



## **GRADING POLICY**

West Ryde Rovers Football Club  
(Amended September 2020)



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## DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version	Description of Change	Author	Owner	Approve	Issue Date
1.0	New Policy	L.Donald	WRRFC	AGM	
1.1	Change to layout only	L.Donald	WRRFC	GCM	17/05/2015
1.2	Update Document	L.Donald	WRRFC	GCM	TBA 2020

Legislation/Regulation	Reviewed by	Date of Review

## UPDATES AND DISTRIBUTION LIST

Suggested changes to this document shall be proposed by the document owner. These shall be reviewed with the Management Committee where relevant and, if applicable, approval of any proposed changes shall be provided to the General Committee.

The following shall be advised of policy and/or procedure changes:

- Management Committee,
- General Committee, and
- Any other roles identified as accountable or responsible.

## REVISIONS

The next revision of this document is to take place within 3 years after the last issue date unless there have been changes in legislation or scope of application.



## CLUB GRADING POLICY

### INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this document is to formulate the processes by which West Ryde Rovers Football Club (hereby referred to as WRRFC) will conduct its grading sessions on a yearly basis. This document should be accessible to members of WRRFC and the general football community.

### JUNIOR GRADING POLICY

The Grading Policy of WRRFC essentially is to be used to provide the Grading Committee (as confirmed by the WRRFC General Committee) with clear process and procedure outlines to ensure that WRRFC Grading is conducted with the utmost integrity, professionalism and transparency.

In general terms, senior teams (All Age and Over 35/45) are not put through a grading policy, as the Management Committee will oversee general placement of senior's teams in relation to previous year's performance, and overall request from players in each team. This process is, as always then at the discretion of the Association as the exact final Division each team will be placed.

Overall, WRRFC has some clear objectives in relation to the grading of our junior teams, which are as follows:

#### Players:

- Provide a clear, well defined process to ensure that all players are to be placed in a team that will:
- Best represent their individual level of skill and ability,
- Ensure teams formed are comprised of similarly skilled players,
- Maximise opportunities to develop and improve their skills
- Maximise their enjoyment and love of the game, and
- To provide clear and well managed pathways through age groups and divisions.

#### Club:

- Ensure that players are placed in teams in a fair and equitable manner by independent persons,
- Enable the club to properly assess and nominate team placing's (i.e. divisions) for the upcoming season, and
- Ensure that stakeholders (Players/Parents) concerns are taken into consideration and addressed as necessary.

### GRADING COMMITTEE

The Grading Committee is comprised of the elected Grading Coordinator of the WRRFC General Committee, the Coaching Director of WRRFC, plus an additional 3 senior members of the Club, who preferably have had at least 12 months experience on the WRRFC Committee, or are/have been experienced coaches at WRR.

The Grading Coordinator will act as overall coordinator and convenor of all aspects of the Grading process, and is to provide suggested team and division breakdowns to the WRRFC Management Committee prior to Team Nominations closing date, as determined by North West Sydney Football (NWSF)



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For all positions other than the Grading Coordinator and Coaching Director, nominations will be called for those interested in becoming a part of the Grading Committee. Nominations will be taken to a WRRFC General Committee Meeting, and a vote shall be undertaken to determine those that will be approved to become the Grading Committee for that year.

When grading age groups from Under 11's and above, coaches from the previous season will be invited to assist in an advisory capacity only at the initial grading session, whether they intend coaching in that age group again or not. These coaches will have a good knowledge of the players and can assist the Grading committee, who may have concerns with regards to particular player's skills or abilities.

The Grading Committee will make all final recommendations on team selections to the WRRFC Management Committee for approval. These recommendations are formed after analysing all recorded information and any documentation from the grading process and what may have been provided at the completion of the previous season by coaches/managers, via Player Evaluation Sheets (Refer Appendix A and B).

### AGE GROUPS

- Under 6 - 7 - There is no individual player grading, but a team ranking assessment.
- Under 8 – 18 - Player grading is mandatory, although dependant on player numbers in each age group.

In relation to player numbers for each side, it will be based on the total numbers registered in each age group in any given year.

WRRFC preferred squad levels for all teams is to provide a maximum of three (3) substitutes for any one team. This number means that every player, in theory, should get at least 75% game time on the field of play and allows sufficient room for player unavailability during the season.

