



GRADING POLICY

Glenhaven Football Club
(Adopted 2 February 2021)

1. DOCUMENT OBJECTIVE

- a. The main objective of this document is to formulate the processes by which Glenhaven Football Club (GHFC) will conduct its grading sessions each year. This document should be accessible to all members of GHFC and the general football community.

2. POLICY OBJECTIVES

- a. The Grading Policy of GHFC is adopted to provide the Grading Committee with a clear process and procedure outlines to ensure that GHFC Grading is conducted with the utmost integrity, professionalism and transparency.
- b. Senior teams (Youth League, All Age and Over 35/45) are not put through a grading process. The Club Committee will oversee nomination of senior teams in relation to the previous year's performance and requests from each team. The final decision about the division into which each team is placed is at the discretion of the Association.
- c. GHFC has clear objectives in relation to the grading of U6 to U18/Youth League, which are:

Players: To provide a clear, well-defined process that best enables players to be placed in a team that will:

- i. Best represent their individual level of skill and ability,
- ii. Ensure teams formed are comprised of similarly skilled players,
- iii. Maximise opportunities to develop and improve their skills,
- iv. Maximise their enjoyment and love of the game; and
- v. Provide clear pathways through age groups and divisions.

Club:

- vi. Ensure that players are placed in teams in a fair and equitable manner.
- vii. Enable the club to properly assess and nominate team divisions for the upcoming season.
- viii. Provide a process for stakeholder (players/parents) concerns to be taken into consideration appropriately.

3. GRADING COMMITTEE

- a. The Grading Committee will be comprised of:
 - i. A Grading Coordinator appointed by the Club Committee, and
 - ii. The GHFC Club Coaching Coordinator, and
 - iii. 1 to 3 senior members of the Club who are experienced coaches or players.
- b. The Grading Coordinator will act as overall convenor for all aspects of the grading process and is to provide suggested team and division nominations to the Club Committee prior to the Team Nomination closing date determined by Hills Football.
- c. The Grading Committee may ask members of the club who are experienced coaches or players to assist them in running any or all grading sessions.
- d. When grading age groups in Under 12s and above, coaches from the previous season may be invited to assist in an advisory capacity only, whether they intend coaching in that age group again or not. These coaches will have a knowledge of the players and may assist the Grading Committee in regard to players' skills or abilities.
- e. The Grading Coordinator may invite an experienced coach or player, who is not a member of the club to assist the Grading Committee in age groups where a potential conflict of interest may arise. E.g. a Grading Committee member's child is trailing.
- f. The Grading Committee will make all final recommendations on team selections and divisions to the Club Committee for approval. These recommendations are to be formed after analysing all information and documentation from the grading process, along with what may have been provided at the completion of the previous season by coaches/managers, via Player Evaluation Sheets (see

Appendix A).

4. GRADING DATES AND TIMES

- a. Grading sessions will be conducted in early to mid-February. Notification of dates and times for each age group will be posted on the GHFC website and Facebook page, and a notification sent to members via TeamApp.
- b. Players are required to be in attendance at the nominated venue at least 15 minutes before the allotted time to allow for grading registration and other necessary administration. Players arriving on time will help ensure that grading sessions can commence as scheduled and will minimise any impact on any following grading sessions on the day.

5. GRADING CRITERIA

- a. When assessing players, the Grading Committee will be primarily looking at the following criteria:
 - i. First Touch
 - ii. Ball Control/Dribbling
 - iii. Passing
 - iv. Tackling
 - v. One on One
 - vi. Shooting
 - vii. Speed and endurance
 - viii. Teamwork
- b. The first four criteria listed above are the key skills that all players need to master if they want to become a talented football player, so will be the main criteria for grading. As players move into competitive football (U12 and up), the remaining skills in the list become just as important in the grading process, especially in choosing the top teams in each age group.
- c. In circumstances where players are of similar ability, selection preference will be given to players who played with GHFC in previous football seasons.

6. GRADING ATTENDANCE

- a. Attendance at grading is compulsory for all registered junior players.
- b. Players who have not registered with GHFC at the time of their age group's first grading session will not be considered for that age group's top-graded team.
- c. Players must register and grade in their correct age group. Playing "up" will only be allowed solely at the club's discretion. Playing "up" in one season does not guarantee playing "up" the next season.
- d. Failure to attend, with no notification of absence, may result in the player missing out on being graded into their previous team or a higher team.
- e. Where notification of a player's absence from the grading day is received by the Grading Coordinator (grading@glenhavenfc.com), the Grading Committee will note down any special requests, his previous team within GHFC 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.
- f. If 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 decide not 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.

