

RUGBY VIC

2026 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

RUGBY VIC

ELITE PATHWAYS

ROADMAP FROM CLUB RUGBY TO ELITE NATIONAL TEAMS

THE RUGBY VIC ELITE PATHWAY

Rugby Victoria provides a clear and connected player pathway from junior club and school rugby through to state and national representation.

Our programs are designed to:

- Identify talent
- Support long-term development
- Provide meaningful playing opportunities

Players can enter the pathway at multiple points and progress at different stages of their development.

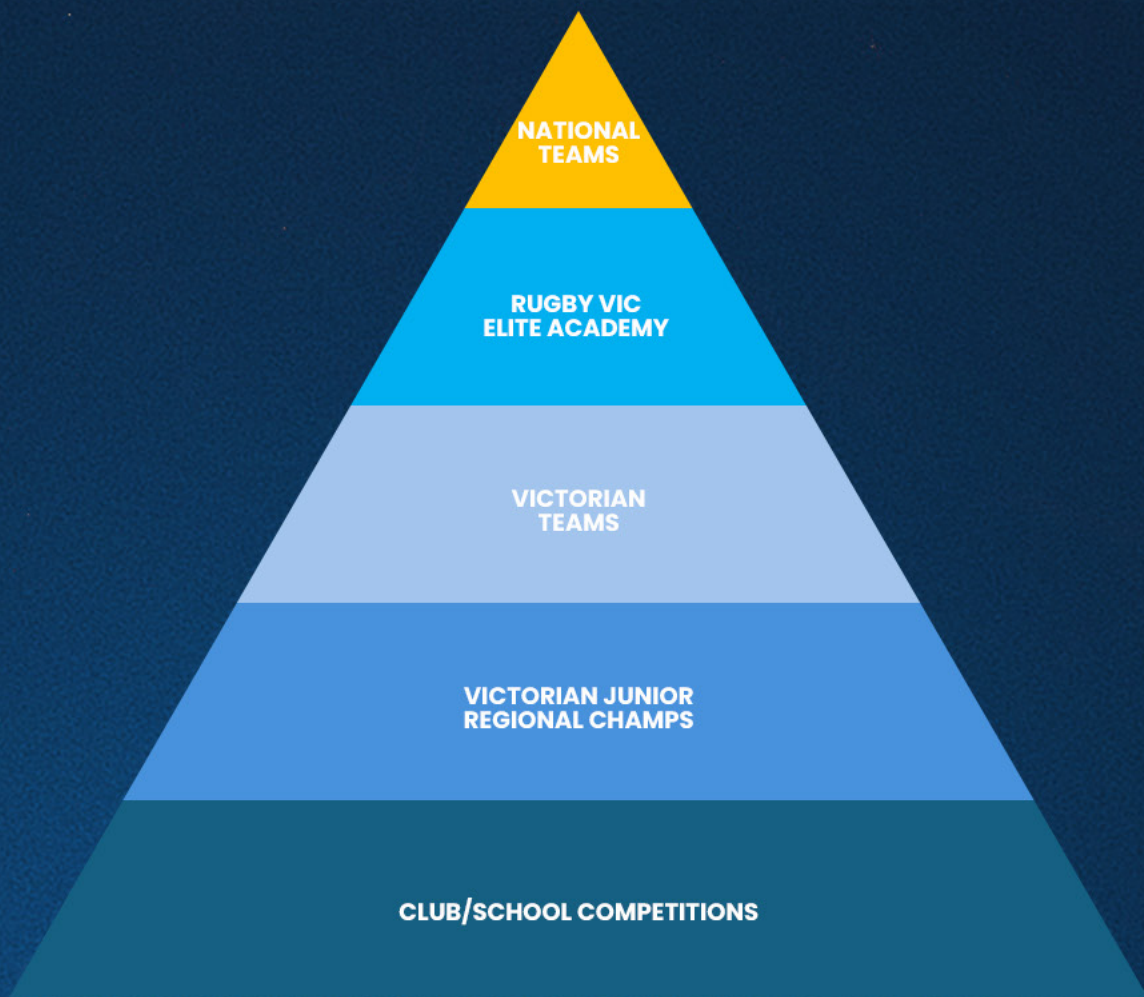
A CLEAR PATHWAY FOR VICTORIAN PLAYERS

Victorian players can progress from local club and school rugby to national representation through a clear, connected and supported pathway.

- No requirement to move interstate
- Access to High-performance environments in Victoria
- Alignment with Rugby Australia national pathways

Our focus is on developing players to reach their potential – both on and off the field

THE RUGBY VIC PLAYER JOURNEY



PLAYERS CAN ENTER AND PROGRESS THROUGH
THE PATHWAY AT DIFFERNT STAGES.

