

1. TEAM RULES AND REQUIREMENTS

1.1. Participation in the HGC Australian and New Zealand.

- (a) HGC Australian and New Zealand is a team-based competition comprising two divisions:
 - i) Heroes ANZ Open Division; and
 - ii) HGC ANZ Premier division.

1.2. Eligible Participants

- (a) In order to be eligible to compete, the following criteria must be met by all members of the team:
 - i) Legal residents of Australia or New Zealand
 - ii) The age of majority in your country of residence
 - iii) Have authorised access to a full Battle.net Account registered on Blizzard's Battle.net service with a Heroes of the Storm license with access to fourteen (14) playable heroes.
- (b) Teams may have a maximum of two members who are not residents of Australia or New Zealand. These members must be on VISAs with a fixed address (ie Student or Work VISAs but not Tourist VISAs) and will remain in the country for the duration of the season.

1.3. Team Composition

- (a) Save and except for as provided in paragraph 2.2, none of the Team Members may be associated with more than one Team in the HGC Australian and New Zealand.
- (b) Teams are comprised of:
 - i) five (5) core players, and
 - ii) one (1) registered reserve player;

herein collectively referred to as “Team Members”.

- (c) Each Team Member must be an Eligible Participant as defined in section 1.2.
- (d) Teams must nominate one person to be the primary point of contact for the team (“the Team Representative”). Any communications made by a Blizzard or an official league representative to the Team Representative will be deemed to have been communicated to the Team.
- (e) The Eligible Participants who are designated as Team Members to play for the Team in the HGC Australian and New Zealand Premier will be considered the (“Active Roster”) for the Team.
- (f) Only players who are on the Active Roster at the conclusion of the Team’s final game of the Australia and New Zealand Finals will be eligible to receive prizes from Blizzard.

1.4. Team Name and Player BattleTags

- (a) Team name must be deemed appropriate by Blizzard. Blizzard reserves the right to ask Teams to change their name or to directly change Team names that are seen as unfit for the Tournament.
- (b) Player’s BattleTags must be deemed appropriate by Blizzard. Blizzard reserves the right to ask Players to change their BattleTag or to directly change BattleTags that are seen as unfit for the Tournament. Blizzard may also insert Player’s Team Name as a part of the Player’s BattleTag to enhance the viewing experience for fans.

2. COMPETITIVE AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND HEROES OF THE STORM LEAGUE STRUCTURE

2.1. Roster Restrictions

- (a) Every team that participates in the Australian and New Zealand Qualifiers is subject to the following Roster Restrictions:
- (b) Teams that participate in the official HGC Australian and New Zealand Premier League (including Preseason Qualifiers and Premier) will not be allowed to change any of their Team members during the course of an HGC ANZ Phase except during the Agency Period, defined in section 2.3.
- (c) Tournament Officials may exercise a discretion to allow player movement in extenuating circumstances. Such circumstances may include medical illness.
- (d) Teams that participate in the HGC Australian and New Zealand Open Division must observe the core-of-three rule: in order for the team to retain points throughout the Open Division Phase, at least three team members must remain on the team's core roster. These three players are required to play in each points-scoring match, except where substitutions are explicitly authorised by a tournament administrator in writing.
- (e) A phase is deemed to be concluded once the finals series has taken place to determine a Phase champion. In the case of HGC ANZ Premier, this will be at the Intercontinental Clash for each phase.
- (f) A team that disbands (more than three players are leaving the team) will be automatically disqualified from the Australian and New Zealand Qualifiers. A team that is disqualified will lose all standings points that they have earned and the players will have no claim to any such points.
 - i) Any standings points that a disqualified team held will be removed and will not be redistributed in any way.
 - ii) The team name remains with the 3 players as the majority.

- (g) If a Team disbands and a new team is formed comprising at least two (2) members of the original team (Team A), then the highest ranking Open Division team shall be invited to play in a best-of-five series against Team A with the winner of that series being awarded the slot in HGC ANZ Premier for the remainder of that Phase.
- (h) If a Team disbands into two separate teams (“Team A” and “Team B”) then Team A, Team B and the highest ranking Open Division team will play a best-of-five series to determine who will be awarded the slot in HGC ANZ Premier for the remainder of that Phase.
- (i) A Player who has competed:
 - i) in four (4) or more rounds of Open Division Competition; and
 - ii) on behalf of a team who has qualified for HGC ANZ Premier via either Preseason Qualifiers or the Promotion process as referred to in section 3.2 (“the Qualified Team”)

will not be permitted to compete on behalf of any team other than the Qualified Team for the duration of the Phase for which that team qualified (“the Qualified Phase”).