### GRADING DATES AND TIMES

The initial grading sessions will be conducted over three Sundays in February. The first of these will take place approximately two weeks after the official registration day. Notification of these dates and times for each age group will be listed on the WRRFC website <https://wrrfc.com.au/> and will also be available on registration day.

This allows the Grading Coordinator and Management committee, the necessary time to assess how many players and teams the club is likely to have for each age group and organise accordingly.

During the initial grading sessions, each age group will roughly have a 90 minute session.

Those players that wish to trial for placement in Division One teams, will be invited to attend a separate grading session.

Players wishing to grade for the highest graded team, will grade separately from those not wishing to. Depending on the numbers, their grading session may be shortened, as they will have additional grading sessions (see Highest Graded Team further in this document).

Players are required to be in attendance at the nominated venue, at least 15 minutes before the allotted time to allow for grading registration, necessary administration and the distribution of coloured bibs. Ensuring that players arrive on time will ensure that the grading can commence on



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time, and will provide each child the maximum opportunity to impress, and also minimises any impact on the following grading sessions on the day.

With the possible exception of Under 9's, all other age groups respective teams (except the Highest Graded Team) should be finalised on these days.

### LATE REGISTRATIONS

Late registrations will only be accepted if player vacancies still exist in applicable age groups.

Non-registered players will not be allowed to participate in grading.

Players can register on the day of grading and must pay in full before they can participate in the grading process.

Players registered while grading is taking place may grade for the highest graded team but only if, playing record suggests he/she has a chance of being selected.

Players registered after grading has been completed are unlikely to be considered for the highest graded team, although where there are exceptional circumstances a player may trial (at the discretion of the Grading Committee) to earn a place in this team. This will only occur if there are spaces available in that team.

An example of the preceding paragraph might be in the case of a team that is searching for a permanent dedicated goalkeeper. This is a specialised position on the field and generally are hard to find, or where we are short of players across all teams in that age group and the player clearly demonstrates a high level of ability consideration may be given by the Grading Committee.

### GRADING ATTENDANCE

Attendance at grading is compulsory for all registered players, and they are required to attend grading on the nominated day of their age group for the process to work efficiently and be effective in the long run.

Where notification of a player's absence from the grading day is received by the Grading Coordinator, the Grading Committee will note down any special requests, his previous team within WRR and any comments the player's coach may have made in the assessment sheets from the previous season, and take that into consideration when nominating that player for a team. This however is no guarantee that the player will play in the same team as last year.

Failure to attend, with no notification of absence, may result in the player missing out on being graded into a higher team or their previous team.

The initial grading session will be the best chance a new player to the club has of potentially being graded to the highest graded team, so attendance is strongly recommended.

Additional grading sessions (where necessary) will be added when grading the highest graded team in each age group. There will be a maximum of three (3) sessions and in some cases just two (2) where deemed appropriate. The second grading session is likely to be held midweek, while the third grading session may involve a trial match against a team of a similar ability.

All players from the highest graded teams (except 8 Blue's) in the previous season are deemed to have earned the right to participate in the second grading session for the highest graded team for the current season. However to be eligible for the top team in the current season, they must attend



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the 2nd and 3rd grading sessions. If any of these players do not wish to grade for the top team, they must attend the initial grading session and will go through the normal grading process.

Whereby only one (1) team is to be registered in an age group and that team has the optimal number of players at the time of grading, the Grading Committee may not need to go ahead with a grading session in that age group. If so, contact will be made with all players to notify them of any cancellation.

## SPECIAL REQUESTS

Special requests can be made on the player registration form.

The initial grading session is the final opportunity for players/parents to make special requests.

Where a request to play with a friend/s has been made, the players (if all agree) will be placed in the team that matches the player with the least level of assessed ability, so that it does not disadvantage another player who perhaps deserves to play in a higher team based on their ability.

Where a request to play in the same team as last year has been made, this will only be automatically taken into account if they played in the lowest team of their age group. If for example, an age group had two teams last year and a player that was in the top team, cannot request to stay in the top team. That player must go through the grading process, as some players that were in the second team may have improved significantly enough to go up to the top team.

## GRADING PROCESSES

### UNDER 6/7 RANKING

In these age groups, it's generally recognised that the children just want to play with their mates, so at all times it is the Clubs objective to achieve this ideal scenario.