RUGBY
VIC

RV PATHWAYS

WHAT A YEAR CAN LOOK LIKE

RUGBY
VIC

	PRE-SEASON (JAN-MAR)	EARLY SEASON (APR-JUN)	LATE SEASON (JUL-AUG)	POST SEASON (SEP-OCT)	OFF SEASON (NOV-DEC)
U13	OFF	CLUB/SCHOOL RUGBY	CLUB	VJRC	OFF
U14	VJRC	CLUB/SCHOOL RUGBY	RV U14 DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS CLUB	EMERGING REDS CUP	OFF
U15	VJRC	CLUB/SCHOOL RUGBY	RV U15 DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS CLUB/SCHOOL RUGBY	NSW NEXT GEN CUP	RV ELITE ACADEMY
U16	RV ELITE ACADEMY VJRC	RV U16 DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS CLUB/SCHOOL RUGBY	RV U15 DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS CLUB/SCHOOL RUGBY	SUPER RUGBY U16	AUSTRALIA U16 RV ELITE ACADEMY
U17	RV ELITE ACADEMY VJRC	RV U17 VIC SCHOOLBOYS TRAINING CLUB/SCHOOL RUGBY	ASJRC CLUB/SCHOOL RUGBY	AUSTRALIA U18 RV ELITE ACADEMY	RV ELITE ACADEMY
U18	RV ELITE ACADEMY VJRC	RV U17 VIC SCHOOLBOYS TRAINING CLUB/SCHOOL RUGBY	ASJRC CLUB/SCHOOL RUGBY	AUSTRALIA U16 RV U20s RV ELITE ACADEMY	RV ELITE ACADEMY

RUGBY
VIC

BOYS PATHWAY
U13 - U18

U13 BOYS

The U13 Victorian Junior Rugby Championship (VJRC) is the first entry point into the Rugby Victoria pathway for U12 and U13 players.

The program provides players with access to a series of high level centralised training sessions delivered by Rugby Victoria pathway coaches. These sessions introduce players to the core skills within the Rugby Victoria skill framework, as well as the key principles of play that underpin our high-performance environments.

At the conclusion of the development phase, players are selected into four regional teams (Waring, Beek, Woorwoor and Treang), competing in a tournament alongside the top U13 players across the state.

Timing:

- Runs following the completion of the club and school season
- Mid September to Early October

Eligibility:

- Open to all U12 and U13 players

U13 BOYS PATHWAY

U13 Boys Pathway
(Players born 2013, 2014)

**VJRC U13
Competition**



**Junior Club and School
Competitions**

U14 BOYS

The U14 program provides players with an introduction to the Rugby Victoria talent pathway and early development opportunities within a representative environment.

Players begin the year by participating in a VJRC pre-season program aligned with the U15 age group, providing exposure to higher-level training and competition. Throughout the club and school season, players continue to develop in their local environments, with selected players invited to attend Rugby Victoria development sessions.

The program culminates in the selection of a final U14 squad, which competes at the Emerging Reds Cup in Brisbane against leading Queensland representative teams and international opposition.

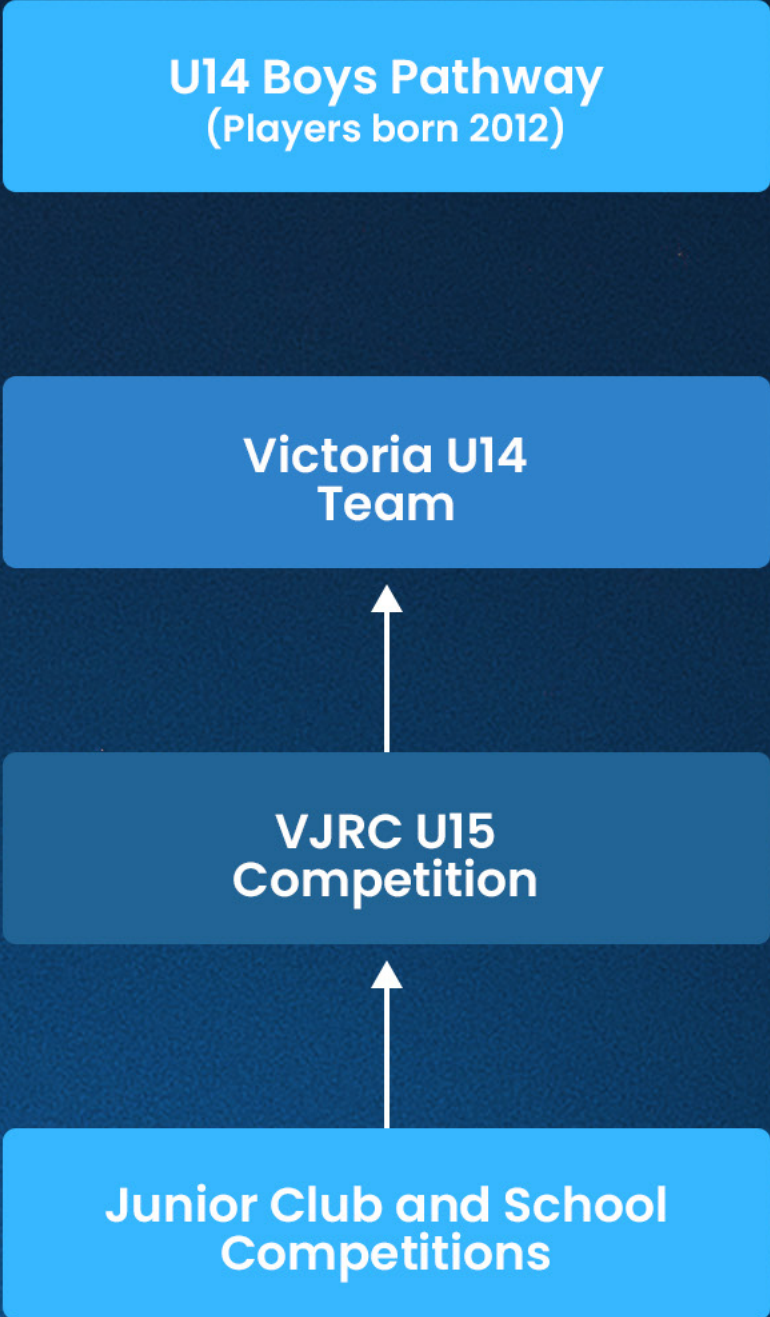
Timing:

