



## ***GUFC Policy Guidance – Process for Playing in a Higher Age Group***

### **Purpose**

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This document outlines the procedures for players wishing to play in an age group higher than which they turn in the current playing year. It is intended for use by parents, players and GUFC officials.

Any queries should be directed to the GUFC Club Coach at [coaching@gungahlinunitedfc.org.au](mailto:coaching@gungahlinunitedfc.org.au).

In framing the policy, GUFC is mindful of the need to meet responsibilities to:

- the immediate needs of its current players at all levels;
- the future needs of the GUFC in meeting its strategic goals;
- further the development and promotion of soccer in the wider community;
- prepare players with higher aspirations for their transition to senior soccer, including representative honours; and

It is emphasised that it is not the aim of GUFC to force players to play in particular teams or divisions.

### **Scope**

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These guidelines apply to players in all age groups from pewees to U18's who request to play in an age group higher than the age they are turning in the current playing year. They do not apply to decisions made by GUFC with the primary purpose of ensuring the viability of teams.

These guidelines shall constitute the policy for 'playing/grading up' and should be considered binding by all players, parents and officials.

General Exception: Players who were already playing up an age group in 2007 in the U8 age groups or below will be permitted to continue to do so up until the U9 age group without effect of this policy.

### **General Rule**

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The general policy is that all players *must* play in their own age group unless they are assessed and fit one of prescribed criteria below. The right to assessment under these guidelines is not implicit and shall be granted solely by the Club Coach. Requests to be assessed will be declined by the Club without prejudice under any of these conditions:



- Timing of the request falls after the official closing date for registrations;
- The request is not submitted through official channels; or
- The player is not registered at the time of the request.

Furthermore, ALL players who wish to grade in a higher age group MUST grade in their natural age as well.

Any players wishing to grade up more than 1 year MUST be approved to GRADE in that age group by the coaching panel.

*Note: Should a player be granted the opportunity to be graded in order to play up an age group and ultimately found capable of doing so this should not be considered an automatic placement in a team in the higher age group. Access to the higher age group is subject to the availability of a place within a team.*

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## **Fees**

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When a player requests to play in a higher age group, they are responsible for any extra fees that are incurred due to increased registration costs in that division.

If a player is *requested* to play in a higher division by the club, the club will cover any increased registration costs above the player's normal age group.

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## **Process - U5 to U9's**

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If a request is received for a player to play in a higher age group where the age group is U9, U8, U7 or U6, the decision will be at the discretion of the Registrar and Club Coach which should be based on the grounds listed below. If consensus cannot be reached the President shall have the casting vote.

The following process shall occur for each request:

1. The player must be registered in the higher age group until such time as a decision is made on whether or not to allow the player to play in the higher age group.
2. The Registrar will make an assessment at the time of registration after making parents aware of this policy based on the individual requests taking into account factors such as:
  - a. the player's ability;
  - b. the player's date of birth;
  - c. the player's physical stature;
  - d. the reasons provided for requesting that the player to play in a higher age group.
3. If the Registrar has any concerns about approving a request to 'play up', the decision may be referred to the Club Coach for a more



thorough technical assessment. The Club Coach will then make a recommendation to the Registrar.

4. The Registrar will then need to consider the availability of places and viability of teams in the age groups that may be affected by any such decision.
5. Requests after the registration closing date will be subject to availability.
6. Once a decision is made by the club it will be communicated to the parent / guardian of the player and recorded in the club database on the player's record.
7. Appeal will be available via written submission to the GUFC committee. Any decision made by the committee will be final and no review or further appeal will be available.

## **Process – U10 to U18's**

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If a request is received for a player to play in a higher age group where the age group is U10 to U18's, the decision will be at the discretion of the Club Coach and Coaching Panel age group coordinator. If consensus cannot be reached the President shall have the casting vote.

*Note: The following applies to all new and existing players whether or not a player was playing in a higher age group in a previous year. Playing up one year does not guarantee further years.*

Capital Football Academy is moving to keeping players in their natural age group. Inline with this policy, the primary reason for playing up should be exceptional ability.

The following process shall occur for each request:

1. At the time of registration the player must notify the Registrar that they wish to 'play up'. They will be registered in their preferred age group until such time as a decision is made on whether to allow the player to play in a higher age group.

*Note: All players requesting to 'play up' must attend the grading session(s) for their preferred age group.*

2. After the grading / the Club Coach in conjunction with the Coaching Panel age coordinator will make the decision about the appropriate age group and division for the player to play in for that season.

In making the above decisions the assessors will take into account a number of factors, including but not limited to:



- a. whether the player possesses skills and ability to a high standard;
  - b. whether the player's ability will be significantly enhanced if they play up an age group;
  - c. recommendations of assessors at grading / trials and previous coaches;
  - d. the physical ability of player to play in a higher age group;
  - e. the absence of a first / second division team in the player's actual age group; and
  - f. availability of places in the higher age group.
3. Players will be assigned to teams based on the above criteria and team lists will be placed on the website at a time to be advertised by the club.
4. Questions regarding team placement should be directed to the Club Coach. No automatic right to review is provided through this process.
5. If a decision is made that the player may not play in a higher age group any additional registration fees paid will be refunded. The Coaching Panel will provide a recommendation of the suitable Division for the player to play in the lower age group.