In an attempt to minimise lopsided score lines in these age groups, teams are assessed and placed into one of three ranking levels - 1-3. By doing it this way, it is hoped that this will maximise the kids all round enjoyment of the game.

The rankings of teams are based solely on a team assessment and not specifically on individual player ability.

### U6/7 GRADING PROCESS

To achieve these team assessments, WRRFC will organise a Mini-Gala day (generally early March), where all teams will play several matches and the Grading Committee will assess each team as a group.

It is essential that all players attend this day, so the teams can be properly assessed, and place them in the appropriate team ranking. It is also a lot of fun for the kids and provides a good opportunity for them to meet new team mates and the parents to get to know one another, if they already do not, and to determine Coach and Manager for the team.



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### UNDER 8 GRADING

Under 8's has three different ranking levels which the Grading Committee needs to look at when placing players (see Grading Process below). Please note: this is across GHFA and not specific to WRRFC.

The highest ranking level is commonly known as '8 Blue Division' – and WRRFC will always endeavour to enter a team to play in the Blue Division wherever possible.

This is the first age group where individual player grading is deemed necessary and therefore is also one of the hardest age groups to grade. However, individual grading at this age group is restricted primarily to those that likely to be placed in the '8 Blue Division' team.

The Blue Division is generally where those players, who show signs of being a talented footballer in these developing years, can play and test their skills against the best players from other clubs. It provides a valuable guide for the following season, when the players start in the Under 9's and where all teams and players are graded, based on individual ability.

Essentially, WRRFC will only have one team in the Blue Division, but may have two if a special request is made by an U8 team to play in this Division as a group. This situation raises several critical issues and will only be approved, after U8 Grading is completed by all players and the recommendations of the Grading Committee are forwarded to the WRRFC Management Committee. The decision of the WRRFC Management Committee will be final.

After the Blue division, the 2nd and 3rd ranking levels are based on team assessments, but in order to get these team assessments, we first need to look at each individual player.

The main reason for the rankings is to as far as possible try and get teams of roughly the same ability playing against one another in the same competition, to prevent lopsided score lines. Again this helps maximise the kids all round enjoyment of the game, which is vitally important at this age.

### U8 GRADING PROCESS

In the U8's, players are expected to play in many different positions and not be pigeon-holed to one particular position, so assessments are based purely on the players all round skill set.

It is noted that in this age group many players still wish to play with friends, or in the same team as last year, and at all times we will strive to achieve this outcome. However when grouping players together, we need to look at the overall skill mix of this group and then decide which ranking that best fits them as a group, whether it be 1, 2 or 3.

In determining the 8 Blue Division team, we will look at the player assessments on grading day and whether they have any special requests. Those players that are deemed of the ability to play in the U8 Blue Division team will be asked to stay back at grading completion and be addressed by the Grading Coordinator.

If the Grading Committee is unable to grade the required number of individual players (10) for the '8 Blue Division', WRRFC will determine whether a team will be entered for this level.

Once the 8 Blue Division team is determined, the Grading Committee will only then be able to place all other players into a 2 or 3 ranking, whether individually or as a group.



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### UNDER 9 – 21 GRADING

All players are expected to be graded into teams that best represent their level of ability. The only exceptions to this are:

- a) Where there is only sufficient player numbers to fill one team with no more than 16 players in an age group - this generally occurs around the ages of 14 and up and,
- b) Where there is more than one team in an age group and players might want to stay together, but whose playing abilities are noticeably different. In this scenario, players will be placed at the level of the player that is graded into the lowest division.

### U9-21 PROCESS

All players are graded on an individual basis.

There will be initial grading session for all players in each age group at an allocated time and day.

The top team in each age group will be graded separately, away from all other players (see below for further information).

Where possible, the Grading Committee will attempt to keep teams together from the previous season, but note, there is likely to be movement between graded teams each year as player's skill levels develop. If WRRFC also has an age group that will have a team in Division 1 (especially) or 2, there is always a greater chance that new player's will come and try to make this team. Subsequently that will also contribute to player movement down the grades.

Under 9 grading is especially important as it is the first year where **all** individuals are assessed for their skills and abilities, and as such will be placed in a team/division that best reflects these core abilities.

Therefore, from a grading committee's perspective, this age group is very important in making sure we get the right players into the right teams, as best we can, because it has a flow on effect in future years.