7. EXPECTATIONS

- a. Players and parents are to comply with the club's Code of Conduct which is available on the club's web site.
- b. Our club is run by volunteers who give their time and expertise at no cost to enable players to have an enjoyable experience playing at a level that best fits their abilities. No abuse of any members of our Club Committee, Grading Committee, club volunteers, other players or parents will be tolerated.
- c. GHFC offers grassroots football and we ask all members to keep this mind. The Association offers avenues for extra training and development, and trials for elite squads if you believe your child is a particularly gifted player.
- d. On grading days parents must remain away from the grading area at all times. Communication must be with the designated committee member. Parents are NOT to approach the graders under any circumstances.
- e. If a player is trialling for a higher age group and has equal skill level with a player in the correct age group, precedence will be given to the player in the correct age group.
- f. The Grading Committee will consider accommodating reasonable requests, however this is often not possible or practical, so we ask that you respect the Grading Committee's decisions.
- g. The Club Committee understands that mistakes are sometimes made and are happy to address any reasonable questions or concerns, so long as this is done in an appropriate manner and with respect.
- h. Training may be scheduled twice weekly for higher division teams. Players selected into these teams are expected to attend both sessions, wearing appropriate training gear.
- i. Boots and shin pads are compulsory at all grading, training sessions and games throughout the season.
- j. U6-U17 players are to be accompanied by at least one parent/carer at training and at games.
- k. All players are expected to participate positively and, and to comply with the directions of the coach and/or manager at all times.
- l. If a player continually disrupts a training session the player may be asked to leave that session. If such disruption occurs on a regular basis, the player may be suspended for a number of matches, or in extreme circumstances, the rest of the season.
- m. The coach is not to be questioned during a match. The coach may be approached respectfully and privately after a game has finished.
- n. 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.
- o. It is expected that all players who register with GHFC will give 100% commitment to their team. Parents and players need to respect the fact that coaches give up their time and energy to coach, and if some players are only available for a few games here and there (without giving prior warning), it is disrespectful to the coach and teammates, and ultimately unfair on those players who are prepared to show their commitment to the team and club.

8. SPECIAL REQUESTS

- a. Special requests must be made in writing by emailing grading@glenhavenfc.com 48 hours prior to the first grading session for the applicable age group.
- b. Making a request does not mean it will be granted.
- c. Where a request is made to play with a friend/s, all players must agree and, if the Grading Committee assents to the request, the players will be placed in the team that matches the player with the least level of assessed ability so that it does not disadvantage other players who deserve to play in a higher team based on their ability.

- d. Where a request to play in the same team as last year is made, this will only be taken into account if they did not play in the highest-graded team of their age group. That is, they cannot request to stay in the top team. That player must go through the grading process as some players that were in lower-graded teams may have improved significantly enough to make the top team.
- e. Requests such as the ones in 8.d. & 8.e. above will only be considered if overall age group and team numbers allow, or it does not unbalance other teams in the age group.

9. LATE REGISTRATIONS

- a. Players registering after grading has been completed are unlikely to be considered for the highest graded team, although in exceptional circumstances a player may trial (at the discretion of the Grading Committee) to earn a place in this team. An example might be in the case of a team that is searching for a permanent dedicated goalkeeper, or where the club is short of players across all teams in that age group and the player clearly demonstrates a high level of ability.
- b. Late registrations will only be accepted if player vacancies still exist in applicable age groups after grading is complete.

10. GRADING PROCESSES

a. U6 & U7

- i. In these age groups, it is generally recognised that children just want to play with their friends, so it is the Club's objective to achieve this ideal scenario.
- ii. At the first grading session for these age groups, parents of players in these age groups will be asked to form teams, and to select a Coach and Manager.
- iii. In an attempt to minimise lopsided score lines in these age groups, teams will be placed into one of three ranking levels, 1 to 3. These rankings are based solely on a team assessment and not on individual player ability. By doing this, it is hoped that we will maximise the kids all round enjoyment of the game.
- iv. To achieve these team assessments all teams will play several matches against other teams in the age group so the Grading Committee can assess each team as a group.
- v. It is essential that all players attend this day so the teams can be properly assessed and placed in the appropriate team ranking. It is also a lot of fun for the kids and provides a good opportunity to meet new team-mates, for parents to get to know one another.