- VJRC Pre-Season: March-April
- Development sessions: Throughout the season
- Emerging Reds Cup – Late September

Eligibility:

- VJRC – Open to all U14 players
- Rugby Vic U14 team – selected from VJRC and club/school competitions

U14 BOYS PATHWAY



U15 BOYS

The U15 program is a key stage in the Rugby Victoria pathway, providing players with their first exposure to representative selection and higher-level competition.

Players participate in the VJRC program and continue their development within club and school rugby. Throughout the season, selected players are invited to attend Rugby Victoria development sessions, with identification based on VJRC and club/school performances.

From this group, a Victoria U15 team is selected to compete at the New South Wales Next Gen Cup, providing exposure to high-level interstate competition.

A small number of players may also be identified for the Super Rugby U16 program, offering an accelerated development opportunity within a higher-performance environment.

At the conclusion of the season, high performing players may be invited into the Rugby Victoria Elite Academy, commencing with an off-season training block.

Timing:

- VJRC: March-April
- Development sessions: Throughout the season
- NSW Next Gen Cup: Late September
- Elite academy intake: November

Eligibility:

- VJRC – Open to all U15 players
- Rugby Vic U15 team – selected from VJRC and club/school competitions.

U15 BOYS

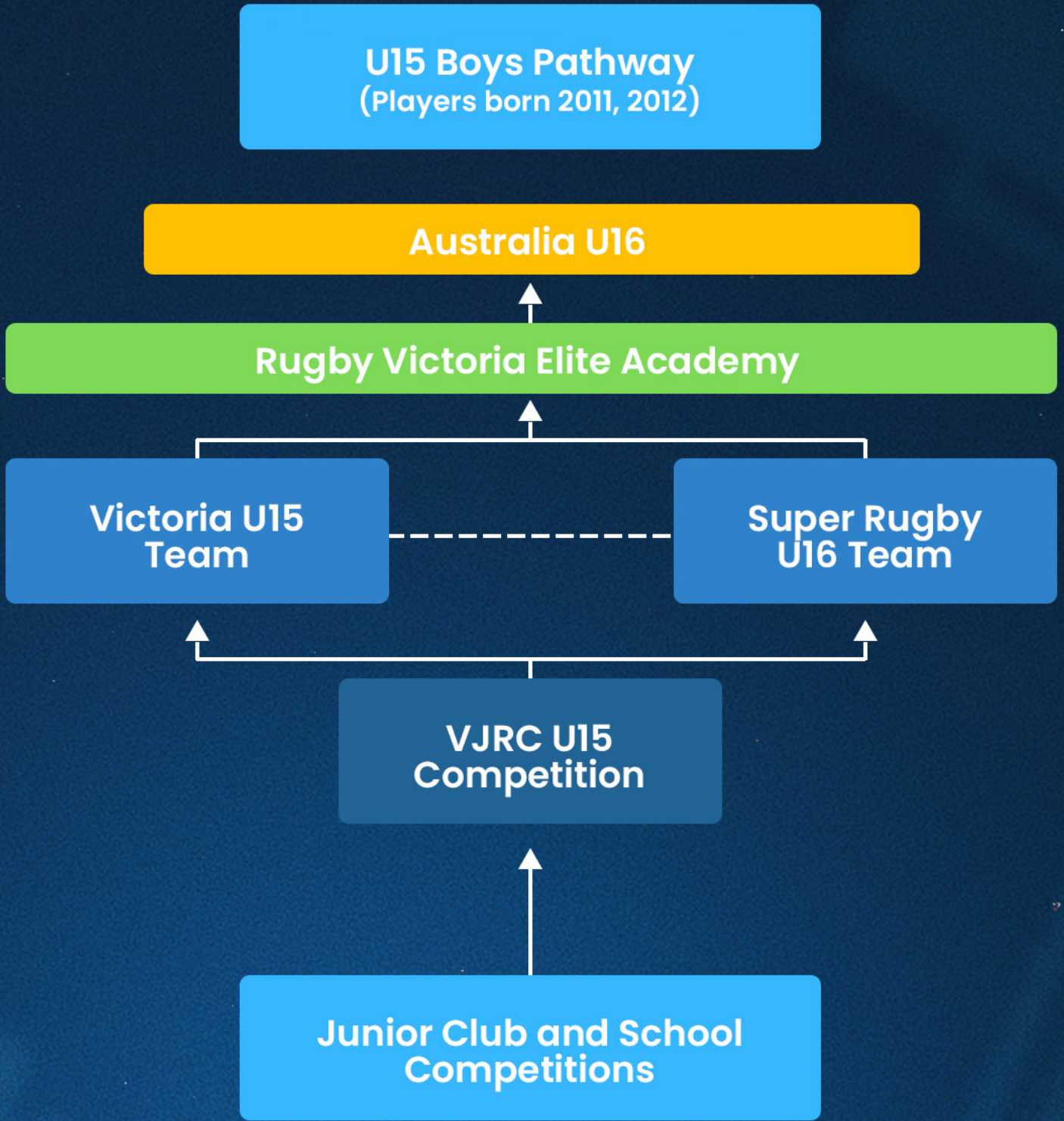
Additional opportunity:

Some players may be selected into the Super Rugby U16 program, which includes:

- Earlier identification
- Additional training and preparation
- A higher level of competition

Players selected in this program will not participate in the U15 Next Gen Cup.

