



## **HJFC GRADING POLICY : Last Amended 14/3/2023**

Grading will only apply when 2 or more teams are formed in a single age group of U13 and above.

### **What Is Grading?**

Grading is the process of establishing the composition of more than one team in an age bracket to compete in the Yarra Junior Football League (YJFL). This means that if there are sufficient player numbers for two or more teams then each team will play in different grades and grades will typically represent different standards of play. It needs to be considered that in the grading process one team will be graded higher and one lower by the YJFL

### **Aim**

Heidelberg Junior Football Club (HJFC) objective is that team grading is conducted openly, fairly and effectively. The purpose of this grading policy is to endeavour that grading of teams is undertaken in this manner, with the best interests of HJFC players and the club. HJFC will undertake this process in good faith and to the best of our ability. Grading is not an exact science and players develop at different stages, both from year to year, and within the season, HJFC will endeavour to place players in the appropriate team based on this guideline.

**The aim of the club when grading is to create an environment that allows for the development of each player and creates two competitive teams.**

Grading will also be influenced by the number and age of players registered with the Club each year, e.g. 40 registered players in a particular age group will form two (2) teams of 20 players each, whereas 50 registered players would mean two (2) teams of approximately 25 players each. Teams would generally be assigned the same number of players to their list to keep teams balanced. Care must be taken to cater for those players that are less advanced in their football development but who still love the game.

### **Team Selection for all Teams**

#### **Team Selection: U8 to U12**

No formal grading processes will be in place. An emphasis is placed on participation and enjoyment with friendship and school groups. Additional goals are the acquisition of football skills and playing in a team environment.

#### **Grading: U13 to Colts/Youth Girls**

A greater emphasis is placed upon individual and team performances in these age levels. Whilst one team may have a more advanced list of players, the Club will aim that all teams will be as competitive as possible in their respective divisions. The club will endeavour to organise players into appropriate teams to provide an environment in which players can be both competitive and continue to develop their football skills.

## **HJFC Team Grading Guidelines**

### **Why Do We Grade Our Teams?**

Football in the YJFL is a graded, competitive sport from the age of 11 with representative opportunities from age 13. The YJFL currently grades teams into 4, 5 or 6 divisions for each age group. They also have rules that stipulate a player cannot transfer from one team in one division to another team in another division. In essence, the YJFL expect multiple teams in the same age bracket to be graded (Refer to YJFL Grading/Re-Grading guidelines).

The club in grading endeavours to aim for the best chance of development, enjoyment and success for all our players across all teams, it is necessary to grade players into teams with players of similar ability while keeping in mind the concept of two competitive teams.

Players and parents are urged to be objective and reasonable in their expectations, and to encourage their children to be happy in their chosen sport no matter what team they play in.

Players and parents should also be aware that the success of a team one year does not always ensure the team will remain together the following year. Due to the nature of change, new registrations and differing development rates of all players from season to season, player movement in and out of such teams may still occur to ensure two competitive teams are established.

**In registering their child for the club parents are agreeing to accept the grading of teams irrespective of their own thoughts and ideas on grading.**

### **"Preferred Team Requests" (Graded Teams Only)**

"preferred team requests" can be submitted by parents, in writing, and must state the reason(s) for the request.

These requests will be taken into consideration when selecting teams however the Football Department can / will override these requests where they believe it leaves one or both teams either;

- At risk of being uncompetitive within their allocated division(s)
- Unbalanced with too many of the same type / style player, e.g. all rucks or all small forwards, all mid's, no ruck etc

### **The Coaching & Grading Panel**

All grading is undertaken on behalf of the Club by our Football Department.

From time to time, the Football Department may also invite Independent Graders to assist with the grading process.

Where a conflict of interest exists (i.e. the grading session involves the child of a Football department member) that member of the department will only grade the other players and his or her child will be graded by all the other department members.

## **Grading Criteria**

- a) Team Balance – For instance there is little point in selecting 22 players who are all midfielders. Each side needs a Ruck, backs, forwards and ball getters.
- b) The previous season performance – votes, attitude, attendance at training (Advice can and may be sought from the previous season's coach);
- c) The ability of the player – this is not just a consideration of skill alone but whether they are a ball getter, timid or their playing maturity;
- d) What position(s) they play/or are considered for;
- e) Whether the player may be better served playing down a grade to improve their skills;
- f) Enabling the player to play in a position that they would not play in at the higher team;
- g) Enabling the player to excel at a lower level which will enable them to enjoy their football and gain greater confidence in years to come;
- h) Be of greater overall value to a team in a lower level;
- i) Work ethic

## **Other grading criteria**

In assessing the overall skills of a player within an age group, the Football Department will take into account:

- a. Kicking
- b. Speed and Agility
- c. Ball Handling Skills
- d. Attacking Skills
- e. Defending Skills
- f. Perception/Cognition Skills
- g. Sportsmanship and Attitude
- h. Game sense

## **Information Session**

Information session for players and parents from under 13 and above will be conducted at the start of each season to clarify both the HJFC Grading Policy and Grading Process where there will be two teams.