



Grading Process/ Policy

Season 2026 will see the continued refinement and enhancement of our approach to implementing HFC's Club Vision and Player Development Philosophy in line with what was commenced in 2025.

We will be carefully considering team selections during the grading process by utilising experienced coaching panel to undertake the process overseen by our newly formed HFC Football Development Coaching Group.

In line with our ongoing club development philosophy, the grading process will be focused on continuing player and team improvement and growth by considering these factors:

- a. keeping age cohorts together to develop team cohesion year on year whilst enabling assessment and feedback on performance against relevant development milestones.
- b. where changes in the composition of teams occur, this is underpinned by:
 - i. sound reasoning and judgement by an experienced coaching panel to ensure players are appropriately challenged for their optimal development;
 - ii. teams are "well balanced" rather simply batching players based on grading results; and
 - iii. ensuring (to the best we can) that teams are allowed to play to their potential in the appropriate grade.

Please also understand that the above methodology is our preferred approach, HOWEVER, some player movement between teams from year to year is always inevitable. This may be due to:

- changes in a player's performance or attitude from year to year,
- varying numbers in each age cohort,
- changes in player registrations (players leaving or joining) and/or
- other factors necessitating changes in order to field teams in appropriate age groups and divisions.

Whilst decision-making will be considered using the above framework, the club also reserves the right to select teams based on any relevant circumstances it deems fair and reasonable.

In addition, this season, there will be a number of grading rounds prior to the commencement of the regular season. The club will use these grading rounds to ensure teams and players have been allocated to the right competition divisions so some movement of players may still need to occur to ensure the right team balance for the season ahead.

We know we cannot please everyone so we will have a clear communication process where any concerns with the grading process can be raised with the club. This process will be communicated closer to the grading dates.

Finally, please note that we have also introduced a new Standards & Ethics Committee (SEC) which will uphold good behaviour standards and ensure our positive and respectful club culture is supported. In this regard, respectful communication is always encouraged however any poor behaviour will be called out and dealt with accordingly by the new SEC.

We look forward to an enjoyable season ahead.