U15 BOYS PATHWAY



U16 BOYS

The U16 program represents a key transition into the high-performance stage of the Rugby Victoria pathway, with a strong focus on selection, performance and national alignment.

U16 players participate in the VJRC program within the U18 age grade, providing exposure to a higher level of training and competition. All U16 players are eligible to attend VJRC development sessions, with regional team selection based on performance and readiness to compete at this level.

Following VJRC, a wider Rugby Victoria U16 squad is identified and enters a structured training program. This includes a preparatory fixture and interstate tour, providing players with exposure to representative environments and higher-level competition.

A final squad is selected to compete in the Super Rugby U16 competition, which is aligned with Rugby Australia national selection.

High-performing players may be invited into the Rugby Victoria Elite Academy, with the program commencing in the off-season.

Timing:

- VJRC: March-April
- Development sessions: May-August
- Pre season tour: June
- Super Rugby U16 Competition: September-October
- RV Elite Academy: January-February, November-December
- Australia U16: December

U16 BOYS

Eligibility:

- VJRC – Open to all U16 players
- Rugby Vic U16 team – selected from VJRC and club/school competitions.

U16 players participate in the VJRC within the U18 age group. This provides exposure to a higher level of competition, with selection into regional teams based on readiness and performance.

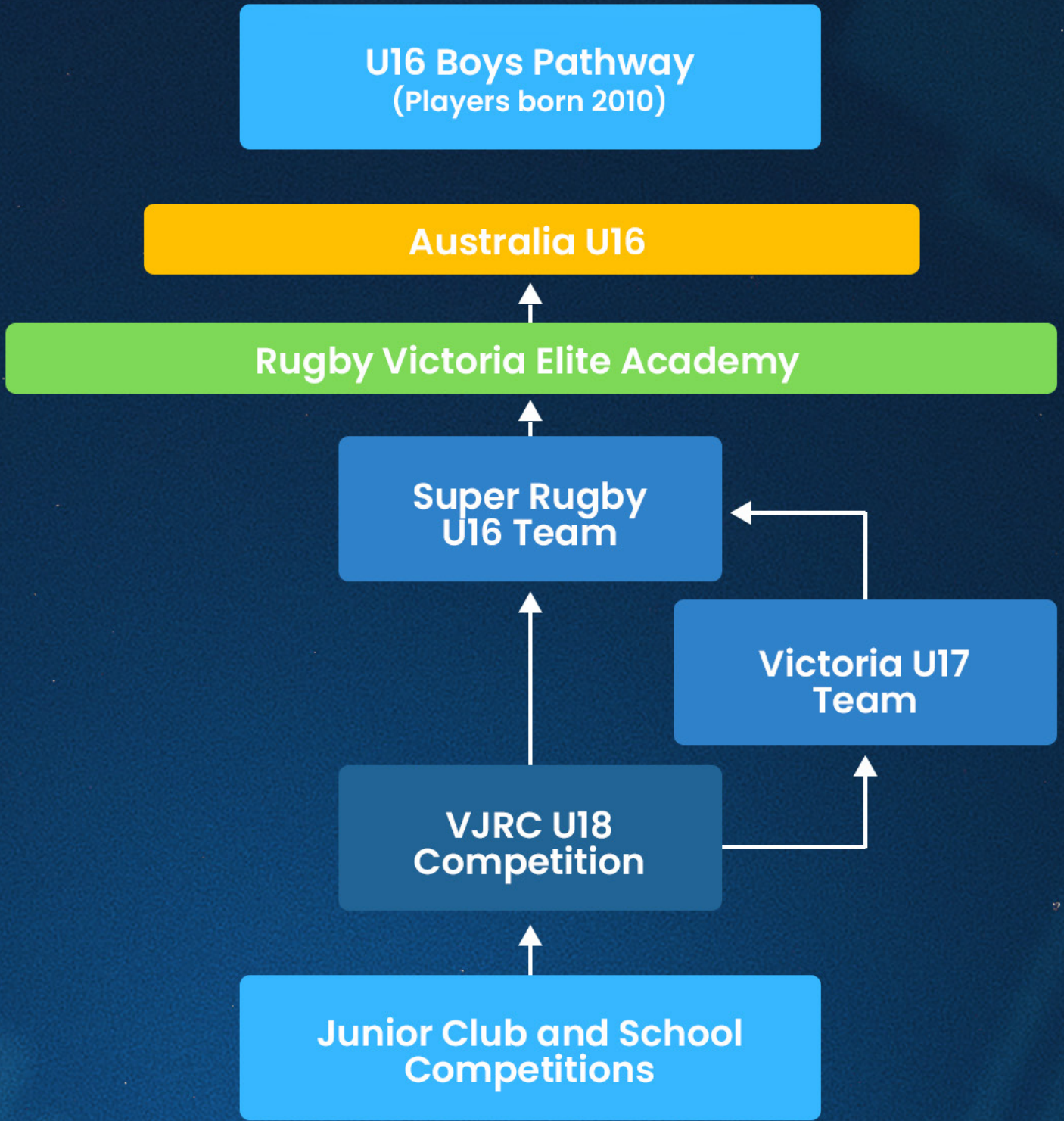
Additional opportunity:

Some U16 players may be selected into the Victoria U17 program, providing additional representative experience during the season.

