Changes to the AIC Australian Rules Football Competition in 2027

The Associated Independent Colleges (AIC) Management Committee has approved a revised competition structure for Australian Rules Football commencing in the 2027 season.

Since Australian Rules Football was reintroduced into the AIC Secondary School sporting program in 2019, participation has grown significantly. Schools that initially fielded three secondary teams are now fielding up to nine teams, while Primary School participation has more than doubled during the same period.

To support this growth and position the competition for the future, all Primary School Australian Rules Football fixtures (Years 5 and 6) will be played on Friday afternoons, while all Secondary School fixtures, including Open Division matches, will be played on Saturday mornings from the commencement of the 2027 season.

The revised structure provides a dedicated competition window for Primary School students, establishes a consistent format across all Secondary year levels and aligns Australian Rules Football with the delivery model used across other AIC sports. It will improve scheduling, venue utilisation and officiating requirements, while enhancing the overall delivery of the competition.

The change also presents new opportunities for member Colleges to work collaboratively with the AFL and AFL Queensland (AFLQ) to develop on-campus playing facilities, strengthening the long-term sustainability of the game within AIC schools. In addition, the new structure will support the development of student umpiring pathways, creating leadership opportunities for students while helping meet future officiating needs across both the AIC and the broader Southeast Queensland AFL community.

The AIC Management Committee acknowledges that any change can create challenges for schools, students and families, including potential scheduling clashes. Students and families are encouraged to discuss any conflicts with the relevant staff at their College. These considerations were carefully examined as part of the review process, with the overriding goal of supporting the continued growth and sustainability of Australian Rules Football across the Association.

As with all AIC sporting competitions, a comprehensive review will be undertaken following the 2027 season to evaluate the impact of the changes, gather stakeholder feedback and identify any opportunities for further refinement.

The AIC remains committed to growing participation opportunities in Australian Rules Football and will continue to work closely with the AFL and AFLQ in the delivery and development of the competition. We thank both organisations for their ongoing support and partnership.

The AIC looks forward to implementing these changes in 2027 and building on the strong growth of Australian Rules Football across the Association, ensuring students can participate, compete and enjoy the game for years to come.

AIC Management Committee
4 November 2026