are training • To consider modification of start time and communicate accordingly, in order to try and find a more suitable time and/or duration for the event • All non-premiership and junior training and competition should be cancelled
200+	Hazardous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancellation of all sport and activities

- 8.4 The Australian Institute of Sport has published the following guidelines taking into account the activity guidelines as they relate to the AQI.

General population and low intensity exercise		Endurance based and high intensity exercise	
AQI	Action	AQI	Action
VERY GOOD [0-33]	Enjoy activities	VERY GOOD [0-33]	Enjoy activities
GOOD [34-66]	Enjoy activities	GOOD [34-66]	Enjoy activities
FAIR [67-99]	<p>People unusually sensitive to air pollution:</p> <p>Plan strenuous outdoor activities when air quality is better</p>	FAIR [67-99]	<p>Asthmatic athletes:</p> <p>Should have medical review prior to performing high intensity extended training outdoors</p>
POOR [100-149]	<p>AIR POLLUTION HEALTH ALERT</p> <p>Sensitive groups: Avoid strenuous outdoor activities</p> <p>Everyone: Cut back or reschedule strenuous outdoor activities</p>	VERY POOR [100-149]	<p>AIR POLLUTION HEALTH ALERT</p> <p>Asthmatics or symptomatic non-asthmatics should not compete or train outdoors. Minimise asymptomatic athlete exposure</p>
VERY POOR [150-200]	<p>AIR POLLUTION HEALTH ALERT</p> <p>Sensitive groups: Avoid strenuous outdoor activities</p> <p>Everyone: Cut back or reschedule strenuous outdoor activities</p>	HAZARDOUS [150-200]	<p>AIR POLLUTION HEALTH ALERT</p> <p>Outdoor training should be rescheduled indoors, and exposure should be minimised for everyone</p>
HAZARDOUS [>200]	<p>AIR POLLUTION HEALTH ALERT</p> <p>Sensitive groups: Avoid strenuous outdoor activities</p> <p>Everyone: Significantly cut back on outdoor physical activities</p>		

PART 2: ABANDONMENT GUIDELINES

9 SPORT SPECIFIC ABANDONMENT/ MATCH DELAY GUIDELINES

In a general sense, most sports will have specific abandonment of match delay guidelines in place for their sport. These are to be considered in the context of this overall GPS guideline by the Directors of Sport and Activities in conjunction with the GPS Executive Officer when implementing their decision.

10 SINGLE GAME

10.1 If inclement weather results in the inability to complete a single game, the following process will be implemented:

- a. If play has ceased in the first half of the game, the game will be deemed a draw.
- b. If play has ceased in the second half of the game, the school which was in the lead at the time of the game being stopped, will be declared the winner.
- c. If play has ceased in the second half of the game and the two teams are drawn, the game will be deemed a draw.

10.2 In the sport of Cricket the Duckworth Lewis scoring system will be followed.

- a. if a change in venue to the "away" school is possible, it must be considered to ensure the 1st XI match can be played.

10.3 In case of Tennis and inclement weather results in the inability to complete a portion of the games scheduled in a day's play, the following options will be reviewed by directors of sport in conjunction with the GPS Office:

- a. If rain prevents play at the appointed starting time, the match may be called off by mutual agreement at any time.
 - I. If mutual agreement on rain cannot be reached, then the fixture shall be called off at 10.00am (1.5hours) after the scheduled starting time of 8.30am.
 - II. if a change in venue to the "away" school is possible, it must be considered to ensure the 1st IV match can be played. A decision to change venue must be made before 10.30am, with play commencing by midday.
- b. If rain prevents play at any stage during the day, the match may be called off by mutual agreement at any time.
 - I. If mutual agreement cannot be reached, then the fixture shall be called off after a 1.5hour delay if play cannot be resumed.
- c. First IV a school must have completed and won 5 of the 8 rubbers for an overall win to be declared.
- d. A decision in a match shall have been reached when one team is in an unbeatable position, before bad weather.
- e. If a decision point has not been reached before bad weather matches will be counted as draws.
- f. GPS Tennis Matches are not permitted to be played indoors.

11 ABANDONMENT DUE TO OTHER ISSUES

11.1 Venue issue or venue evacuation

- a. If play has ceased in the first half of the game, the game will be deemed a draw.
- b. If play has ceased in the second half of the game, the school in the lead at the time of the game being stopped, will be declared the winner.
- c. If play has ceased in the second half of the game and the two schools are drawn, the game will be deemed a draw.