Players in this position may participate in both programs.

The Super Rugby U16 competition provides a direct pathway to Australian U16 selection

U16 BOYS PATHWAY



U17 BOYS

The U17 program is a performance-focused stage of the Rugby Victoria pathway, with a strong emphasis on representative selection and national exposure.

Players participate in the VJRC program within the U18 age grade, continuing to develop in a higher-level training and competition environment. Identification occurs through VJRC and club/school rugby performances.

Selected players are invited into Victorian Schoolboys wider training squads, with final teams selected to compete at the Australian Schools Junior Rugby Union Championships.

The highest-performing players may be selected into the U18 Schoolboys team, competing at the top level of schoolboy representative rugby.

This national tournament provides a key opportunity for players to be identified for Australian Schoolboys and Australia U18 programs.

High-performing players may also be selected into the Rugby Victoria Elite Academy, accessing ongoing high-performance support and development.

Timing:

- VJRC: March-April
- Development sessions: May-July
- ASJRU Championship: July
- RV Elite Academy: January-February, August-September, November-December
- Australia U18, Australian Schoolboys: September-October

U17 BOYS

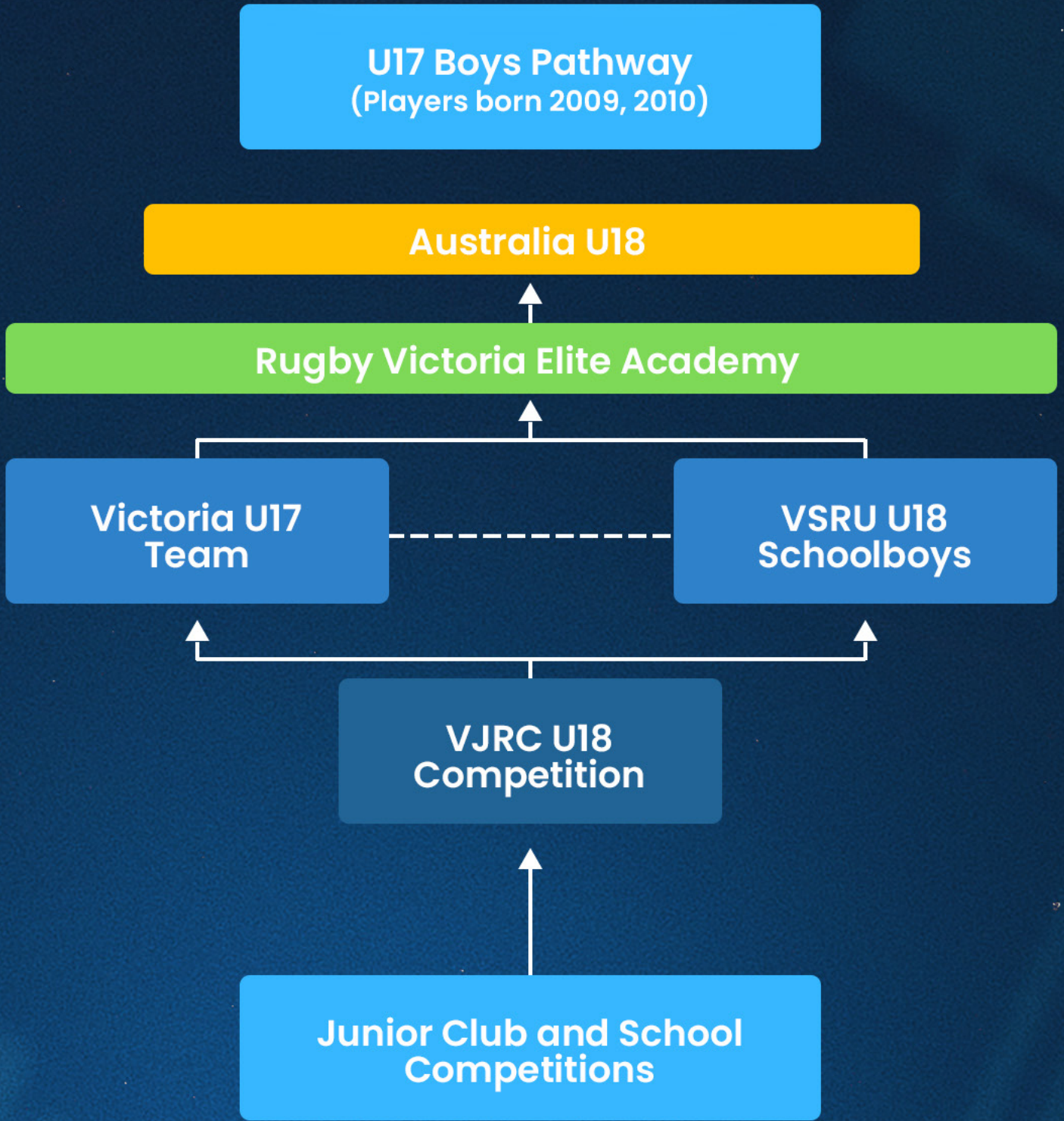
Eligibility:

- VJRC – Open to all U17 players
- Rugby Vic U17 team – selected from VJRC and club/school competitions.