- (j) A Team who attempts to poach a Player (as referred to in sub paragraph (i) above) prior to the conclusion of the Qualified Phase may be penalised. Such penalties may include deduction of points, withdrawal from the league and in the most serious instances, may be banned from competing in future HGC ANZ leagues and tournaments.
- (k) A Player meeting the conditions set out in sub paragraph (2.1(i)) above who leaves an Open Division Team with a view to circumventing the provisions contained in this section 2.1 may be subject to penalties. Such penalties may include being banned from competing in future HGC ANZ leagues and tournaments.

2.2. Emergency Substitutes (HGC ANZ Premier)

- (a) In the event that a Team Member is unavailable to play in a match due to extenuating circumstances, the Team may source an emergency substitute to compete in place of that player.
- (b) An Emergency Substitute may be a player who is competing in Open Division for that Phase but not include a Team Member from another HGC ANZ Premier team.

- (c) A Team will have the ability to utilize an Emergency Substitute on no more than two occasions within a Phase. If a Team has played an Emergency Substitute twice in one Phase, the Team will not be permitted to use an Emergency Substitute for the remainder of that Phase.

2.3. Agency Period

- (a) Teams that will play in two consecutive Phases of Premier may make changes to their Active Roster during the Agency Period which begins on 22 May 2018 and ends on 11 June 2018.
- (b) All Active Roster changes must be submitted to the League Administrator and are subject to Blizzard's approval. Only roster changes submitted to Blizzard by the Team Representative are eligible for review. Any changes approved by Blizzard will be determined as final and binding and players may not contest a roster change once it has been submitted by the Team Representative.
- (c) Poaching
 - i) Team Owners and Team Management of one Team are not allowed to contact, or discuss with, another player on a different active roster to proposition any method of joining their Team or another Team. Any Team Owner or Team Management participating in this activity may be subject to the harshest penalties of the HGC ANZ.
 - ii) For clarity, Team Owners & Team Management may contact other Team Owners & Team Management to discuss trading players at any time, however no one outside of a player's Team may approach said player with regards to changing rosters.
- (d) Roster release window: May 22 – May 31, 2018
 - i) During this period, Teams or players must send documentation to Blizzard declaring their intent to release a player (in the case of a Team) or be released (in the case of a player) from a Team's Active Roster.
 - ii) Any player may be released from a Team.

- iii) Active Roster releases will not be recognized after May 31, 2018. Any attempt to release a player after May 31, 2018 will be penalized at Blizzard's sole discretion. Any player who opts to leave a Team of their own accord after May 31, 2018 will be barred from all competitive Heroes of the Storm play for a period of six (6) months thereafter.
 - iv) A team that has not played in Premier in the Phase preceding the Agency Period may not release any of their players.
- (e) Roster acquisition window: June 1 – June 11, 2018
 - i) During this period, Teams must send documentation to Blizzard declaring an intent to acquire a player.
 - ii) Active Roster acquisitions will not be recognized after June 11, 2018. Any attempt to acquire a player after June 11, 2018 will be penalized at Blizzard's sole discretion.
 - iii) Acquired players must fulfil the player eligibility requirements specified in Section 1, above.
 - iv) Acquired players may be acquired from the HotS ANZ Open Division.
 - v) A team that has not played in Premier in the Phase preceding the Agency Period may acquire an additional player to fill the Reserve position, if the position was not filled during Open Division participation.
- (f) Roster approval and finalization: June 11 – June 15, 2018
 - i) During this period, Blizzard will approve or reject all Active Roster changes in its sole discretion.
- (g) Blizzard may allow additional player replacements in extreme circumstances, as determinable in Blizzard's sole discretion.

2.4. Australian and New Zealand Format

- (a) Both Heroes Open Division and HGC ANZ Premier will be played over a period of nine (9) weeks with one week break mid-season.
- (b) HGC ANZ Premier will be double round robin format, best-of-three (3) series.
- (c) HGC ANZ Premier matches must be played on the Tournament Realm.