In the Under 9's, the main emphasis in the grading process will be on a player's all round skill set and not whether they are good in a particular position. These ages are very important in a player's development and coaches are encouraged to play the kids in all different positions, so they can learn all the skills of the game.

From Under 11 on, a player's preferred position will be taken into account, with teams selected with an even balance of forwards, midfielders, defenders and goalkeepers.

It is expected that all players that register for WRRFC will give 100% commitment towards their team, i.e. first priority is to WRRFC over school teams\* or other activities the kids are involved in (e.g. scouts, other sports, extra tuition). This is particularly important for players in Division 1 squads, and where a parent believes that they can not commit to the extra training and/or other requirements, then their child should not trial for Division 1 teams.

Parents and players need to be conscious of the fact that coaches give up their valuable time and energy to coach, and if some players are only going to be available for a few games here and there (without prior warning given to the Grading Committee or coach), that it is deemed disrespectful to the coach and teammates, and ultimately is unfair on those players who are prepared to show their commitment to the team and club.



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It will be noted which players do not show their commitment towards their team and it may have a significant impact on which team they may play in the following season, if they do indeed wish to return to WRRFC.

### HIGHEST GRADE TEAM GRADING

At registration, WRRFC will gauge from players (especially new players) whether they intend to grade for the highest graded team or not. This may be either on the registration form or at registration day.

Where there is likely to be more than two (2) teams in an age group, players who wish to grade for the highest graded team will be graded separately on their respective grading day.

Where the highest graded team is likely to be a Division 1 team, the Grading Committee encourages only players with a high level of skill and ability to nominate.

At the initial grading session, all players grading for the top team will participate in a 4v4 activity away from the other grading players. Any players that are clearly not up to the level required\*, will be asked to join the other players, where they will be assessed.

\*Does not apply to players who were in the highest graded team the previous season, as per below

Where necessary one or two extra grading sessions will be arranged, especially if this team is expected to be in either Division 1 or 2 of their age group. Grading of this team may also include pre-season trial games.

All players from the highest team (except 8 Blue's) in the previous season are deemed to have earned the right to participate in the second grading session (if required). However to be eligible for the highest team in the current season, it is recommended they attend all grading sessions, including the initial grading session. If any of these players do not wish to grade for the highest team, they will go through normal grading process mentioned above.

Players that have chosen to grade for the top team and are not successful in making the squad, should not expect to be placed automatically in the next lower division. The Grading Committee will take into account all relevant information into consideration and shall place the players in the most suitable grade team available.

Where the highest graded team is a Division 1 or 2 team, the level of commitment and dedication to the team from players and parents needs to be high. Players and parents should expect that in order to be competitive at this level, training could be two (2) nights a week, depending on the availability of the coach and grounds. All parents/players that are applying to Grade for the highest division in each age group are to be handed the letter at Appendix B, to ensure they are aware of the extra responsibilities required for these teams.

### GOALKEEPER GRADING

In age groups 6-9 (10 perhaps), there will be no grading of specialist keepers in these teams, although a player's ability as a keeper will be taken into account in the grading process.

Specialist goalkeeper grading will be considered for teams playing from Under 11 up. Any players that wish to grade specifically as a goalkeeper must indicate this to the Grading Committee prior to the start of the initial grading session. They must also indicate if they wish to grade for the highest graded team.



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Any WRRFC team that is playing in Division 1 from Under 11's and above, should at all times attempt to have a specialist goalkeeper that will play the majority of the games in that position.

Depending on the number of goalkeepers that wish to grade in each age group, the Grading Committee may look to have a special session just for goalkeeper grading. This will most likely be held midweek and notice will be given to all goalkeepers at least a week in advance. Goalkeepers unable to make this session, must notify the Grading Coordinator prior to the session, so alternative arrangements can be made. Failure to do so, may result in non-selection.

## GRADING CRITERIA

When assessing players the Grading Committee will be primarily assessing the following criteria:

- a) Ball Control / Dribbling;
- b) Passing;
- c) Shooting;
- d) Heading\*;
- e) Tackling\*;
- f) One on One\*;
- g) First Touch\*;
- h) Speed and endurance\*;
- i) Strength\*;
- j) Team Work\*; and
- k) Goalkeeping Skills (For Goalkeepers only).

\*Used more specifically from Under 11's on.