Within the Schoolboys program, players may be selected into either U17 or U18 teams, with U18 representing the highest level of competition at this stage.

The Australian Schools Junior Rugby Union Championships provide a direct pathway to Australian Schoolboys and Australia U18 selection.

U17 BOYS PATHWAY



U18 BOYS

The U18 program represents the final stage of the Rugby Victoria age-grade pathway, with a strong focus on performance, national selection and transition towards senior rugby.

Players are identified through VJRC and club/school rugby and selected into Victorian Schoolboys programs, delivered in partnership with the Victorian Schools Rugby Union (VSRU). At this stage, players compete at the highest level of schoolboy representative rugby through the Australian Schools Junior Rugby Union Championships.

The program is designed to prepare players for national selection, with opportunities to be identified for Australian Schoolboys and Australia U18 teams.

High-performing players may also progress into senior representative environments, including Victorian U20 programs, supported by ongoing Rugby Victoria Elite Academy involvement.

Timing:

- VJRC: March-April
- Development sessions: May-July
- ASJRU Championship: July
- RV Elite Academy: January-February, August-September, November-December
- Australia U18, Australian Schoolboys: September-October

U18 BOYS

Eligibility:

- VJRC – Open to all U18 players
- Rugby Vic U18 team – selected from VJRC and club/school competitions.

Selected players may have the opportunity to be involved in Victorian U20 programs, providing exposure to senior representative rugby and potential alignment with Super Rugby pathways, including the Brumbies Academy.

Victorian Schoolboys programs are delivered in partnership with the Victorian Schools Rugby Union (VSRU), aligned with Rugby Victoria's high-performance pathway.

The Australian Schools Junior Rugby Union Championships provide a direct pathway to Australian Schoolboys and Australia U18 selection.

U18 BOYS PATHWAY

U18 Boys Pathway
(Players born 2008, 2009, 2010)