2.5. Tournament Rules; Match Details

- (a) In each Tournament match, two teams will compete against each other by playing Heroes of the Storm on the Battle.net server operated by Blizzard. Matches will be played in the “Custom” game mode and “Tournament Draft” lobby mode.
- (b) Blizzard, at its sole discretion, will select a pool of nine Battlegrounds for the Tournament prior to the commencement of the Australian and New Zealand Qualifiers. The Battlegrounds pool can be changed at Blizzard’s sole discretion.
- (c) Each match will begin with an initial Battleground selection process. One team will be chosen at random to start the process (here labelled “**Team A**”), and will begin by banning one battleground. The other team (“**Team B**”) will then ban one battleground. Team A will then select a battleground from the remaining (unbanned) battlegrounds. Since each team plays each other twice in each phase, teams will have both first and second pick in every match up.
- (d) The next time that Team A and Team B meet in the Phase, Team B will begin by banning one battleground.
- (e) Players will be able to select from any heroes that are available to them on their Battle.net accounts and that have been commercially released in the region of play for at least two weeks before the match, except that Blizzard, in its sole discretion, may restrict certain heroes from the Australian and New Zealand Qualifiers Events at any point during the Australian and New Zealand Qualifiers.
- (f) Each game within a match will begin with a drafting process to determine which heroes each team will play. Each team will have 60 seconds per selection phase in which to ban and pick heroes. If a team runs out of time, its pick will be randomly selected or it’s ban

will be missed. The team that began the battleground selection process (Team A) will go second during the first game's hero selection process, in the following sequence:

Hero Selection Sequence	
1.	Team B will ban one hero
2.	Team A will ban one hero
3.	Team B will choose one hero
4.	Team A will choose two heroes
5.	Team B will choose two heroes
6.	Team A will ban one hero
7.	Team B will ban one hero
8.	Team A will choose two heroes
9.	Team B will choose two heroes
10.	Team A will choose one hero

- (g) In the following games of a match, the losing team of the previous game will have the choice for Battlegrounds selection or first hero pick in the draft. Battlegrounds may not be repeated during a match.
- (h) Blizzard or their local partner, in their sole discretion, may require that a game or match be paused, suspended, replayed, or forfeited by a team in the event that one or more players lose their connections or the game is otherwise affected by abnormal technical or nontechnical issues, or based upon violations of the Specific Rules or otherwise unfair or unsportsmanlike conduct.
- (i) Pauses
 - i) Teams may pause a total of 3 times per game. The amount of pause time must not exceed 10 minutes per game per team.
 - ii) Referees reserve the right to unpause a game at any time and to extend pause time at any time.
 - iii) Any team abusing pause will be punished and automatically be ineligible to any prize in the ongoing match. The abuse of pause will also result in a default loss in the ongoing match. Blizzard as its sole discretion may apply additional sanction.
- (j) Bugs & Exploit

- i) Any use of a known bug or exploit will result in the team using the bug or exploit being ineligible to any prize for the ongoing match. Any use of bug or exploit will result in a default loss. Blizzard as its sole discretion may apply additional sanctions.
- ii) Known bugs and exploits are defined as anything made known previous to the game in question by the administrators or any report that is public on the official bug report forums, the Heroes of the Storm Subreddit (/r/heroesofthestorm) or any form of social media.
- iii) In the case of a bug being identified only after a match has been completed in which the bug was present, any maps played where the bug was present, should be replayed.

(k) Game Forfeitures

- i) If fewer than five Eligible Participants on a team's roster are present ten minutes after the scheduled match time, that team forfeits the match.
- ii) Blizzard, in its sole discretion, may require that a game or match be paused, suspended, replayed, or forfeited by a team in the event that one or more players lose their connections or the game is otherwise affected by abnormal technical or nontechnical issues, or based upon violations of the Official Rules or otherwise unfair or unsportsmanlike conduct.

(l) Replays

- i) All players are required to retain their replays for at least 14 days after any Official Match has finished.
- ii) Every player that participates in the HGC ANZ Premier is automatically required to submit all replays to the Administrators.
- iii) Players who compete in Heroes Open Division may be required to submit their replays to the Administrators upon request within the 14 day holding period. A

player and / or team who fails to submit a replay when asked to do so may be subject to penalties.

