



MEMORANDUM

To: Junior Clubs
From: Football Development Manager
Date: 10th April 20204
Subject: Grading Guidelines and Recommendations
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Members

FSC Grading Guide

Introduction

FSC aim is to provide an Association club grading guide to ensure best practice and transparency is followed for all association junior clubs when grading age groups in preparation for a new football season to ensure all players are suitably graded and placed into a team where they will be suitably challenged and enjoy their football whilst ensuring fixtures remain competitive between two teams.

It's important that care is given to ensure that the love of the game is fostered in the correct way by delivering a grading process that gives every player the opportunity to showcase their abilities and talent in a professional and timely manner free from bias and pre-conception of the players ability and team they participated in the previous season.

Objective

The objective is to provide clubs clear guidance to deliver the following:

- Provide a process for all new and existing players at your club to be given the best and fairest opportunity to be graded into a team that is suitable for the current level of their ability.
- To reduce the opportunity of bias towards a player or a coach by appointing independent selectors where possible.
- Continue to nurture a love of the game by ensuring players are training and playing with players of similar ability and against opposition of similar ability to maintain competitiveness.

- Provide the opportunity for clubs to field competitive teams in graded age groups.
- Increase the development of a club culture over individual teams.
- Retention of players and coaches into the following season and beyond.

Process

Clubs initially receive registrations to their club by players. Once registrations numbers are finalised, the club needs to determine how many teams within any one age you will need to grade. Based on the previous season, decide which level they will be nominated to compete in for the forthcoming season, ie Division 1, 2 or 3.

Consideration also needs to be given to the genders of the players in these age groups and whether mixed or girls only competition are more appropriate.

Based on the number of registrations in any given age group, determine how players are to be selected within in each team to ensure the club has flexibility to move players up in the event of illness and injury, for example:

- 13 – Team A
- 14 – Team B
- 16 – Team C

The club should not under any circumstances make any promises to any player and/or parent of the team they will be allocated to for the forthcoming season prior to grading.

All player assessments must remain confidential and only be discussed by the club and the parent and player if requested and required.

Grading Selectors

1. The Grading Committee must be comprised of at least 2 members
2. As best practice and to ensure complete transparency when grading the players, where possible the club should source a recognised coach as part of the Grading Committee within the football community who has a minimum AFC/FFA C Licence coaching accreditation and who has ideally coached at an NPL level for a minimum of 2 years.
3. All members of the grading committee must declare any potential conflict of interest in the selection of teams. A potential conflict of interest includes, but not limited to:
 - Family or close relationships to a player
 - Business associations to the club
 - Third party coaching organisations who run programs with players in the team

All potential conflicts of interest will be brought to the attention of the club President and Secretary for consideration and management.

4. Grading committee must have suitable knowledge of the game and experience in grading players.

5. Grading committee must be aware of and comply with the the clubs grading policy and procedures.

Grading Sessions

To provide all players to the best opportunity to showcase their ability and talent, where possible provide all age groups with a minimum of 2 grading sessions.

Deliver 1-1.5 hour grading sessions depending on age that include a start, middle and end to the structure.

Grading Session 1

- Ball Mastery practices for selectors to observe the players ability on the ball (20 minutes)
- Small sided games, 1v1, 2v1, 2v2, 3v2, 3v3 for selectors to observe the players ability to make football decisions and perform football actions where opposition is present in small areas. (20 Mins)
- Larger games, 7v7, 9v9, 11v11 for selectors to observe the players ability to perform in a game format.

Grading Session 2

- Larger games 7v7, 9v9, 11v11 with players all being given the opportunity to play in different positions on the field. (60 minutes)

Selection Criteria - Using the below key competencies, grade the players into the following:

- *Advanced*
- *Intermediate*
- *Developing*

Key Competencies

1v1 Attack & Defence, Ball Mastery Moves

The ability of the player to beat an opponent in a 1v1 dual through manipulation of the ball using feints and change of direction ball mastery techniques whilst maintaining balance and the ability to win possession in a 1v1 dual.

Striking The Ball:

The ability to successfully pass the ball to a team-mate over a short, medium and long distance using inside and outside of the foot and laces and the ability to cross the ball and shoot at goal successfully.

1st Touch (or ball control):

The ability of the player to use both feet when receiving the ball, taking the 1st touch away from a defender and being able to use other parts of the body to receive the ball (other than the foot)

Running With the Ball

The ability of the player to dribble with both feet, change direction in possession and to avoid opponents.

Game Awareness

The ability to understand what is going on in the game, ie; to anticipate plays, make quick strategic decisions to maintain possession, create goalscoring opportunities and to prevent goal scoring opportunities.

Physical Capabilities

Players physical capabilities to perform all football actions, ie; speed over the first 10 metres, endurance, balance in attack and defence.

Personality Traits

A player's personality should be considered as part of the process to ensure a positive experience for the player and their potential teammates. This may be hard to assess on the day, however, may require a discussion with the players' existing coaches if there are any concerns.

- Demonstrates a strong work ethic.
- Desire to want to win the ball when not in possession.
- Be able to respond positively to instructions.
- Show commitment, dedication, and determination on the field of play.
- Communicates with their team mates on the field of play.
- Shows respect to teammates and opposition.

***Note:** The grading committees' role is to observe not just the players skill level but also the players attitude and work ethic.*

To capture all the above information, please refer to the **attached template**.

Grading Communication

At the conclusion of the final grading session, selection committee to submit the selections and recommendations to the club within 48 hours.

Club to notify players of the outcome of the grading sessions and the teams in which they have been allocated within 48 hours of receiving the team allocations from the grading committee.

Questions, Feedback and Appeals Process

If a player and or parent wishes to discuss the outcome of their child's grading, they are encouraged to email the club with their questions, concerns, feedback or complaints to the Club Secretary who will then investigate and discuss further with the Grading Committee prior to responding to the player and parent.

Yours Sincerely

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