Australia U18

Rugby Victoria Elite Academy

VSRU U18
Schoolboys

VJRC U18
Competition

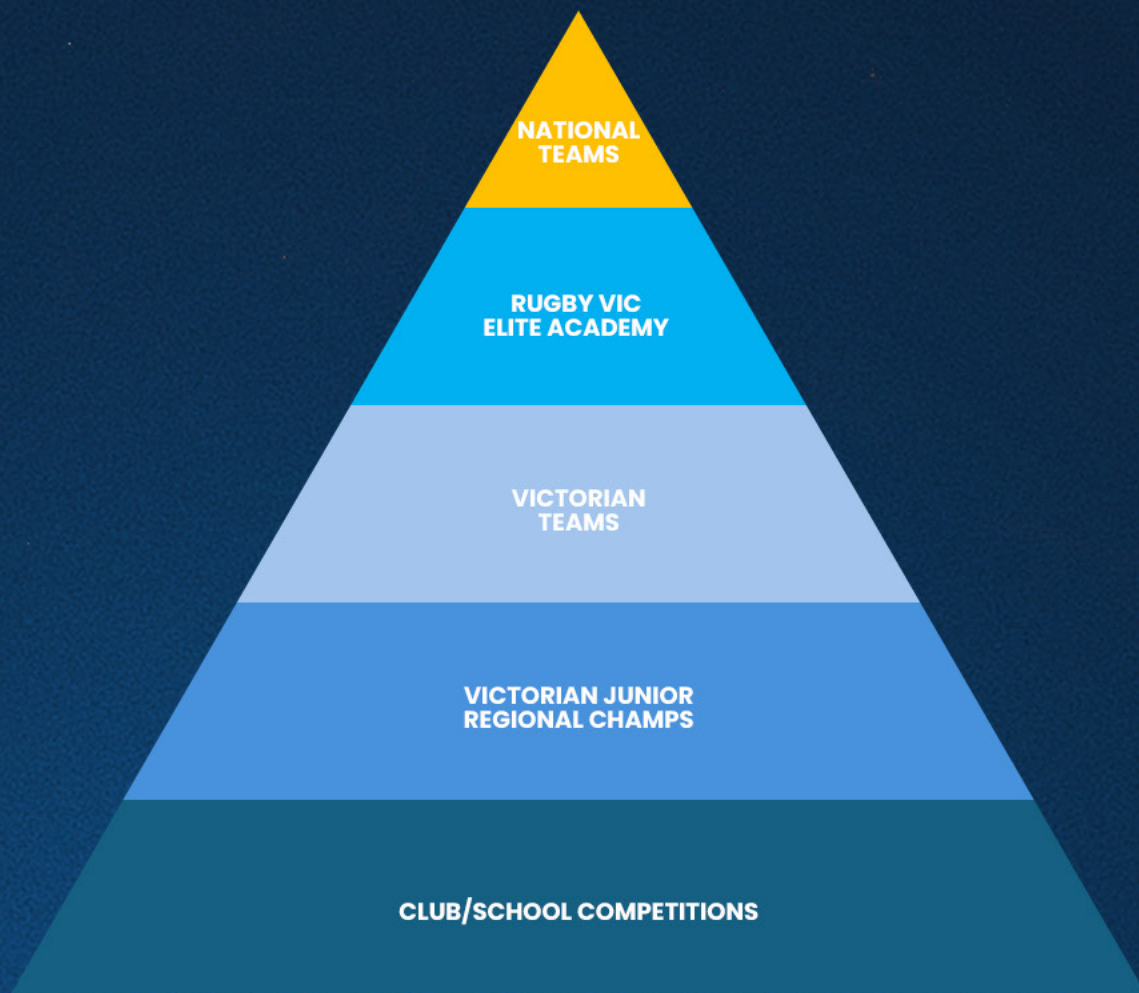
Junior Club and School
Competitions

**RUGBY
VIC**

**GIRLS PATHWAY
U13 - U18**

The Rugby Victoria Girls Pathway
Rugby Victoria provides a clear and connected pathway for female players, offering development opportunities across both Sevens and XV formats.

The pathway is designed to: Identify and develop talent
Provide representative playing opportunities
Prepare players for national and professional environments



Players can enter and progress through the pathway at different stages, with opportunities across both formats supporting long-term development.

RUGBY
VIC

U13 GIRLS

The U13 Victorian Junior Rugby Championship (VJRC) is the first entry point into the Rugby Victoria pathway for U12 and U13 players.

The program provides players with access to a series of high level centralised training sessions delivered by Rugby Victoria pathway coaches. These sessions introduce players to the core skills within the Rugby Victoria skill framework, as well as the key principles of play that underpin our high-performance environments.

At the conclusion of the development phase, players are selected into four regional teams (Waring, Beek, Woorwoor and Treang), competing in a tournament alongside the top U13 players across the state.

Timing:

- Runs following the completion of the club and school season
- Mid September to Early October

Eligibility:

- Open to all U12 and U13 players

U13 GIRLS PATHWAY

U13 Girls Pathway
(Players born 2013, 2014)

**VJRC U13
Competition**

**Junior Club and School
Competitions**



U16 GIRLS

The U16 program is the entry point into the Rugby Victoria girls high-performance pathway, providing opportunities across both Sevens and XVs formats.

Players begin with a VJRC pre-season program, where they are identified for selection into the Victoria U16 Girls Sevens team, competing at the national championships in July.

In the XVs format, a Victoria U16 Girls team is selected to compete in the national provincial competition following the club and school season. Selection is based on performances in club and school rugby, as well as the Sevens campaign.

The U16 stage is also the first opportunity for players to be selected into the Rugby Victoria Girls Elite Academy, with identification occurring through VJRC, state programs and club/school rugby.

Timing:

- VJRC: March-April
- Victoria U16 Girls 7s: June-July
- Rugby Victoria U16 Girls (15 a side): August-September
- RV Elite Academy: January-February, May, November-December

Eligibility:

- Open to U16 players identified through VJRC, club and school rugby

Dual Format Pathway

Players have the opportunity to develop across both Sevens and XVs, with both formats providing aligned pathways into national programs.

U16 GIRLS PATHWAY

U16 Girls Pathway
(Players born 2010, 2011, 2012)

Rugby Victoria Elite Academy

Rugby Vic U16
Girls XVs

VJRC U16G
Competition

Junior Club and School
Competitions

U16 GIRLS SEVENS PATHWAY

U16 Girls Sevens Pathway
(Players born 2010, 2011, 2012)

Rugby Victoria Elite Academy

Rugby Vic U18
School Girls 7s

VJRC U18
Competition

Junior Club and School
Competitions

RUGBY
VIC

U18 GIRLS

The U18 program represents the final stage of the Rugby Victoria girls age-grade pathway, with a focus on performance, national selection and progression into high-performance and professional environments.

Players begin with a VJRC pre-season program and may be identified for selection into the Victoria U18 Girls Sevens team, competing at the national championships in July.

In the XVs format, a Victoria U18 Girls team is selected to compete in the national provincial competition following the club and school season. Selection is based on performances in club and school rugby, as well as the Sevens campaign.

High-performing players may be selected into the Australian U18 Girls Sevens team or identified for Super W programs (XV) and Super Rugby Next Gen Sevens programs, providing exposure to semi-professional environments and a pathway towards national senior teams, including the Wallaroos and Australia Sevens.

Selected players continue to access the Rugby Victoria Girls Elite Academy, supporting their ongoing development within a high-performance environment.

Timing:

- VJRC: March-April
- Victoria U16 Girls 7s: June-July
- Rugby Victoria U16 Girls (15 a side): August-September
- RV Elite Academy: January-February, May, November-December
- Australia U18 girls 7s: November-December

U18 GIRLS

Eligibility:

- Open to U18 players identified through VJRC, club and school rugby

Professional Pathway

Outstanding U18 players may be identified for Super W (XV) or Super Rugby Next Gen Sevens programs, providing exposure to semi-professional environments and progression towards national senior teams.