- iv) Administrators will communicate directly with all persons who have their replays requested in order to obtain the replays in a method that is feasible for all parties.

2.6. Prize Awards

- (a) The teams that successfully place in the Australian and New Zealand Finals will receive the prize as notified by Blizzard prior to commencement of the tournament.
- (b) As at the date of publication of these Rules, prizes in relation to HGC ANZ are as follows:

Placement	Prize Payout
1st	AUD 16,000
2nd	AUD 8,500
3rd	AUD 5,000
4th	AUD 3,500
5 th	AUD 2,500
6 th	AUD 2,000
7 th	AUD 1,500
8 th	AUD 1,000

- (c) National, state and local taxes, including VAT taxes, which are associated with the receipt or use of any prizes are the sole responsibility of the winner. All cash prizes will be paid in Australian dollars. Winners will be required to complete and submit to Blizzard all governmental and tax forms required to receive a cash prize, including bank information and any other forms required by the country in which the player is a resident. Additional paperwork that Blizzard requests, including waivers, indemnities and releases, must be submitted to Blizzard before Blizzard will provide the winner with any prize. Prizes are not transferable.

- (d) No substitutions or exchanges (including for cash) of any non-cash prizes will be permitted, except that Blizzard reserves the right to substitute a prize of equal or greater value for any noncash prize.
- (e) All Eligible Participants must be verified by Blizzard to ensure their eligibility prior to being declared a winner and/or receiving any prize. Display of statistics in the game (e.g., on a leader board) during the League does not entitle any Eligible Participant to a prize. In the event of a dispute as to the identity of any winner, Blizzard will resolve the dispute using the email addresses of Team Members used on the Battle.net Account.
- (f) As a condition of being awarded any prize, winners may be required to execute and deliver to Blizzard a signed affidavit of eligibility and acceptance of these Rules and an indemnity and release of liability. In the event that a winner is under the age of majority, the winner's parent or legal guardian will be required to execute and deliver such documents. Failure to return a signed affidavit and related documents within seven days of request may result in forfeiture of prize. Potential winners are responsible for ensuring return of all required materials; proof of sending will not be considered proof of receipt by Blizzard.
- (g) Blizzard will post a list of winners at <http://heroesofthestorm.com/esports> no later than seven days after the end of each Phase. The list will remain available for six months on the website.
- (h) Any team or player that displays unsportsmanlike conduct during a Blizzard sanctioned tournament may be subject to penalties. Blizzard reserves the right to take action against any team and/or player whose conduct has been called into question. Possible ramifications may include but are not excluded to;
 - i) A reduction in prize money payment
 - ii) Total prize money forfeit
 - iii) Disqualification from the tournament
 - iv) Denied eligibility for future tournaments.

3. HGC ANZ PREMIER – QUALIFICATION, PROMOTION AND RELEGATION

3.1. Qualification

- (a) Eight teams will be eligible to compete in HGC ANZ Premier in 2018 for each phase.
- (b) For Phase 1, the top 4 finishing teams from season 4 2017 will be invited to compete in HGC ANZ Premier. This invitation is conditional upon the team having retained at least 3 of its 5 player main roster.
- (c) A preseason qualifier shall determine the remaining teams to make up HGC ANZ Premier Phase 1.

3.2. Promotion and Relegation

- (a) At the conclusion of each phase:
 - i) The top two ranking teams from Heroes ANZ Open Division (“the Promotion Candidates”) shall be eligible to compete for promotion to HGC ANZ Premier in the next Phase.
 - ii) The bottom two ranking teams in HGC ANZ Premier (“the Relegation Candidates”) shall be required to compete against and defeat one of Promotion Candidates to retain their position in the HGC ANZ Premier Division for the next Phase; and
 - iii) The first placed Promotion Candidate team will have the option to select which of the Relegation Candidates they will compete against and the remaining Promotion Candidate will compete against the other Relegation Candidate.
 - iv) The winners from the matches played pursuant to this clause shall be promoted (or remain as the case may be) within HGC ANZ Premier for the next Phase with the losers being able to compete in the Heroes Open Division.