The top three criteria listed above are the three key skill areas that all players need to master if they want to become a talented football player. These three skills are distinctly different in players in these early years and are why they form the basis of our grading criteria from Under 8-10's. As players get older, the remaining skills in the criteria list develop, and become more important and are taken into account throughout the grading process, especially in choosing the top teams in each age group.

## PLAYER NOTIFICATIONS

All team notifications throughout the grading process will be via the WRRFC website – <http://www.westryderovers.asn.au/>. This is the most efficient and quickest way of informing people, as teams will not have managers and coaches confirmed until after the teams have been confirmed.

All initial team notifications are provisional only, until such time as all teams in the age group are finalised, following the final grading assessments (which might include pre-season trial games in some cases).

While WRRFC will always attempt to place those players who have registered with the club in a team in their age group, there are the odd occasions where unfortunately player numbers don't match the required numbers that are generally permitted for each squad.



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If this scenario occurs, WRRFC will endeavour by all means possible to place players into another WRRFC team if there are player vacancies.

If WRRFC exhaust all options internally, and players ultimately will have to be let go from the Club, our second option is assist in finding a position for these players with other clubs who might be needing players in that age group. In this scenario, preference will be given to those players who registered first, hence it's imperative to make sure that you get registrations in on time. Players who register late, will not be accepted if we have the required numbers already, no matter if you previously played at the club or not.

## DISPUTES

All grading assessment sheets and player evaluation reports are the Committee-in-Confidence property of WRRFC.

If a parent/guardian is not happy with the graded level of their child, and/or not happy with the grading process, they must send their grievance in writing to the Grading Coordinator. The Grading Coordinator will consult with the Grading Committee to determine if the grading stands, or if an amendment to the grading may be necessary.

If a parent/guardian is still unsatisfied with their child's graded level following the review of the Grading Committee, they may apply for their grievance to be heard by the WRRFC Committee for a resolution. The decision of the WRR Soccer committee will be deemed final. Application for this must be made in writing and sent to the Club Secretary.

If a parent/guardian requests a change in team for their child after team allocations are completed, they must notify the team manager ASAP. Please note: that players can only be moved down a grade and will only be approved if a player from the lower grade is willing to move up. If no team manager is in place, they should inform the WRRFC Club Secretary.







## CLUB GRADING POLICY

### APPENDIX C:

#### Letter to be given to parents/players involved in grading.

Thank you for attending our grading session. Grading is being undertaken using the guidelines outlined in the WRRFC Grading Policy which is available on the Club's web site.

Listed below are some of the conditions that you are expected to abide by should you/your child be selected to play in the highest division/s for their age group. Should you need any clarification of these conditions please ask prior to the grading session/s.

- ☉ Players and parents are to comply with the Association and Club's Code of Conduct which is available upon request.
- ☉ Players are required to attend grading session/s plus pre-season trials if required unless otherwise advised by the grading panel.
- ☉ Players who are unlikely to be selected will be advised by the Grading Committee as early as possible in the selection process and where possible prior to muster day.
- ☉ In circumstances where players are of similar ability, selection preference will be given to players who played with WRRFC in the previous football seasons.
- ☉ Players and parents of players, will be informed by the grading panel at the end of the process whether or not they have been selected.
- ☉ Players are selected into a team, not a position. A player's position may be changed to suit the needs of the team.
- ☉ Training may be scheduled twice weekly. Players are expected to attend both sessions, wearing appropriate training gear. Boots and shin pads are compulsory. Junior players are to be accompanied by at least one parent/carer at training and at games.
- ☉ All players are expected to participate positively and enthusiastically at training and comply with the directions of the coach and/or manager.
- ☉ If a player continually disrupts a training session the player may be asked to leave that session. If such disruption recurs on a regular basis, the player may be dropped from the team to a lower division team.
- ☉ The coach is not to be questioned during the match. The coach may be approached privately after the game has finished.
- ☉ Players are obliged to notify the coach/manager as early as possible if they are unable to attend training or a game. It is the responsibility of the parents of junior players to comply with this requirement.
- ☉ Any disputes regarding either the grading process or unfair treatment of a player during the season should be referred to the committee through the club's Disputes process.

Please explain these conditions to your child should he/she be selected.

Any questions may be directed to the Grading Committee Coordinator.

Yours faithfully

The WRRFC Grading Committee