

ART NEWS FLASH - 29 JULY, 2026

Domestic Grades

Kia Ora skating whānau,

The Artistic Committee has reviewed feedback and grading structures and are excited to share the following updates for the 2026 domestic skating season:

Kiwi Skate Whetū

Kiwi Skate Whetū is a new Kiwi Skate level created to be a bridge between Kiwi Skate & Star Skate to help ease the transition from learn to skate and into potentially competitive grades by using similar terminology and formatting.

The Artistic Committee recommends that the Kiwi Skate Whetū level requirements be used as the standard for Beginner grades at club events and league/beginner competitions.

Domestic Grades:

For all domestic grades we will be moving towards the same naming structure as 2025 Loops Grades, with Tuatahi, Kaiaka & Mātanga replacing Primary/Preliminary, Intermediate & Open.

The minimum ages will be reduced to allow skaters to access progressive options based on skill not age - and in some cases where the discipline allows flexibility with what a skater can present (ie Freeskating & Freedance), Intermediate/Kaiaka will be removed. For those disciplines where content is compulsory (ie Figures & Compulsories) Intermediate/Kaiaka will remain. And lastly for Loops where we previously had two grades competing the same content but split by age (Primary & Preliminary Loops), Primary will be removed and Preliminary/Tuatahi will have the age limit lowered.

Freeskating & Freedance Grades:

- **New Grade: Tuatahi**
Preliminary and Intermediate Freeskating will be merged into one grade: Tuatahi, aligning closely with WS Cadet Intermediate to support clearer progression.
 - Age eligibility: 10 years and over
 - Final requirements will follow the release of 2026 World Skate criteria.
- **Open Freeskating becomes Mātanga**
The grade name will change to Mātanga, but requirements remain the same.
 - New lower eligibility age: 14 years

Loops Grades:

- The Kaiaka Loops grade will be removed in 2026.
- Tuatahi and Mātanga Loops requirements will remain unchanged.
- Skaters in Cadet, Youth, and Junior Figure grades may only enter Mātanga Loops.

Solo Dance (Compulsories) & Figures:

- Grade names will be updated as follows:
 - Preliminary → Tuatahi
 - Intermediate → Kaiaka (min. age 12)
 - Open → Mātanga (min. age 14)
- Requirements for these grades will be reviewed and confirmed ahead of the 2026 season.

A flow chart has been sent out with this newsflash to help explain these changes.

Please circulate this News Flash to all your club members.

Yours In Skating,

Janine Price

NZFRS Artistic Roller Sports Committee Secretary