



WILLIAMSTOWN SC

PLAYER GRADING

&

TEAM SELECTION POLICY



Williamstown SC

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Appendix 1
Grading Criteria's



PLAYER GRADING AND SELECTION POLICY

This policy document relates to team composition as well as match playing time and has been developed from the club's philosophy of 'being inclusive of players of all skill levels and the drive to help all players to develop to the best that they can be'.

POLICY OVERVIEW

The aim of this Policy is to assist players and their parents to understand the clubs process of placing players into a team that best suits their level of ability.

It is a requirement of Williamstown Soccer Club that all players wishing to participate in teams from U9's and up be graded into teams according to their ability.

It is the club's policy to grade players every year to ensure that all players have the opportunity to progress.

The club encourages players and parents not to focus on which team a player is selected in, but rather, on the players own development during the season. It is important that parents are supportive of their children during the grading process.

As a club we follow the FFA's National Curriculum and as such our grading and selection policies is based on the building blocks which underpin the curriculum framework, namely to ensure all players are playing at the level appropriate for their age and skill level.

There will not be a single grading session and coaches will grade players based on what they know of players from the previous season(s) and performances and behaviours during the grading sessions.

Our training setup, in these grading sessions, will allow coaches to move players between training groups in order to assess their development when matched against players of different skill levels.

To ensure we get an independent view on each kid we cooperate with the Football Star Academy who also submit their grading of the individual child.



POSITIVES & NEGATIVES OF PLAYER GRADING

There are some advantages in not grading players, such as maintaining friendships and family social groups; however this soon becomes an issue in several ways.

- **Peer pressure** – Other players will soon let their feelings be known when it comes down to ability and from our experience this often does more damage than any ill feelings resulting from the grading itself.
- **Exodus of talented players** – Players of above average skills and their parents will become frustrated and eventually leave for another club that does grade their players in the hope their child is put into a better team. The player's development may also stagnate because they are not being challenged to improve.
- **Reduced enjoyment** – Players who play in a grade significantly above their skill level will often feel left out as the more skillful players take control of games. Often this can result in the less skillful player leaving soccer in search of another sport.

To not grade the children based on ability would take away the opportunity for some to progress to representative soccer at a later stage. Soccer is a competitive sport. If you would like your child to play at a less competitive level then ask the grading staff if they can be placed in a lower grade when grading is conducted at the start of the season.

An integral part of grading is the information available about the player from his or her coach in the previous year. The coaches will seek input from previous coaches regarding player attributes and playing ability. Grading will be concluded early in the pre-season so as to give teams and coaches the maximum amount of time to work together before the season starts.

Teams will be selected based on skill, technique and attitude at training as outlined Williamstown Soccer Club Grading Criteria (see Appendix 1). Players and parents need to be aware that from U13 onwards playing position will also be a factor in grading. For example, the ten most skilled players may not necessarily be selected in the same team if they are all strikers or all goalkeepers. The overall team composition is an important consideration during the grading process.



TEAM SELECTION AND PLAYER GRADING GUIDELINES

- FFV competitions from U8 to U12 are graded as Kangaroos, Wallabies & Joeys level.
- FFV Competitions for U13 to U18 are graded as A, B, or C, level.
- Grading involves selecting a balanced team with the best ability from the pool of players in any age group.
- The team coaches will conduct grading with input from the Coaching Coordinator.
- Players in the U7 age group will be allocated to a team based on the number of coaches available.
- All players in an age group above U7 will be graded and players will be assigned to teams based on their skills and abilities as per the Williamstown Soccer Club Grading Criteria.
- Where it applies, team grading will take place pre-season with at least 2 training (grading) sessions occurring before preliminary team assignments are made.
- The process must involve consultation between age group coaches and the Coaching Coordinator. Parents may also be consulted if deemed appropriate.
- All players, returning and new will be expected to attend the relevant grading sessions to be eligible for selection.
- If at the start of the season there are excess players in an age group or there is no appointed coach, players will be advised ASAP to provide an opportunity to register at another club.
- Coaches always have the right to request that their children are allocated to the team they are coaching.
- Where there are players of similar ability and limited age group vacancies, preference will be given to returning players of Williamstown Soccer Club.
- Once grading is complete and teams selected, a player cannot change teams without approval from the respective coaches and the Coaching Coordinator. Players may be asked to move up or down grades within an age group due to a player's level of ability or to cover for absent or injured players in other grades; any such movements will be at the advice of the players' coach in consultation with their parents and the Coaching Coordinator.
- Once assigned to a team, players will train with their respective team and coach.



Ideally, all teams in an age group will train at the same time to allow interaction between teams as the coaches deem fit. However, this is not always possible as training times are dependent on the schedules of each individual coach.

Coaches shall meet regularly and are encouraged to discuss their teams and players capabilities.

The coaches in any age group should act for the benefit of all players in that age group and not just for the members of their team. All players must play in their own age group unless there is a valid reason for playing in an older or younger age group which must be approved by the Coaching Coordinator (see section on “Playing above your age group”).