U18 GIRLS PATHWAY

U18 Girls Pathway
(Players born 2008, 2009, 2010)

Wallaroos

Super W TID Opportunity

Rugby Victoria Elite Academy

Rugby Vic U18
Girls XVs

VJRC U18
Competition

Junior Club and School
Competitions

U18 GIRLS SEVENS PATHWAY



ELITE ACADEMY

The Rugby Victoria Elite Academy provides a high-performance development environment for the state's top emerging players.

The program is designed to accelerate development and support players in transitioning from age-grade rugby into national and high-performance pathways.

Selected players receive additional support across key areas of performance, with a focus on preparing more Victorian athletes for national team selection.

The Academy plays a critical role in bridging the gap between representative rugby and elite national programs.

Players in the Academy receive:

- Advanced technical and tactical coaching
- Strength and conditioning support
- Performance education (nutrition, recovery, mindset)
- Individual development planning
- Exposure to high-performance standards and expectations

High-Performance Environment

The Elite Academy provides an additional level of support for high-performing players, designed to accelerate development and prepare them for national selection.

HOW PLAYERS ARE SELECTED

Players are selected based on a combination of performance, potential and behaviours across three key areas:

1. Technical and tactical Gold Standards
 1. Core skill pillars
 2. Position specific skill profile

GOLD STANDARD – PILLARS

CATCH/PASS	BALL CARRY	GROUNDWORK	CLEANOUT	TACKLE
OUTSIDE HAND EARLY	FOOTWORK	NORTH	BULLET/BLAST	SFSS
NORTH (INSIDE SHOULDER)	FEND	SNAP	CAPTURE/KILL	PUNCH
PUNCH TO TARGET	FIGHT	PLACE		WRAP
	FINISH			

GOLD STANDARD – POSITION SPECIFIC

AGRESSIVE SET PIECE

PROP	HOOKER	LOCK
<p>SET PIECE SCRUM, LINEOUT, MAUL, RESTART</p> <p>CONTACT BALL CARRY, TACKLE, BREAKDOWN</p> <p>RUCK DEFENSE DECISION MAKING & EXECUTION</p>	<p>SET PIECE LINEOUT, THROW SCRUM, MAUL, RESTART</p> <p>CONTACT BALL CARRY, TACKLE, BREAKDOWN</p> <p>RUCK DEFENSE DECISION MAKING & EXECUTION</p>	<p>SET PIECE SCRUM + LINEOUT, MAUL, RESTART</p> <p>CONTACT BALL CARRY, TACKLE, BREAKDOWN</p> <p>RUCK DEFENSE DECISION MAKING & EXECUTION</p>

DOMINANT COLLISIONS

FLANKER	NO 8	CENTRE
<p>TACKLE EFFICIENCY, PHYSICALITY, VOLUME</p> <p>BREAKDOWN DECISION MAKING, ACCURACY, SUPPORT</p> <p>ATTACK BALL CARRY, LINE POWER, SPEED, LINK</p>	<p>CARRY POWER, GAINLINE, VOLUME, PASS/OFFLOAD</p> <p>DEFENSE PHYSICAL, PRESENCE, IMPACT</p> <p>BREAKDOWN SUPPORT, BODY SHIFTER</p>	<p>ATTACK CREATOR, BALL CARRY, LINES PASSING LINK</p> <p>DEFENSE COMMUNICATION, MOVEMENT, PRESENCE & IMPACT</p> <p>BREAKDOWN SUPPORT, DECISION MAKING</p>

GOLD STANDARD – POSITION SPECIFIC

STARTERS & FINISHERS

SCRUM HALF	FLY HALF	BACK 3
<p>DISTRIBUTION BALL PLAYING, PASS, KICK, RUN</p> <p>DEFENSE CONDUCTOR, VOICE, BOSS, FILL</p> <p>GAME CONTROLLER SUPPORT, DECISION MAKING</p>	<p>GAME MANAGEMENT KNOWLEDGE, ALIGNMENT, COMMUNICATION</p> <p>ATTACK TRIPLE THREAT, PASS, KICK, RUN</p> <p>DEFENSE SETPIECE, BACKFIELD PHASE, TRANSITION</p>	<p>ATTACK STRIKER & FINISHER, SPEED & AGILITY, BALL HANDLING</p> <p>BACKFIELD TRACKING & ORGANISE, HIGH BALL CATCH, KICK</p> <p>DEFENSE EDGE & BACKFIELD, 1 V 1 TACKLE</p>

2. Behaviours and Values

1. Team first behaviours
2. Growth mindset
3. Accountability (preparation, punctuality, consistency)

3. Athletic potential

4. Speed, power and movement
5. Physicality and workrate
6. Capacity for future development

Selection Philosophy

Selection is based on both current performance and future potential. Players may enter and progress through the pathway at different stages.

YOUR JOURNEY STARTS HERE

Rugby Victoria is committed to supporting players at every stage of their development.

- Play and perform in your club or school environment
- Take opportunities to engage in pathway programs
- Focus on continuous improvement and development

There is no single pathway – players can enter and progress at different stages.

For more information contact:

✉ elitepathways@vic.rugby

🌐 www.vic.rugby

📷 [@rugbyvictoria](https://www.instagram.com/rugbyvictoria)

RUGBY
VIC