b. U8 & U9

- i. U8 is the first age group where individual player grading is deemed necessary and therefore is one the hardest age groups to grade.
- ii. 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 the Grading Committee will keep this outcome in mind. However, this is not their primary criteria for two reasons:
 - 1. The increase in team size from 4 players on the field to 7 makes it impossible to keep all players in the same teams as U7s.
 - 2. The skill and ability level of players in these ages develop at different rates, and it's important for players to play with, and against, players of roughly the same ability. This helps develop skills and maximise a child's all-round enjoyment, which is vitally important at this age.
- iii. These ages are very important in a player's development and coaches are asked to play the kids in all different positions, so they can learn all the skills of the game.
- iv. Because players are expected to play in many different positions and not be pigeon-holed

to one particular position, grading assessments are based on a player's all-round skill set.

- c. U10 to U18
 - i. All players are graded on an individual basis.
 - ii. All players will be placed into teams that best represent their level of ability. The only exception will be where there are only sufficient player numbers to fill one team with no more than 16 players in an age group (this often occurs around the ages of 14 and up) and,
 - iii. Where possible, the Grading Committee will attempt to keep teams together from the previous season, but there is likely to be movement between graded teams each year as player's skill levels develop.
 - iv. If GHFC has an age group that will have a team in Division 1, there is always a chance that new players will come to the club and try to make this team. Subsequently, that may also contribute to player movement between grades.
 - v. U10 grading is especially 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.
 - vi. From U12 on, a player's preferred position will be taken into account, with teams selected with an even balance of forwards, midfielders, defenders, and goalkeepers.

11. HIGHEST GRADED TEAM

- a. GHFC will gauge from players (especially new players) whether they intend to grade for the highest graded team or not.
- b. 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.
- c. 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 all relevant information into consideration and shall place the players in the most suitable grade team available.
- d. Where the highest graded team is a Division 1 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 will be two (2) nights a week (depending on the availability of the coach and grounds).

12. GOALKEEPER GRADING

- a. In U8s to U11s, there will be no grading of specialist keepers in these teams, although a player's ability as a keeper may be taken into account in the grading process.
- b. Specialist goalkeeper grading will be considered for teams playing U12 and 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.
- c. Any GHFC team that is playing in Division 1 from U12s and above, should always attempt to have a specialist goalkeeper playing the majority of games in that position.
- d. 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. At least one-weeks' notice of such a session will be given. 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.

13. SQUAD SIZE

- a. GHFC's preferred squad size for junior teams is to have a maximum of two (2) substitutes in U6 to U9 teams, and three (3) substitutes for U10 and up. This number means that every player, in theory, should get at least 75% game time on the field of play and allows sufficient scope for player unavailability during the season.
- b. However, final squad size will depend on the total number of registered players in an age group. Lower division teams may be assigned more substitutes, as players can be borrowed into higher division teams, but can't be borrowed "down".
- c. No junior team is to have more than 16 players.
 - i. U6 & U7 have 4 players on field (no goalkeeper), so the ideal squad size is 6.
 - ii. U8 & U9 have 7 players on field including a goalkeeper, so the ideal squad size is 9.
 - iii. U10 to U12 have 9 players on field including a goalkeeper, so the ideal squad size is 12.
 - iv. U13 to U18/Youth League have 11 players on field including a goalkeeper, so the ideal squad size is 14.
- d. If player numbers within an age group are either under or over the number required to form one or more teams, the Grading Committee in consultation with parents will attempt to recruit additional players. If this does not work within a reasonable timeframe, the Club Committee will do what they can to find suitable teams for players at other clubs.

14. PLAYER NOTIFICATIONS

- a. All team notifications will be made via email approximately one week after the final grading session.
- b. 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.
- c. While GHFC will always attempt to place players who have registered with the club in a team in their age group, there are occasions where player numbers don't match the required numbers permitted for each squad. In this scenario, GHFC will endeavour by all means possible to place players into another GHFC team if there are vacancies.
- d. If GHFC exhaust all options internally, and players ultimately have to be let go from the Club, GHFC will assist in finding a position for these players with other clubs who might need 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 they previously played at the club or not.

15. DISPUTES

- a. All grading assessment sheets and player evaluation reports are the Committee-in-Confidence property of GHFC.
- b. 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 (grading@glenhavenfc.com), who will consult with the Grading Committee to determine if the grading stands, or if an amendment to the grading is necessary.
- c. 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 GHFC Club Committee for a

resolution. Application for this must be made in writing and sent to the Club Secretary (info@glenhavenfc.com)

- d. The decision of the Club Committee will be deemed final.