During the regular season, players in an existing team may be invited to play in a team in an age group that is higher than their normal age group as a cover player. That player should not displace or deny adequate fair and reasonable playing time to the normal roster players, as a result of that player being brought in.

This does not include where a player may be regraded permanently to the higher age group. (See section on “Playing above your age group”).

Players may also be required to move up or down within their age group e.g. Kangaroos down to Wallabies or Joeys up to Wallabies. This move is in line with FFVs policy regarding player development and will done in discussion with coaches, the Coaching Coordinator and parents.

Players who have not paid fees, owe fees from prior seasons, or not registered with the FFV will not be eligible for team selection.

TEAM SIZES

Age Group	Field Number	Squad Size
U7	4	7
U8	7	10
U9	7	10
U10	9	13
U11	9	13
U12	9	13
U13	11	16
U14	11	16
U15	11	16
U16	11	16
U17	11	16
U18/20	11	16



GRADING APPEALS PROCESS

Parents and players are able to appeal a grading decision they feel is unfair or inappropriate by:

- Making a submission in writing to the Junior Coordinator requesting a review of the players grading, outlining why they think the grading is not correct.
- If the Coaching Coordinator refuses to conduct another grading or reconfirms the original grading then the player or parent may then make a written submission to the Club President, outlining why they think the grading is not correct.
- The President will consider this submission in consultation with the Junior Coordinator, and then make a decision on whether or not to change the players grading.
- The Executive decision is final.

GIRLS ONLY TEAMS

The same selection principles as set out above will also apply to the selection of Girl only teams. If girls do not get selected in a girl's only team they can still be selected in a mixed team. Where possible WSC will allocate girls 11 years or older into girl only teams.

PLAYING ABOVE YOUR AGE GROUP

Point Cook Soccer Club supports the FFVs policy regarding player development which states that it is important that children are constantly challenged or they will get bored. Players that will be considered for playing above their age group are those deemed by the coaches and the Coaching Coordinator to be highly skilled / talented. To be considered, players need to demonstrate that they can cope with the demands of the higher age group both physically and mentally. Decisions are made based on what is best for the player's development.

By adopting this policy, Point Cook Soccer Club is supporting policies for players from the FFA/FFV to better help develop football/soccer talents.



LATE REGISTRATIONS

Once teams have been finalised with their maximum number of players we will not add any late arriving players to a team and exceed the maximum team size. Should a vacancy occur in a team, the Coach and the Coaching Coordinator will assess the situation to determine whether it is necessary to replace that player and then a decision on the grading process will be adopted to access the late player.

In extraordinary situation, a maximum team size can be exceeded, which will be at the sole discretion of the Coach and the Junior Coordinator.

TEAM SELECTION DURING SEASON

- GENERAL

Preference will be given to children who regularly attend training and are reliable on game days. Team selection will be at the discretion of the coaching group and we seek your support to ensure that this policy is maintained.

- UNDER 14 AND ABOVE

Player rotation during the game remains the coaches' prerogative. All players should have equal time across the season meaning they could play for longer in some games than others. All players would also receive a fair and reasonable amount of game time each game.

Once a player reaches these age levels it is expected that positions will become more clearly defined and players will begin to play in more defined roles. However, all players would still be expected to play in a number of different positions during the season and even during a game so as to continue their football development.

Should a player be selected and play more than 5 times in a team at a higher level than their normal team within the same age group (U13 and above), they will automatically be a tied player to that team and no longer be able to be considered for selection for their normal team.

- UNDER 8 TO UNDER 13, & UNDER 13/14 GIRLS

Player rotation during the game remains the coaches' prerogative. The intent to rotate players through different playing positions throughout the season is to allow the player a fair and reasonable opportunity to develop ALL 4 core technical skills (First Touch, 1 v 1, Running with the Ball, and Striking the Ball). All players will receive fair and reasonable time across the season



meaning they could play for longer in some games than others. Player rotations will take place in a manner which ensures players are not on the side-line for a lengthy time.

- UNDER 8 AND BELOW

It is essential for the benefit of all players and the club that a mix of players of varying levels of skill and ability are placed in the same team to learn from each other and develop an appreciation of the game.

However the club is mindful of players wanting to play with friends and this is accommodated where possible.

Once the children reach under 9, all previous grading policies are changed to reflect those outlined above. That is the children are placed in teams based on their skill level, not where their friends are.

GRIEVANCES & ESCALATION DURING SEASON

If a parent or player feels that a decision is taken which they feel unfairly disadvantaged their child or themselves, they should in the first instance contact their respective coach.

Should it not be resolved within 7 days of notification to the coach, the item should then be escalated to Coaching Coordinator to review.

If the Coaching Coordinator is not able to resolve item to a satisfactory conclusion within 10 days, the item is then the escalated to the club's executive who will review all the facts and make the final decision.



APPENDIX 1

Grading Criterias