11.2 Venue evacuation due to venue fire drill

- a. In the event that a fire drill is held at a venue and the venue needs to be evacuated and this evacuation results in games having to be stopped, the following process will occur:
- b. Games will stop at the allotted time, and all participants will take part in the fire drill as directed by venue staff.
- c. Upon return to the venue, games will recommence where they left off, providing that no more than 20minutes has elapsed since the initial stoppage.
- d. If more than 20minutes has elapsed since the stoppage for the fire drill:
 - I. If the game was in the first half or within the first two-quarters of a game, the first half or first two quarters will be deemed complete and the game will recommence immediately with the second half of the game (or at the start of the third quarter).
 - II. If the game was in the second half or within the third or fourth quarter, the game would be deemed complete, and the team in the lead will be declared the winner. If teams are drawn, the game will be deemed a draw.

11.3 Serious injury

- a. GPS recognises that serious injuries can take place on the field of play and some injuries require the injured person to be immobilised until they can be safely removed from the field of play by appropriate medical personnel.
- b. If a player is injured and cannot be moved from the field, the game will stop until such time that person is removed safely by approved medical personnel. Upon removal of the injured player, the game will recommence providing that there is still official time left in the game.
- c. If there is no official time left in the game and the game was stopped in the first half or within the first two-quarters of a game, the game will be declared a draw.

- d. If there is no official time left in the game and the game was stopped in the first half or within the third or fourth quarter of the game, the school that was in the lead at the time that the game was stopped, will be declared the winner.

PART 3: SEASON ABANDONMENT

12 HEALTH PANDEMIC, WAR, SHUT DOWN

In rare cases, the Federal, State or Local Government, Government sports agencies, governing bodies or the GPS Association may shut down or restrict GPS Sport and Activities.

- 12.1 Upon advise from relevant authorities a shut down of GPS Sport and Activities will be confirmed by the GPS Management Committee through the Executive Officer.
- 12.2 The GPS Management Committee has the authority to restrict or shut down on a more conservative base to that of Community Sport.
- 12.3 Premierships will be awarded for regular 9-week fixture Sport and Activities where 75% of the scheduled fixtures have been concluded
 - a. Matches scheduled and abandoned or not played due to weather are considered concluded fixtures
 - b. Seven (7) or the nine (9) scheduled rounds completed
- 12.4 Premierships will be awarded for 7-week fixture Sport and Activities where 70% of the scheduled fixtures have been concluded
 - a. Matches scheduled and abandoned or not played due to weather are considered concluded fixtures
 - b. Five (5) or the seven (7) scheduled rounds completed
- 12.5 Championship Sports will be rescheduled in the first instance, as agreed by the GPS Management Committee
 - a. Rescheduling may occur before or during the Championship
- 12.6 Premierships awarded for Championship Sports must complete 75% of individual event in each discipline and all relay events if applicable
 - a. Track and Field must see 75% of each track and field disciplines completed
- 12.7 Premierships awarded due to a season abandonment will be awarded as truncated
- 12.8 In the event of criteria 12.1 – 12.6 unable to be achieved no Premierships will be awarded in such year

PART 4: APPENDICES

13 GPS INCLEMENT WEATHER - PLAY IMMEDIATELY SUSPENDED SUMMARY

GPS Inclement weather play immediately suspended

	Heat	Hail	Lightening	Cold weather	Fog	Air Quality
Cricket	36 and above with 25% humidity Resumption: Decrease in temperature below the limit.	Hail on field of play. Resumption after hail storm past with evolution of playing conditions.	A storm cell with lightning within 10km (30/30 safety Guideline). Resumption minimum 30 minutes after the last sighting of lightning or sound of thunder	Minus 2°C (AT) for wind chill factor. Resumption: Increase of temperature above the limit.	Unable to see the full field of play from all positions on the field.	AQI 150-200 Resumption: Decrease in AQI to under 150.
Football						
Tennis		Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	AQI 200+ Resumption: Decrease in AQI to under 150.	
Rugby						
Basketball outdoor						
Basketball indoors						
Volleyball						
Debating						
Chess						

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14 GPS GAME ABANDONMENT SUMMARY

GPS Game Abandonment

	Full game/ day	Partial game/ day	Venue/ Evacuation/ Fire drill/ Serious injury	
Volleyball	Draw	First half - Draw is the result. Second half - current score determines the result.	0-20min delay - If in 1st half, resume at the start of 2nd half - If in 2nd half, the game deemed completed and result declared by the current score	
Football				
Basketball				
Rugby				
Tennis		A school must have completed and won 5 of the 8 rubbers for the overall win (A decision in a match shall have been reached when one team is in an unbeatable position).	Continue rubbers from when delay started	
Cricket		Duckworth Lewis scoring system	Duckworth Lewis scoring system	
Debating		Draw		0-20min delay continue from when delay started 21+ min delay, the game concluded and draw awarded
Chess				